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Sister's anti-drug fight grows

By CAROL HARPER

carolharper@sanduskyregister.com

NORWALK

Marci Davies' desire to speak publicly about her brother's heroin overdose and death has grown into a fledgling organization offering an outlet to others who similarly lost loved ones.

Since Davies launched a Web site in August at www.ForPetesSake.org, she has organized the people who contacted her into a highly motivated force for educating children about the horrors of heroin addictions.

"If we all put our strength together, we can make a little bit of a difference," Davies said. "It's good to see my mom sit in a room with four or five parents who have lost children to heroin, and they're able to do something about it."

Toying with the idea all summer, it took Davies and her sister-in-law a week to file papers for non-profit status for the new organization, For Pete's Sake Inc.

While Davies is waiting on approval from the state of Ohio, she is working with people who have lost a son, a daughter, a best friend, or other loved one.

"The sad part is everyone realizes we have an epidemic in our area," Davies said.

The group's first public event is a rally from 4 p.m. until dusk Oct. 3 at Norwalk Memorial Lake Park, Old State Road, Norwalk.

Speakers include Davies; Carol Anderson, who lost a daughter to heroin; a recovering addict; an emergency room nurse from Firelands Regional Medical Center who will talk about detoxification; and a Norwalk police officer and dog.

Activities are planned for children, also, such as a kid zone with a bounce house, a play area, clowns, balloons, pencils, stickers, all supervised by adults so parents can participate in discussions not meant for children, Davies said.

A band from Sandusky, Uncle Meat, will play in memory of a friend lost to drug use, Davies said.

Four styles of T-shirts will be available as a fundraiser; the T-shirts also will be available for sale on the Web site, Davies said.

A quarterly newsletter should debut at the rally, too, Davies said.

Businesses have donated items such as gift certificates and oil changes for raffles, Davies said.

One of her goals is to funnel other speakers into schools where Davies has already spoken.

"I'm really excited about this," Davies said. "I have an amazing group of volunteers."

Davies' younger brother, Pete Rinner, an Ohio State University student, died March 1, 1999, at the age of 24 of an apparent heroin overdose.

Rinner's family did not know he was taking heroin.

"Pete was an awesome person who happened to screw around with heroin and it killed him," Davies said.