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Film sheds light on addiction problem

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A crowd of local citizens, public officials, law enforcement, drug counselors, and teens met to watch the "Crystal Darkness" documentary film and discuss the negative impact of methamphetamine use in the city, county, and state at the Canadian Valley Technology Center Tuesday night.

What started off as a documentary film to address the escalating meth epidemic in Nevada, has now reached Chickasha and the entire state to help achieve some of the same positive results.

Throughout the 30-minute film audience members were seen turning their heads to the graphic and "tragic" photos displayed of the meth abusers and their living environments.

"It's shocking to see what people put themselves and others through," said one viewer as she left after the program was over with her two young children.

"Some people may be wondering why the mayor, the city, the chamber of commerce... are so passionate about this topic... we have a lot of poverty and other issues in Chickasha, and from a mayor's perspective I think it is important to address the causes of these problems. And meth is a big problem that ties into these issues," said Mayor Greg Elliott in a discussion after the program.

"And I want everyone to put Feb. 3 down on their calendars so that we can continue this discussion with a town hall style format and hopefully we can try to address this problem our community faces and do something about it," added Elliott.

Apart from the mayor speaking, the Chickasha Police Chief, the District Attorney, the District 6 Drug Task Force Director, and Judge Richard VanDyke also shared their connection to the prevention and enforcement against meth use and users.

"We see meth everyday. Good people, all walks of life, but once they get on meth... it is all gone," said District Attorney Bret Burns.

Burns commended Judge VanDyke for his valiant effort to combat this issue and his dedication to "drug court", a program that was created three years ago in the county to hold drug abusers accountable for their actions.

Burns introduced a former meth addict that shared a heartfelt story of her battle with the "darkness".

"I lost my right to be a mother, because of it, and... if I can reach one person out there to not make the same mistake I did, then maybe I can make a change," said Lisa as she went on to say how she decided to go back to school to become a dental assistant so that she could possibly help a former addict with "meth mouth". "Meth Mouth" is when a meth addict has used meth to the point where they have either lost all of their teeth or are on the verge of such.

Lisa received several ovations for the courage to share her story and a personal "thank you" from the mayor. It was evident after watching the documentary, the audience at the watch party agreed that something has got to change before America's youth is taken away.