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\$2.50 | SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

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SPECIAL REPORT / HEROIN'S HOLD ON US



Natasha Long snorts heroin. The 39-year-old and her boyfriend scour trash and work small jobs to get the money to get high. They don't have custody of their four children. DORAL CHENOWETH III/DISPATCH PHOTOS

Streets of death

Ohio at epicenter of US opiate crisis that's killing thousands every year

By JoAnne Viviano | The Columbus Dispatch

Adam Conkey held out the tip of his middle finger to reveal a tiny circle of black-tar heroin. ¶ He'd scoured trash bins, collecting cans for a couple of hours on a sweltering summer afternoon just to earn \$8 to buy this heroin — just shy of a “dime,” or \$10 worth. ¶ Conkey, 39, placed the piece, resembling a watermelon seed, on the bottom of a Natural Light beer can he'd stashed in some weeds next to a white garage in a Franklinton alley.

He cut the heroin in half with a pocket knife and added a few drops of bottled water to one piece, using his middle finger to dissolve the drug. He brought a short red straw up to his nose.

A long sniff. Then a shorter one. And the liquid was gone. Conkey was on his way to another high.

He reserved the other half of the heroin for his girlfriend, Natasha Long, who quickly snorted the drug.

Conkey and Long are among an estimated 435,000 Americans who regularly use heroin, nearly triple the number who



A six-part series

The Dispatch explores how heroin corrodes the community.

- **Today:** Heroin's chokehold
- Monday:** Children's crisis
- Tuesday:** Parents' pain
- Wednesday:** Policing's change
- Thursday:** One team's help
- Friday:** Moms' hard choice

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INSIDE: Coupons worth up to **\$121**

Coupon values vary by delivery zone.



80/61

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ONGOING COVERAGE

Outbreak at shelter raising questions

By Rick Rouan

The Columbus Dispatch

By now, the timeline for an infectious respiratory disease outbreak at the Franklin County Dog Shelter is clear.

The county waited nearly a week after its first distemper diagnosis before closing the shelter, letting dozens of dogs that should have been quarantined leave with new owners. Hundreds of dogs were exposed to the potentially deadly respiratory virus, and 84 have been euthanized so far.

SEE SHELTER, A14

PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

Ohio GOP voters uniting behind Trump

By Darrel Rowland and Alan Johnson

The Columbus Dispatch

Donald Trump's ascension to his biggest lead of the general election campaign in Ohio is fueled by a pair of surprising sources: newfound Republican Party unity and increased voter trust.

Buried in the data of recent polls showing Trump with as much as a 5-point lead in

SEE VOTERS, A10



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