

One step at a time

Junior battles birth defect

by sophomore Grace Jorgensen.

One out of every 750 children born worldwide suffer from clubfoot. Junior Emma Shaffer is one of them.



Emma was born with all the ligaments in her left foot shorter than normal. The doctors diagnosed her with clubfoot.

Clubfoot is medically defined as a deformity where the foot is twisted so that the sole cannot be placed flat on the ground.

A couple days after she was born, doctors tried to correct this deformity.

"They had to cut the ligament in the back of my foot six

or seven times," said Emma, "but that did nothing." The doctors then tried the Ponseti Method where they would try to correct her foot through casting.

This method, though claimed to be "100% effective" by doctors, failed, making Emma the first patient the Ponseti Method didn't work on.

The doctors said that Emma would never be a track star or even be able to walk.

By the time she was three years old, she had five major surgeries and over 50 casts.

She taught herself how to walk with casts on, but when she got them off for good, she had to re-teach herself how to walk since she only knew how to walk with casts on.

"I'm not going to lie, there's a lot of downsides (to my condition)," said Emma. For one, has to buy two different sizes of shoes because her feet are different sizes.

"We have to throw the other pair away, and it gets extremely expensive," says Emma. Luckily, the local Von Maur supports those with this condition. It is one of the only stores where she buys shoes because they offer her one pair for free.

Clubfoot affects her physically as well as financially. Emma has to wear a boot if her leg starts to hurt. "It's really embarrassing because it shows that something's wrong with me," says Emma.

Despite these challenges this junior

remains positive. Since physical activities are rather challenging for her, Emma takes up piano and guitar.

"There aren't a lot of them (upsides), but it's just something different about me," said Emma.

She also doesn't have to run the mile in PE. "I mean, that's a plus," jokes Emma.

About six months ago, Emma was told that she will most likely have to have even more surgeries for the first time since she was four.

In one of her many surgeries, the doctor made a mistake which left her with

nerve damage.

Now, every time something touches the top of her foot, there is immense pain. Emma said that the pain gets stronger every day, sometimes so bad

that she has to miss school.

There's a 50/50 chance it'll work, the other 50 being that she'll be numb from her left hip down for life.

"I was happy even though there were a lot of risks because hopefully this time they can make the pain stop," said Emma.

Emma refuses to let the fear of surgery, pain or anything about this condition stop her from living life to the fullest.

photos courtesy of Google and Schaffer Family.

"Just because there's something wrong with me, doesn't mean I need to stop living."

New Year Resolutions

by senior Alex Fouts.

85% of Hudson High students who took the No Distracted Driving Pledge have kept up with the pledge by no driving distracted.

The most common resolution among teachers is: **to be healthy**

"My New Year's Resolution is to play ping pong every day, to advance my skills to a whole other level, and to treat my cats like the kings they are."

- senior Jackson Twait

FurryFriends

by senior Alex Fouts.

High school special education teacher Erin Maves and her llamas Lakota and Carlisle



Why did you choose to have a llama?

Our kids became interested in llamas at the 4-H fair, so we decided to surprise them one day with building the barn and getting each of them a llama.

Senior Amber Dixon and her ferrets Vicious, Summer, Sandy and Sweets



Why did you choose to have a ferret?

My mom and I were at the pet store and got two. They were so fun and loving, we end up getting another one every time we go to the pet store. We now have six.

Senior Megan Ross and her sugar glider, Gizmo



Why did you choose to have a sugar glider?

My family decided to have a sugar glider because of the learning experience that comes along with it, due to sugar gliders living up to 18 years and require higher standards of caretaking than a hamster.

photo selfies courtesy of pet owners.