

Something more:

Freshman shares unique story of moving past her difference

Clare Kilmartin
features & managing
editor

When someone says your name, what do they think? We all hope others view us as nice, funny, athletic, creative, smart, compassionate and important. For freshman Maddie Fasnacht, she hopes others will view her as normal.

Fasnacht was born May 15, 2001 to a loving family; however, she was born without the lower half of her right arm.

"Growing up with one hand, is not as hard as you think it is," Fasnacht said. "The only difficulties I had were other people's perceptions of me."

While Fasnacht grew up, she always had others point out her arm.

"I've known Maddie since early elementary school, and one of the first things I remember is that we were on the playground and two boys came up and said that her arm was weird and that it made her completely different," freshman Ava Davis said. "I told them to go away, obviously, and I asked if she was okay and she was just like 'yeah, it's cool.' She never lets anything get to her, and that's what I love so much about her."

Not only does Fasnacht deal with constant attention, she also deals with others who see her as incapable of doing normal activities.

"I had adults and kids who thought I needed extra praise for something that was ordinary—for

something I didn't struggle to do," Fasnacht said. "That always made me really upset because other people thought I was struggling so much that I couldn't do ordinary things—that even picking up a chair was a huge feat."

While everyone has insecurities, Fasnacht's insecurities root from her difference.

"Around school, I'm pretty much known as 'the girl with one arm,' and that's my biggest insecurity," Fasnacht said. "It makes me wonder, does everyone else know me like that—is that all anyone ever thinks of me, that I'm

just the person with one arm?"

Although Fasnacht struggles with how others view her, it's the manner in which Fasnacht overcomes those thoughts and her positive

nature that inspires others.

"She has influenced a lot of who I am," freshman Emma Welsh said. "No matter what is happening, she always tries to put a humorous spin on things, or find the bright side. She is one of the best people I know, and I hope other people can see that as well [and], not just see 'that girl.'"

Despite the fact that Fasnacht is missing part of her arm, she is much more than a physical difference. When others were asked what they thought about Fasnacht, only positive characteristics were said.

As Fasnacht has just embarked on her high school career, she hopes others will simply view her as normal.

"The thing I want most in the world is to be treated the same," Fasnacht said. "Just treat everyone how you would treat yourself and don't ignore people because of their differences."