

# Chillicothe Gazette

athlete | basket case | brain | criminal | princess

chillicothe's own

BREAKFAST CLUB



Sarah Wright/Gazette

## Shy, outgoing—a little bit of both

Breakfast Club's 'basket case' has no problem figuring out who she really is

**By Jona Ison**

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Elizabeth Onderko, a Chillicothe High School junior, may leave some classmates shrugging their shoulders. Self-described as both shy and outgoing, she also can be a bit random. "Occasionally if, like, I don't know what to say to someone, I'll make a random sound or say something random to get the conversation started," Onderko said. Sometimes, depending on who she is around or what is being said, Onderko said she may come across as a little sarcastic.

"I am actually really nice ... Most people don't know that I'm nice when they first meet me because I'm either too quiet, or I automatically act mean depending on if I'm with certain people," she said.

Onderko is concerned about how others are treated, and is a member of the Gay-Straight Alliance at CHS.

“(GSA) brings awareness to the fact there aren’t just straight people at the school. It gives a place for gays to go and talk and stuff. Everything that is usually said there is confidential,” she said.

She also initiated doing a story in her Cavs News class on multiple handicap children. Onderko’s sensitivity to how others feel may come from growing up with three brothers who all have Fragile X Syndrome, an inherited mental impairment.

“It’s really hectic because all my brothers are handicapped, so I have to deal with that all the time, and I don’t always really get my way, and I have to be responsible for my brothers. So, I don’t really like it at times,” Onderko said. When she isn’t active after school with Cavs News, the flag corps or GSA, she is home with her brothers. Although trying, Onderko said her experiences with her brothers make her more mature.

“One of my teachers told me that I have a calming aura whenever everything is hectic at school because I’m so used to having to remain calm around my brothers,” she said.

Onderko said she is comfortable with being herself, but like many people, one of her fears is people not liking her for herself.

“She’s a very bright girl,” Onderko’s mother, Karen, said. “She doesn’t push herself to her potential a lot of times, but overall, she’s a really good girl.”

Onderko isn’t sure where she would like her potential to take her, but she hopes somewhere outside of Chillicothe. She may pursue a career in broadcasting, since she really enjoys how she can work alone but also as a team in that field. However, Onderko also is interested in psychology because she would like to know what people are thinking.