

SAVED BY AN ICEE

Westlake junior goes through traumatic scoliosis surgery

By Madeline Morris

Junior Mary Travis lay in her hospital bed six days after back surgery, almost starving to death.

“Mom, I think I’m dying,” Travis said. “I just want to die.”

Travis never thought her scoliosis would lead her there, leaving the hospital on her 16th birthday after an excruciating experience.

In August, Travis went through a six-hour back surgery to fix her scoliosis. She had a bad reaction to the painkillers and couldn’t eat for seven days. As the pounds dropped on the scale, the doctors were afraid she would die of starvation.

“I was miserable,” Travis said. “I survived off of the three IVs that I had and nothing else but the occasional sip of water. I could tell you that I remember the pain I was in, but that would be a lie. It was so overwhelming that I have forgotten most of the traumatic event.”

But Travis still remembers the day she got to leave the hospital on Aug. 6, her 16th birthday.

“It was surreal — the best birthday present I could imagine,” Travis said. “I burst into tears when Dr. John Williams gave me permission to go home. That’s all I wanted — out of the hospital that had become a prison to me and back to the comfort of my own room.”

But the pain still lingered with her. She described the previous six days as absolute torture.

“I wasn’t supposed to endure a major surgery without painkillers,” Travis said. “Scoliosis surgery is one of the most painful surgeries out there. Getting two rods and 19 screws drilled into your spine isn’t easy, but that was my reality.”

Travis went into the surgery thinking she would be a model patient.

“I had a bad reaction to everything — the hospital, the pills, the smells. You name it — it was making me sick. I was taken off of the painkillers in

two days. I was on sensory overload; I couldn’t take it anymore,” Travis said. “But the thing was, I was so miserable, I couldn’t find anything to distract me from my pain. I didn’t watch TV or a single movie. Looking back, I don’t know what I did for six days. I must have just laid there.”

The medicines weren’t what finally helped her. Instead, it was a small \$1.50 Coke-flavored Icee.

“I hadn’t eaten in days. The doctors predicted I would be back in the hospital soon, still unable to eat. I was beginning to believe them,” Travis said. “At least until I took one sip of the sickly sweet sugar water, also known as a Coke-flavored Icee. I was addicted. My dad couldn’t get them as fast as I was drinking them. That Icee saved my life.”

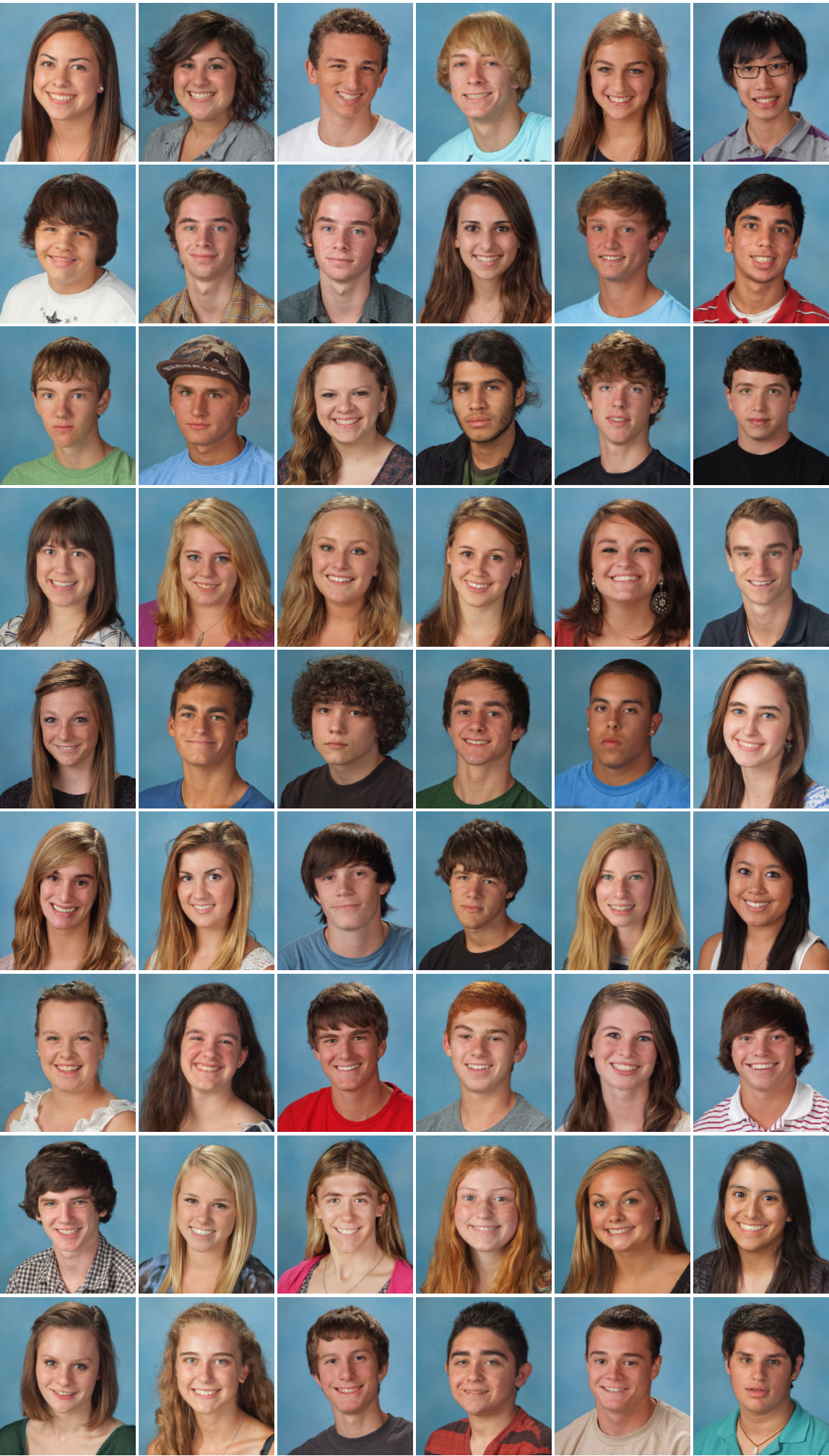
Just one month later, Travis walked through the hall, an inch taller and marked with a 13-inch scar running down her back.

“Miraculously, I was able to return to school only three weeks after my surgery, still a little shaky, but more confident than ever,” Travis said. “That scar reminds me of my bravery and uniqueness; it tells my story.”



Travis’ x-rays after and before surgery

- Hayley Mathis
Ashley May
Eric Maynard
Gavin McAdam
Cally McCrea
Drew McCurley
- Brendan McGrath
Megan McGrath
Maddie McLaughlin
Lauren McLeod
Thomas McNair
Carley McNicholas
- Matthew McWitz
Max McWitz
Molly McWitz
Catherine Mear
Keyur Mehta
Kristen Mele
- Macey Meraz
Mitchell Merka
Christine Meyer
Hannah Meyer
Caroline Miller
Justin Miller



- Chloe Mills
Jazmine Mireles
Thomas Misikoff
Conner Mitchell
Sofia Mitre
Michael Miyagi
- Abraham Monroe
Colton Monts
Sky Monts
Sophie Moody
Matt Moore
Adil Moosani
- Adam Moreau
Sam Morgan
Madeline Morris
Troy Morris
William Morse
Sam Morton
- Abby Mosing
Julie Moskow
Adrian Moss
Meagan Moulton
Chandler Mrlik
Chris Murch
- Hayden Murphy
Jake Murphy
Matthew Murphy
Mack Murray
Connor Naddef
Zoe Nathan
- Rachel Nauert
Sarah Nehring
Wesley Nesbit
Scott Newman
Nicolette Newton
Tiffany Nguyen
- Katherine Nichols
Sarah Nichols
Wes Nicol
Clayton Niess
Renee Nolan
Stratton Nolen
- William Norman
Christine Northington
Ally Noster
Cece Oestrick
Taylor O’Neal
Gabriela Ortiz
- Anne Ortman
Cali Osborne
Jeffrey Ott
Jeremy Owens
Russell Paape
Federico Padilla Garza Falcon