

"I am in my 40's and wear shoes of two size groups (13 1/2D child's shoe, 6 1/2B or 7B woman's shoe). I am searching for shoe companies which make the same style/color in these two size groups or for recommendations regarding companies or individuals who make custom shoes which would accommodate various orthopedic modifications. I would also like to know whether others have had success in receiving authorization or payment from insurance companies for custom shoes."

E. M. Kief, New Mexico

Please send your comments and suggestions to International Polio Network.

Pedorthics (ped-or'-thiks) is the design, manufacture, modification and fit of shoes and foot orthoses to alleviate foot problems caused by disease, overuse, or injury. A certified pedorthist (C.Ped.) is a professional whose competence has been tested and established by the Board for Certification in Pedorthics, the independent agency that sets the nation's pedorthic standards.

To find a board certified pedorthist (C.Ped.) in your area, write or call Prescription Footwear Association, 9861 Broken Land Parkway, Suite 255, Columbia, Maryland 21046-1151 (410/381-7278, 800/673-8447, 410/381-1167 FAX).

This was the "billionth" pair of brown saddle oxfords that Lynda, my wife, purchased. Why would she wear those particular shoes every day of her life to the exclusion of all others? She went to church in brown oxfords that went nicely with her pants suit. She went on picnics in jeans and a sweatshirt and brown saddle oxfords. We went hiking through the woods — me in my sneakers and Lynda in her brown saddle oxfords. At our wedding she wore ...

Lynda's shoe selection is limited because the right foot requires a child's shoe with a three-inch lift and the left foot requires a woman's shoe. The left and right shoe really should match.

Since I do not need a lift and can wear whatever shoe I want, I regret to say I was a little slow to see things from her point of view. I found her attitude toward the orthopedic profession unusual. She was surly at times and was always skeptical. I now understand.

I now understand what it would feel like to be a maturing young person, interested in the opposite sex, attending a party where all of the girls are taking the risk of wearing high heeled shoes in public for the first time. I think I understand how it would feel to arrive at the party with shoes, selected by someone else, with all the stability, charm, and style of a concrete block.

It seems that the people who could help Lynda the most wanted to control her choices and remove all risk from her life. We all face risk every day and each must make individual and well-considered choices. Choosing what is and is not an acceptable risk should involve the advice of qualified professionals, but the final decision should be our own.

After some professionals hesitated (even refused) to make a lift for hiking shoes because "you do not want to do that, hiking can be dangerous," I was in complete sympathy. I was determined to help her wear whatever shoes she wanted and to encourage her to do all that she could do. I bought and experimented with solvents and glues; bought tools and made up processes. It took a while but I perfected a process that works on any shoe except one with a gum sole. I have been making the lifts for Lynda's shoe for more than ten years now. At our son's June wedding she wore a pair of white sandals with her color coordinated mother-of-the-groom dress. I was by her side all the time. She probably would have been safer in brown saddle oxfords, but she looked and felt beautiful.

If you need a lift on a shoe and your regular source will not or can not do the work, I may be able to help you. To make preliminary inquiry, send a description of your shoe and lift to David Scaggs, 902 Shadow Creek Drive, Stockton, California, 95209 (209/477-6880). Please be sure to include you telephone number.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Any business transactions resulting from this article are the responsibility of those involved, not I.P.N.

RESOURCES:

National Odd Shoe Exchange
7102 North 35th Avenue, Suite 2
Phoenix, Arizona 85051
(602/841-6691; 602/841-3349 FAX)

Non-profit that assists amputees and people with different size feet.

One Shoe Crew
86 Clavela Avenue
Sacramento, California 95828
(916/364-7463)

For a fee, the service registers individuals who want to find a shoe partner.

Tru-Mold Shoes, Inc.
49 LaSalle Avenue
Buffalo, New York 14214
(800/843-6653; 716/837-3867FAX)

Will manufacturer shoes from casts.

ACOR® Orthopaedic, Inc.
18530 South Miles Parkway
Cleveland, OH 44128-4238
(800/237-2267)

Will manufacture shoes from casts, etc.

Hitchcock Shoes, Inc.
225 Beal Street
Hingham, Massachusetts 02043
(617/749-3571; 617/749-3576FAX)

Specializes in extra wide shoes;
free catalog.

Tru-Fit
500 Fifth Avenue
Pelham, NY 10803
(800/348-7662)

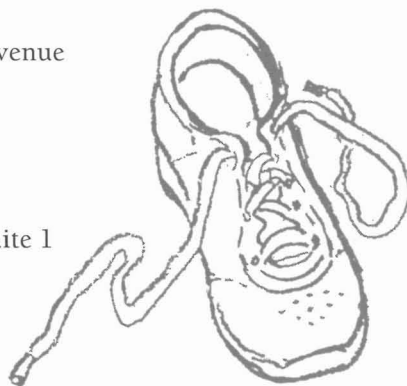
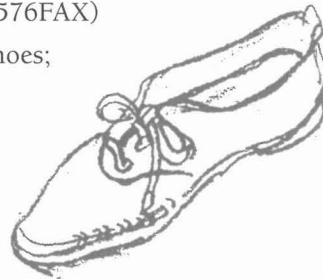
Call for a free catalog.

The following were recommended by polio survivors. Please send your recommendations to be listed in the next issue of the Polio Network News.

Vince's Shoe Service
Vincent Sgro
182 East Tallmadge Avenue
Akron, Ohio 44310
(216/762-4331)

and

Ernesto Castro
835 East Southern, Suite 1
Mesa, AZ 85204
(602/926-4130)



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We continue to receive a considerable amount of mail addressed to our *old* address. If we are on your mailing list, please check our address:

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