

THE INCONVENIENCES OF WEARING *Braces*

Smile if you dare, but be prepared for public ridicule. Anyone who wore braces knew the humiliation of being called "Brace Face," "Metal Mouth," "Railroad Tracks," "Chainsaw Jaw," or any number of other nicknames.

As if public ridicule and \$3,800 were not enough of a price to pay for a pleasing smile, the cost also took the form of pain and sacrifices. Braces wearers often experienced soreness after adjustments and even more so when they got a new arch wire.

One sacrifice wearers had to make was foregoing gum chewing, munching on crunchy or chewy foods and drinking carbonated drinks. Although it was for the wearer's own good as far as cavities were concerned, how could a teenager go without "junk food" for two years?

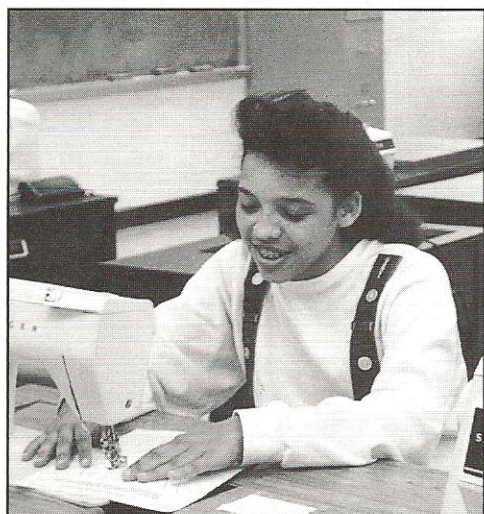
Of course, any clever teenager was not going to let wearing braces get in their way. In fact, most

wearers of braces found that wearing the orthodontic elastics, or rubber bands, could be advantageous. The rubber bands made convenient weapons against the people who made jokes about the braces. One sharp pop of a rubber band usually ended all of the jokes!

Wearing braces did have a few benefits. During the time a student wore braces, it was quite coincidental that many appointments were scheduled on days of major tests or during the student's least favorite classes. Few appointments were ever made on days of pep rallies or dances.

While some students went to Walterboro for care, others went to Charleston. Freshman Stephanie Mixson stated, "Going to Charleston to the orthodontist was wonderful because it kept me out of school longer, and I got a doctor's excuse for my absence."

— Lisa McCall



Freshman Melanie Rivers practices sewing techniques in Home Economics class. She was one of the many students who wore braces.

Freshman Gordon Ackerman proudly shows off his braces as he crafts a piece of wood in shop class. He was a member of the Band of Blue.

