

the city

Extra family closes generation gap

By MERIL EDWARDS

Battalion Staff
Elmer Blaine walked in the den, took off his cowboy hat, dropped on the couch and propped his boots up on the coffee table.
"So, you want to know what it's like to live in a household like ours," said. "Let me tell you, we've had to make adjustments since mother

Marie Loveless, 65, lived with her daughter's family in Bryan from May to September.

Her daughter, Carole Ramsey, said her mother was depressed to the point of being non-functional. "She didn't feel like cooking, eating or doing anything," Ramsey said. "She stayed in bed constantly. I brought her here as a last resort."
Ramsey said her mother was as dependent as a toddler. "She depended on me emotionally 100 percent," she said. "Whatever I did, she was right in the middle of it, never two feet away."

Ramsey said her husband and two teen-agers were supportive and helpful. "But they resented mom's total consumption of my time."

"I tried to go to bed early because my ears had had it by the end of the day," Ramsey said. "Mother would ask me questions all day long like a small child."

Ramsey said she tried not to get emotionally involved and rarely cried. "I had to be stable, I had to be strong," she said.
Loveless is back in her home now and functioning on her own.

Ramsey said her mother would live with her again if necessary. "If

sharing a home an economical advantage.

Lenora Finche, 62, and her daughter, Nedra Sneed, recently decided to buy a house together instead of running back and forth between each other's apartments.

Finche and Sneed share finances. "We don't keep tabs," Finche said.

"It's nice to have a third parent to come home to," he said. "She tells me what it was like in the past and shows me her antiques. Then I play my rock and roll for her. It's kind of like a cultural exchange."

"Our money goes into a household fund. It all works out equitably, so it's no big deal."

Communication in this house is free and open. Nobody hesitates to say what they think. Usually everyone talks at once including Sneed's son Tim, 15.

"Mom and grandma are an example to me," Tim said. "I tend to set them up on a pedestal. It's good to see their different viewpoints, moral codes and ethics."

Finche said they respect each other's privacies. "I do what I want, so do Nedra and Tim," she said. "I think it's important to be compatible. Also, we're not dependent on each other emotionally."

Sneed says a sense of humor and a lot of love are essential elements for a three-generation family to work.

"We are renewing ties that have always been there," Sneed said. "We're getting the chance to be together again."

Families beginning two- or three-generation households or ones with problems can benefit from advice given by those in harmonious situations.

Mind your own business and try not to interfere in family discussions by jumping in with your own opinion is Florice Weaver's advice to making a three-generation family work.

Weaver, 80, lives with her daughter, son-in-law and two grandsons in Bryan.

"It's more of an advantage than a disadvantage to have mother here," Shirley Yates said. "If we go on a trip, mother is here to cook for the boys and look after the house."

Yates said there have been adjustments on both ends and a certain lack of privacy but it's not too bad.

"We've all seemed to get along so well," Weaver said. "The boys are wonderful to me. They're always willing to do anything I ask."

Jim, 15, said he enjoys having his grandma live with them. "Since grandma's here, it's easier when mom and I get in a fight because it gives me someone else to talk to."

"It's nice to have a third parent to come home to," he said. "She tells me what it was like in the past and

shows me her antiques. Then I play my rock and roll for her. It's kind of like a cultural exchange."

These families show a lot of love for each other, they sacrifice and compromise and put others first and give, give and give some more. But, like Mrs. Blaine said, it's very rewarding in the end.

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mom became totally disoriented or physically and mentally unable to cope then I would put her in a home for the aged, but otherwise I'd rather have her here," she said.

From this experience Ramsey said she learned to trust God more. "I'm asking God to make me adaptable," she said. "Also, it made me realize it's necessary to prepare for old age."

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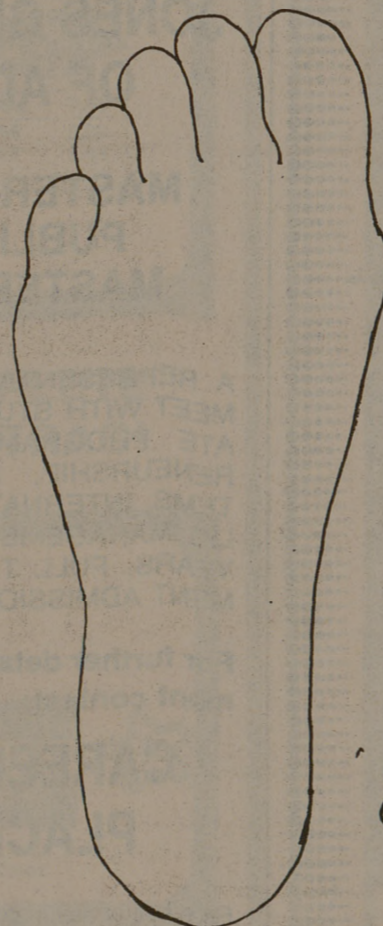
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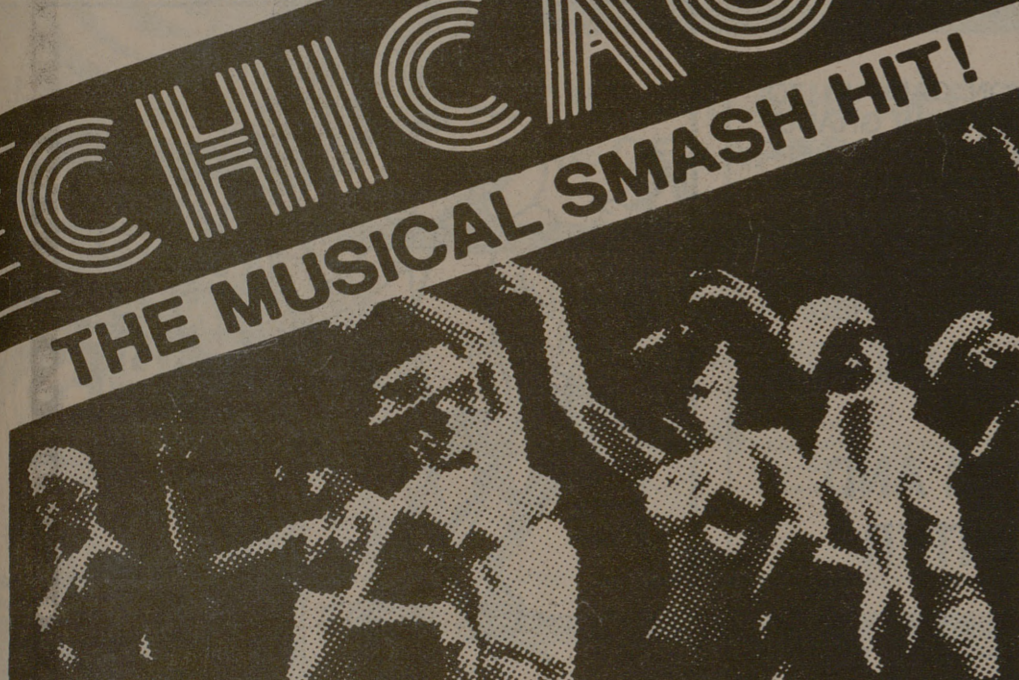
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