

Won't be there for you

Students speak out about failed friendships, what constitutes a true friendship

BY JEFF WOLFSHOHL
The Battalion

A good friend is a friend until the end, or so the saying goes. But when friendship takes a turn for the worse, people end up getting burned. Kristen Pickar, a sophomore environmental design major, said she first experienced the loss of a friend during her freshman year of college. "I met a girl at Fish Camp," Pickar said. "She was a good friend then, but things changed when school started. She said she'd come to a party that I invited her to, but she didn't show up. I guess she had other priorities."

Pickar said she was close friends with the girl in high school who became more concerned with being liked by everyone than staying true to her friends.

"She was strong in morals, but when she talked with someone and they said something that was against her morals, she told them she agreed with them," Pickar said. "She would mold herself into her surroundings."

Pickar said she was not the only one to recognize the hypocritical nature of her friend.

"A large group of friends thought the same [about her], but they had come to ac-

cept that that is how she was," Pickar said. "And I accepted it, too, but I couldn't hang out with her because it would drive me crazy."

C'ella Clayton, a senior agricultural economics major, said a person's freshman year is all about finding oneself, so friendships forged during one's first year at A&M are likely to change when those involved change their outlooks on life.

"The friends at that time also haven't found themselves, and because of that the friendships fall apart and won't last," Clayton said.

Clayton said her own experiences with not-so-friendly friends validate her theory.

"I had a group of friends my freshman year that hung out together, but everyone ended up going their separate ways," Clayton said. "One wanted to join a sorority, and one wanted to party all the time, so everyone found another group of their own friends."

Clayton said an effort was made to keep the original group together.

"They [the group] tried [to stay together], but it didn't work out because everyone had to do their own thing," Clayton said.

She said there is always a feeling of sadness when one loses a good friend.

"I didn't think it would happen at first," Clayton said. "I always thought these were the friends I would have the rest of my life."

Ryan Nixon, a sophomore petroleum engineering major, said membership in an elite organization can drive friends apart.

"He [friend] joined the Parson's Mounted Cavalry, then seemed like he was too good for me and some of my friends," Nixon said. "He was trying to kiss up to the upperclassmen in the Cavalry."

Nixon said he and his friends have not hung out with his estranged acquaintance this year.

"He is not someone who will do anything for you, which is what a friend should do," he said.

Nixon said because he and his former friend are in the same Corps of Cadets outfit, the two still see each other.

"When he is around he does act like it's all cool," he said. "He always tries to be the guy to hang

around with, [and] I'll just agree with him so he will just go his own way."

Nixon said the situation helped him understand the true nature of friendship.

"On his part it seemed superficial, like there was no relationship [in the first place]," Nixon said.

There are also friendships that break up because of underhanded significant others.

Shelley Pryor, a sophomore education major, said one of her acquaintances had a falling out with a friend due to boyfriend issues.

"It was over a guy," Pryor said. "Her friend had slept with her boyfriend."

Pryor said the boyfriend ended up leaving, which left behind a scar in the women's friendship.

"A guy should not come between a friendship," Pryor said. "Guys come and go, but friends will always be there."

Pryor said jealousy is a common cause of destroyed friendships, but there are some things stronger than jealousy.

"If the friendship is strong enough you should want to repair it, because friendship is one of the most important things to have," Pryor said. "A true friend should always be there for you no matter what."

Gina Niehues, a senior genetics major, said friendship problems are often trivial.

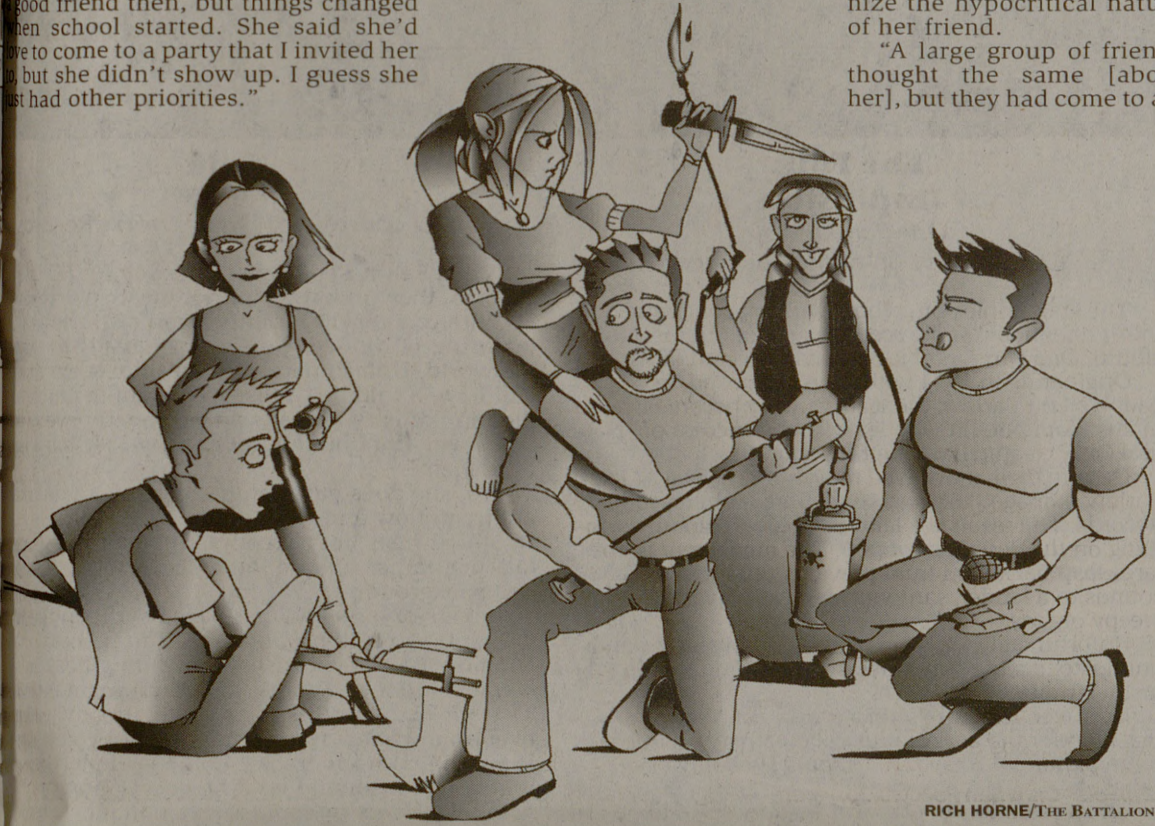
"I call that soap-opera stuff — like holding a grudge, or getting overly upset about something small and just dramatizing things," she said.

Niehues said friends might not be able to understand each other's perspectives.

"They [friends] will take things personally, and they don't realize that the other person didn't mean to be rude or insulting," she said. "Instead of talking it out, some friends just flip out."

Niehues said it is better to look on the bright side of things to keep the friends one has, than constantly replacing them.

"If there's a problem, I always look on the better side, as if there's not such a problem," she said. "I would [hope] that everyone tries to smooth over rough spots in friendships, because otherwise you will have a trail of failed relationships behind you."



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