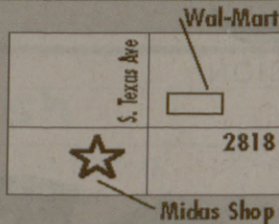


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THE BATTALION

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DEADLINES: 4:30 p.m. **Tuesday, Nov. 27**, for editor positions, and 4:30 p.m. **Monday, Dec. 3**, for staff positions. Turn applications in at 014 (basement) Reed McDonald Building. Interviews will begin immediately after application deadlines. If you have questions, contact Mariano Castillo at 845-3313.

Extra applications available in the newsroom or online at <http://www.thebatt.com>

AggieLife

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THE BATTALION

Wednesday, November 21, 2001

I'll be home for Christmas ...

Students encounter changes in relationships when heading back to their roots

By MARIANNE HUDSON
THE BATTALION

While away at college, some students feel that the distance from their family and hometown friends makes their hearts grow fonder. However, others view them as out-of-sight and out-of-mind.

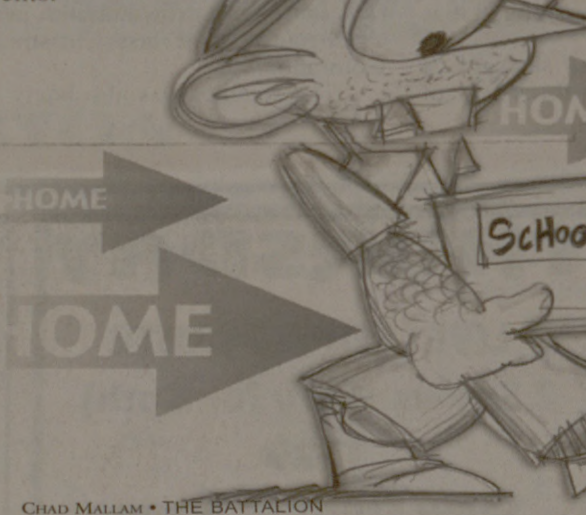
Despite perceptions, Christmas break situates students in their familiar hometown settings. Most students experience many changes during the semester. These changes indirectly affect old relationships with family and friends; therefore, the transition of returning home requires much patience and understanding.

During the initial week of the break, parents often become obstacles to enjoying night life excitement. Even when their children are grown, parents continue to feel the need to protect them from the dangers of the world. Curfews and embarrassing late-night phone calls to inquire their child's whereabouts often are methods of reassuring safety. It sometimes is difficult for parents to realize that their children make their own judgments while in college.

Holly Kious, a junior marketing major, said her parents had a hard time adjusting to their daughter's newfound freedom.

"My parents had a hard time realizing that I was in college and did not have anyone to answer to when I was away," Kious said. "When I came home, they tried to reinforce my old high school curfew."

Students must understand that most of the time their parents take these actions because they care about them. Instead of employing the rebellious high school attitude, students should prove their maturity calmly assessing the situation with their parents.



CHAD MALLAM • THE BATTALION

Brian Park, a junior history major, said students should sit down with their parents to explain their plans for the night before they leave the house.

"It's better to let your parents know where you are going and around what time you expect to be home," Park said. "When you get home, they will see you are responsible and learn to trust you to make your own decisions."

Many students find they become closer to their parents during college. Jen Vickery, a sophomore general studies major, said her relationship with her parents has changed since she became a college student.

"My relationship with my parents has changed because they no longer dictate my life," Vickery said. "We now have a respect for each other."

Relationships with siblings also undergo changes. Time away from one another often allows siblings to appreciate each other's company. Petty fights become viewed as a waste of time. Kious said that she and her younger brother along better once she left the house.

"My parents were able to spend a lot of time with him so we no longer competed for attention," Kious said.

Most drastic are the conversions that occur with hometown friendships. In this situation, parties have lived in different places and have new friends and new views. Kious said it was hard to talk to her friends at first because they no longer had the same mutual friends. However, through time they realized that their college experiences were the same.

Students should be patient when listening to friends tell stories that may seem irrelevant to their lives. In actuality, these stories give friends a better understanding of each other and will allow the friendships to mature and progress. Modern technology has also helped distant friends stay more in touch.

"I talk to most of my hometown friends about once a week through email or instant messenger," Kious said. "This enables me to be updated on what is new in their life, so I am able to stay close to them even when I am away from home."

Yet no matter how students choose to stay in touch, Park said maintaining relationships requires effort when returning home.

"You should take advantage of the time by spending time at home and reacquainting yourself with what a precious gift family and friends are," Park said. "Before you know it, you'll be out of college and you won't get to see them as much."

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