

## Ghost of Christmas presents

Some gifts would be better if the receipt was included in the packaging

By Lyndsey Sage  
THE BATTALION

One can only wonder what presents lay in the wrapped-and-ribboned boxes piled high under the Christmas tree. For children and students alike, waiting until Christmas morning to find out what Santa brought can be overwhelming. However, as many students discover Christmas morning, some of those presents are best left unopened. As students reflect on the Christmas gifts they have received over the years, there are always one or two presents that come to mind they hope never to find packaged and labeled, with their name under the tree again.

Erika Pasquel, a junior engineering major, said the worst Christmas present she ever received was a troll doll from her brother when she was 12 years old. "It was ugly and it had pink hair," she said. But it's the thought that counts, right?

"My brother told me he got it for me because it reminded him of me," Pasquel said.

Even though many people encounter the embarrassing gift of underwear, Jeff Noland, a junior speech communications major, said his experience with underwear ranks among the worst Christmas gifts he has ever gotten.

"I was eight years old and my aunt bought me my Christmas present at a garage sale," he said. "That's not the worst part though. It was glow-in-the-dark, My Little Pony underwear."

As though that was not traumatic enough, Noland said the situation got even worse. "My mom and my grandmother made me actually wear the underwear because they didn't want to disappoint my aunt and hurt her feelings," Noland said.

Caitlin Melia, a sophomore general studies major, said the worst present she has ever

received she got from her brother last year. She said her brother usually gives gag gifts to family members, but she was not prepared for what she saw when she opened the box.

"He flooded me with all kinds of t.u. stuff," she said.

Included in the present was an assortment of University of Texas paraphernalia such as a UT T-shirt and a stuffed Bevo.

"He's older than I am and he's always picked on me, so he knew it would upset me because I don't go there," Melia said.

As much of a disappointment these presents may be, most students wake up Christmas

morning to discover the good presents usually outweigh the bad. In fact, as Melia found, some of the best Christmas presents are those that aren't even on any Christmas list.

The best Christmas present Melia said she has ever gotten was a scrapbook from her best friend.

"She gave it to me our senior year in high school and it had pictures of us mostly throughout high school," she said.

According to Melia, the thought behind the gift was what made it so special.

"She wrote a note at the beginning of it, which was very meaningful," Melia said. "It was such a good gift because it was thoughtful and it is something I can keep and I will always remember."

For Alicia Benson, a sophomore biology major, a car was the best Christmas present she has ever gotten.

"I got a little red car when I was five. It was the plastic, Little Tykes kind with a hole in the bottom," she said. "I liked the car so much that I would walk into the living room where the Christmas tree was, pick up a present and then go get back in the car to open the present."

Benson said all of the years worth of play she got from the car made it one of the most enjoy-

able Christmas presents she has ever received.

"Later we even got a gas station for it," she said. "You would drive the car across this strip and a bell would ring. There was a gas pump, and you could really put it in the gas tank."

Even though that present was memorable, it could not compare to what was to

come. Eleven years later, during her junior year in high school, Benson received a real car for Christmas.

"It was on Christmas Eve and my parents took the car up to church and hid it," Benson said. "Then, after the service, they gave me a box with the keys in it. They had even put a big red bow on top."



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