

LIFE AND ART

COLUMN

Growing up with Travolta



By Laurel Wissinger
 ■ The Breeze
 James Madison U.

I was in fourth grade in 1978. I wore pigtails and striped knee socks, and my favorite possession was a vinyl Holly Hobby lunchbox. "Going out" meant riding my banana-seat bike up and down the street.

It was the year that I, like the entire nine-year-old and above population of North America, fell in love with John Travolta.

Suddenly, suburban shopping malls were sponsoring Travolta look-alike contests, retailers had a hard time keeping white polyester suits in stock, and everywhere you went someone was humming a Bee Gees tune.

"Saturday Night Fever" was the first R-rated movie I saw.

My friends and I bought tickets for the Disney cartoon showing at the same complex and then walked into the theater where Tony and Stephanie made cinematic history.

Never mind that some of the movie's subtle messages went right over my pre-pubescent head — I was hooked.

My friends and I spent three weeks memorizing the soundtrack — and then we sang it in exaggerated falsettos everywhere we went. One of my friends had to stay after school because she carved "Barry Gibb" on her desk.

"Saturday Night Fever," with its glamorization of casual sex, recreational drug use and the sometimes seedy side of life, spawned an era.

And it was over by the time I turned 11. Polyester became a dirty word, John Travolta plummeted from the rank of hunk to wind up somewhere around cheesy, and sexually transmitted diseases killed promiscuity.

We all joke about the whole "Saturday Night Fever" era now, but a quick survey of my friends reveals practically all of them owned the album.

And when the university showed the movie here last semester, hundreds of students showed up to pay homage to — or laugh at — a part of our life we all remember.

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 Yes member and soloist Trevor Rabin talks about his homeland South Africa.
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Language isolates international students

By Cindy Stevenson
 ■ College Heights Herald
 Western Kentucky U.

Tamie Nishihara confessed that she couldn't stop crying when she realized she was trapped at Western Kentucky U.

"I was crying morning to night, 24 hours a day," the exchange student from Japan said. "Especially the first week. I was very sad because I was so homesick and I didn't try to understand people."

"Most students are nice to me," she said, but to make friends, the ability to speak fluent English and carry on conversations is essential. "I didn't expect to have a good close American friend."

But after her first week here she met a student who grew to be a terrific friend — although Nishihara said she thinks it's a "really rare case."

Close friendships between international students and Americans really are the exception here, said Ronald Eckard, interim international student adviser.

"The rule is international students have difficulty meeting with and opening up with Americans," he said. "It's not all the Americans' fault. It's a combination of all those cultural things" — especially language.

"International students look for the same goals — friendship, understanding, communication," said Kristine Bernhard, a sophomore from Guatemala. "We're not only homesick, we're country sick."

"We can understand the English," she said, "but sometimes it's hard with Americans when they lock their ears" and don't try to understand international students.

"It's easier to make friends with other internationals because they're all going



MIKE TEEGARDEN, COLLEGE HEIGHTS HERALD, WESTERN KENTUCKY U.

Tamie Nishihara has made a close American friend, something most foreign students don't do.

through the same adjustment problems," Eckard said.

Joan Lindsey, international programs and projects administrative secretary, agreed. "They're in the same boat in the sense that they come from another country," she said.

"Lots of students say there's no way they can translate what they're thinking. I think it all gears to the language more than anything."

However, "there have been exceptions," Eckard said. "It depends on the individual."

Nishihara and Michelle Ward are one exception. They said they notice their differences but have enjoyed learning from them — at school and in Ward's hometown most weekends.

"I'm learning American culture — especially the English," Nishihara said laughing. "She's always correct-

ing my English."

Ward said, "I learn so much about Japan. How they express their feelings within the family. And we talk about the boyfriend-girlfriend situation."

"Me and Michelle is really close friends," Nishihara said. "I always say everything to her and she always says everything to me."

Nishihara and her roommate Stephanie Guyer have had fun getting to know each other, too. "I had to get used to her accent," the Henderson junior said. "Sometimes she might say a word with an accent different than we do. So I'd say, 'Write it down.' Now, it's no problem hardly ever. We've stayed up many nights talking."

Guyer said she plans to travel to Japan this summer, to visit her friend and learn a new way of life.

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Preacher prays for flock — and good grades

By Sharon Monson
 ■ The Daily Helmsman
 Memphis State U.

The new pastor of St. Paul's Baptist Church pushed the floor waxer along a church corridor. One of the church members turned and said with a chuckle, "You wouldn't think that was our pastor, now would you?"

And he's right, especially considering the Rev. Rickey Harvey is only 25-years-old and is a full-time student at Memphis State U.

"Times have changed," Harvey said. "Used to be a time when 25-year-old ministers couldn't get a church. You had to be 45 with a big stomach and all that."

Harvey said he felt his calling to the ministry at age 12, and he has been a pastor since he was 22. "It was my personal goal to wait until I was 30 to become a pastor, but the Lord would have it that I'm a successful pastor at 25," Harvey said.

Harvey said he feels proud to be pastoring St. Paul's because large, historical churches usually reach out to pastors from other parts of the country.

Harvey was elected pastor of the



MIKE MURRAY, THE DAILY HELMSMAN, MEMPHIS STATE U.

The Rev. Rickey Harvey balances his church duties with school.

church last fall and has found that being a student, gospel singer, pastor and father has been difficult. "I go to school, I leave school, I come flying here to church," he said. "Many times in my

office I'm doing schoolwork, and at school I'm reading my Bible. Being a pastor, a student at MSU and a gospel singer has taken a lot of time away from my family, but it will get better."

However, Harvey, a junior psychology and sociology major, does derive some rest and relaxation — on Saturdays, not Sundays — from his office television set. "I look forward to sitting here on Saturday and watching the wrestling match. I guess it's my hobby."

One of the most rewarding things about being a pastor is ministering to people he knows, Harvey said. "It's amazing. I'm pastoring my sixth-grade teacher," he said. "I'm pastoring people I knew when I was a little child."

"This is my calling. It's all I want to do. I like the fact that I'm helping people."

Charles Simms, a church member, said, "Harvey is much older than his age. He's not your typical 25- or 26-year-old. Even though he has a baby face, God has given him wisdom beyond his years. He's a good God-fearing pastor."

"One advantage of his age is that he attracts young people, and young people are the future of our church. But he also relates really well to the older people."