

Gardner

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Their main consolation was that they could flee to a nearby American Army base if trouble erupted. Fortunately, none did.

After training, Nicole was assigned to Kwangzu, located in the southern part of the country and home to a million residents.

Kwangzu was the scene of a large civilian massacre by military dictator Chun Do Hwan in 1980, Nicole said.

"The people, led by college students, had held a nonviolent protest against Chun Do Hwan and refused to go to work," she said. "His forces killed several thousand citizens. Since the military forces were under the jurisdiction of the Americans, the people had thought the Americans would help them, which didn't happen. The massacre sparked a great deal of anti-American sentiment in Kwangzu - the people couldn't believe that the Americans didn't come in and save them from Chun Do Hwan's men."

A great deal of Nicole's job in South Korea is being a good-will ambassador. She is one of two Fulbright teachers and one of only 30 Americans in the entire city.

The food required a period of adjustment, she said.

"They eat basically the same things for breakfast, lunch and dinner - lots of squid and fish and heavy on the hot peppers," she said. Learning the language and a complicated etiquette have posed challenges which Nicole has gleefully set out to overcome.

"The language is hard for Americans, with many subtle sounds and intonations," she said. "I speak a bit and understand much more."

The language has six different modes of address, used when speaking with inferiors, equals, superiors and elders, she said.

Age is venerated - even the Prime Minister uses the most respectful form of address when speaking to older people.

Because so many customs are different from ours, Nicole said she sometimes feels like she's on another planet.

Many women marry young and stay home to raise their children, similar to America in the 1950's, she said.

"It must be difficult for the men whom I work with, because they don't know where I fit in on the social scale," she said. "I think I'm near the bottom because of my age (22) and gender. My school has only three female teachers, none of whom speak any English, so I'm assigned to the main office with the men instead of to the women teachers' office."

The entire country treats her like a guest, Nicole said. The people feel it's their personal responsibility to make sure that her stay in South Korea is pleasant and educational.

In return, she has tried to learn as much of the language, etiquette and customs as possible.

"When in doubt, I always address and treat people as superiors," she said. "I explain that I don't know much and always ask to be corrected if I make a mistake and unintentionally do something

which they might consider rude." For example, people bow when they meet others. Nicole makes sure she bows very deeply, as one does to one's superiors, and speaks very formally whenever possible.

"There are rules for literally every situation," she said. "Since many Americans don't follow them

People aren't allowed to have guns here."

The schools are quite different from Nicole's days at Lake-Lehman.

"My students couldn't believe that we have a short school day," she said. "They're in school six days a week from 8 a.m. until at least 10 p.m. The more academi-

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Nicole Gardner

too carefully, the Koreans I have dealt with are very kind, forgiving and impressed that I want to learn to do things properly."

Although most Koreans study English for several years in school, they often aren't confident about their ability to converse with a foreigner, Nicole noticed.

"They're curious about me, but often worry so much about making a mistake that they're a bit intimidated speaking to me," she said. "I occasionally overhear them arguing among themselves who speaks the best English and should talk to me."

In some smaller towns which Nicole has visited, entire busloads of curious school children will hang out the windows, calling, "Hello! How are you? I'm fine!" to her.

If she asks someone for directions, invariably five or six people will cluster around to help out.

"My school has only 3 female teachers, none of whom speak any English."

Nicole Gardner

Teaching in South Korea

They're curious about her and sincerely want to make a good impression, she said.

Nicole is most interested by her hosts' strong community spirit.

They believe that it's their responsibility to build up their society and morality in all aspects of their lives.

The prime minister and the mayor of Seoul recently resigned because the Songsu Bridge collapsed and killed several people," she said. "The citizens were enraged because there had evidently been shoddy inspection techniques and insufficient money allocated for bridge repairs. The mayor nearly had to go to trial over it."

If something goes wrong, it's everyone's fault - the people say they were lax or their spirit was weak.

Crime isn't tolerated at all. "A youth gang murdered six rich people and within six weeks of their arrest they were executed," she said. "I feel very safe, even in a city of a million people. You can safely walk the streets at midnight."

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There is no time for dances, pizza parties, school plays or sports, she said.

"I sometimes feel sorry for them because they don't have the time to do things which I enjoyed in high school," she said.

The students are too busy working, even during vacations. The school offers many "non-required" classes, which actually are required, during the six-week winter vacation and week or two off during the summer.

Students' idea of a perfect vacation is one during which they can sleep late.

Boys and girls attend separate schools and pitch in doing janitorial work when they're not in class or studying.

Korean schools have fewer support personnel and administrators, which means the teachers' responsibilities include some of the work done in America by administrators. Teachers stay late to work with talented students.

Nicole credits her mentor, former Lake-Lehman English teacher Ellen Campbell, with helping to shape her into the woman she is today.

"Mrs. Campbell was very thoughtful and creative," she said. "She encouraged us to be as creative as possible and was a great source of strength to me. She really believed I would do well in my life and encouraged me to go to Penn State."

After she finishes her Fulbright-funded assignment in July, Nicole hopes to stay for another year teaching English in a South Korean university. Although universities usually require masters' degrees, Nicole's experience and standing as a Fulbright teacher are definite assets, she said.

Nicole is the daughter of Robert Gardner of Nanticoke and Marsha Carter of Clearwater, FL.



POST PHOTO/GRACE R. DOVE

Hot new wheels

Showing off Kingston Township's new four-wheel-drive police cruiser are manager Jeff Box, supervisor Herbert Hill, police chief James Balavage and supervisor William Tippet. The 1995 Chevrolet Blazer, which cost \$25,000, contains state-of-the-art police equipment and a heavy-duty hitch to pull equipment trailers. Kingston Township is one of three Back Mountain municipalities to use a 4x4, which Box said is necessary for the township's many steep hills. It is also set up to drive off the road if necessary.

Kingston Twp. strengthens curfew

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

Young people out at night in Kingston Township may want to check their watches more frequently.

Young people less than 18 years old may not be out after 10 p.m. unless they're accompanied by a parent or adult, according to an amendment to the curfew ordinance passed by the supervisors at their regular January 11 meeting.

Under the amendment, offenders will be cited and could pay fines of up to \$300, or spend up to 90 days in jail, Box said.

Formerly, the parents were cited for their children's actions, he added.

"This isn't anything new," said police chief James Balavage. "We

have always had a curfew ordinance. The amendment just updates it. We'll continue to aggressively enforce it."

Young people returning home from evening jobs are an exception to the ordinance, he added.

The supervisors also gave preliminary approval to Mike Kester, Jr., manager of Echo Valley Trailer Park, to add five lots to the trailer park as the first of a two-phase construction project.

Three lots will be for double-wide homes and the other two for single-wides and will be located near the park entrance, Kester said.

By the time he receives the final approval for the first phase, Kester must obtain approval from the Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) for a new sewer line for five more homes and build a new

fire hydrant and a stormwater detention basin.

As part of the second construction phase, Kester will have to add a larger water line and line a stream channel on the property with rocks, Box said.

The trailer park presently contains 99 lots, Kester said.

The second phase, which hasn't been approved yet, could add another 25 homes to the park, Box said.

In other business, the supervisors voted to:

- Hire a seventh road department worker for \$8 per hour.
- Order a 1995 Chevrolet Caprice unmarked police cruiser through the state purchasing system for less than \$16,000.
- Advertise for bids for a new one-ton four-wheel-drive dump truck to replace the road department's 1988 GMC truck.

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