

Coming to America

The exchange factor

Top 10 Praises of America

10. Best actors/actresses
9. Orderly government
8. Lenient schools
7. Diverse cultures
6. American guys/girls
5. Cool parties
4. Low cost of living
3. Spectacular cities
2. American music
1. Land of the Free

Six exchange students had to adjust to a different lifestyle and academic setting in America.

"Getting used to a new family and coming to a BIG school are some of the most difficult adjustments I had to face," said Norwegian student Kristian Mikalsen.

The exchange students noted many differences in the cultures, laws, and educational systems. "We don't go to church often, only for weddings and funerals," said Stefan Stengard from Sweden. "The food is different .. a lot of junk food here. We eat more rice and potatoes."

Laws and government varied greatly. "The government is trying to follow the democratic system," said

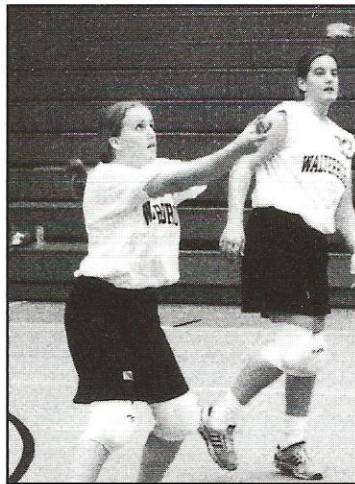
Russian student Veronika Khlybova.

The students observed a contrast in the educational systems. Hugo Castro of Brazil felt American schools were much easier.

"We attend school from 7 a.m.-1 p.m.," he said. They didn't have a lunch, only a snack break. In Brazilian schools, the teachers, not the students, change classes, eliminating crowds in the halls.

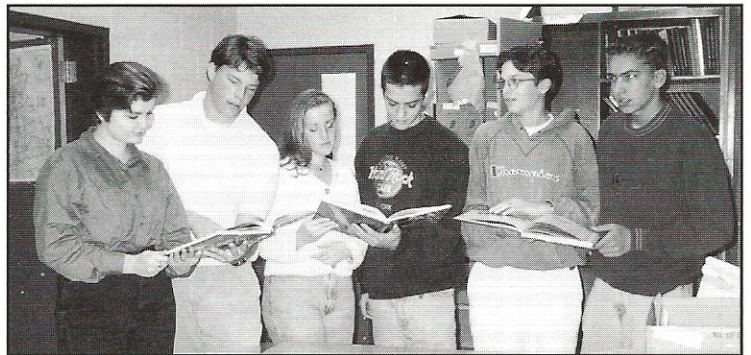
Though not really homesick, the students did miss some aspects of home. "I miss the ocean," lamented Swedish exchange student Andreas Andersson. "I could just take my bike and ride along the beach."

— Tracy Bladh



Ready, Set, Spike. Junior Ellinor Leo, who played setter for the volleyball team, goes for a point.

Helping Hands. Working diligently, junior Russian exchange student Veronika Khlybova studies as her housemother Maryann Bird observes. She wanted to attend college in America.



Culture Club. The exchange students learn about the school through yearbooks. Their programs allowed them to study abroad for one year.