



## PARTY INTERNATIONAL STYLE!

WILLIAM HU

"I should like very much to invite you to a 'Porch Party ...' After I read the note from Mrs. Hilliard, I almost forgot to close my mail box, our International Students Club is coming back.

Sunday afternoon at 3:00, September 11, 1988, was an exciting time for international students. Many students met Mr. Hilliard in front of the library and waited for the free "taxi" ride. The party was held at the Hilliard's house.

After a short prayer, the party started. Students got their favorite drink, a little something to eat and "laid back" in comfortable chairs. The president of the International Students Club, Melania Aquirre, was giving a speech to the students while everyone was busy with their refreshments. "I am glad to see everybody here. The purpose of our club is to get to know each other better and share the different cultures we have. Last year, we had a lot of activities and many of us enjoyed them very much. This year, I hope everybody helps out, so we will have a good time together."

Following the President's address, Mrs. Hilliard, advisor to the International Club and students, told the members of the club what she can do for students and what things she could help them with. One of the major

areas she helps with is finding a place for International Students to stay during breaks/vacations.

"Let's introduce ourselves," Mrs. Hilliard said. Kha Dang from Vietnam, Kassahun Wondim and Samuel Beraki, from Ethiopia were all introduced. After each person was introduced everyone would try to say their name. Everyone had some problems but eventually everyone worked out some way to address the other persons.

The fun really started when everyone got a sheet of paper from the President. On the paper, there are 20 squares with 20 pieces of information about international students. For example: "He/She is auditing classes at M-AC"; "Of six students from her country, she is the only girl"; "The next Olympics will be in his/her country"; and "He plays the violin". Each student had to find the right person and let him or her sign the little square which referred to him or her. There was a time limit on getting everyone to sign the paper. When the time had run out, Mrs. Hilliard would ask who got the most signatures on his/her sheet of paper. The winner was Inku Teferi and she received the prize-- a T-shirt.

An hour and half passed by quickly and the party came to an end. Everyone felt they knew each other better than before. They left the party happy and grateful to the Hilliards who in turn were left to clean up the mess.



## RYOKO TACKLES REAL ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

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Ryoko Murata, a 19-year-old Japanese girl is taller than most Japanese people. A pair of glasses crosses her fair face. Behind the glasses, a pair of pretty eyes shows she is a little bit confused about this continent at the other side of the Pacific Ocean. After one year of English training in Tokyo, she left her grandparents, parents and home town, Aomori, in northern Japan. Under her English teacher's introduction, Ryoko came to Montreat-Anderson College.

"The sky's color is different from Japan, more blue," she told me when I asked about her first impression of this country. "Many people are very kind to me; my fear is gone. Now I feel more comfortable than I did two weeks ago."

Speaking fluent English still seems a little harder for Ryoko. "It's the number one problem for me," she said. "I couldn't speak English when I first came to the U.S. I know everything will not be easy, but I get to try it."

This semester, Ryoko is taking Bible, College Algebra, English 100 with Mrs. Hilliard, Reading and Choir. Algebra will not be too hard for her, because she has a good background of mathematics. "Bible may be the hardest subject for me. I don't have much knowledge of it, even though I had Bible class in my high school and have a Japanese Bible with me," Ryoko said.

Ryoko likes both classical and modern music, and sometimes even loud music. She also likes to watch movies, participate in sports and interpret art. She wants to be a designer, but is not sure which direction she will go. "All of these things I will think about in the



future. But now, I want to speak proper English like native born American. This is why I am taking the choir course. I believe singing can help my pronunciation."

"Living in MA-Hall is comfortable. Sometimes, there is some noise. But at night, it is very quiet. Students obey the rules." She said, "The food is good in the cafeteria but they can be careless, because I don't eat much. I miss Mom's cooking and my grandparents."

Most international students who come to the United States to study, have trouble understanding the language. Most of them try to study very hard so they will be able to follow their professors while in class and also study hard outside of class. Sometimes, they may spend twice as much time as American students in figuring out what they read or what they want to write. In the following years to come, they become Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors. The classes get harder and harder; yet, their English gets better and better. When I asked Ryoko what she will do when she gets some real hard classes, she answered me, "I want to try them. If I am afraid, then I will [would] not be here."

I hope Ryoko will succeed in all of her classes during her first semester at Montreat-Anderson College.

