’90s

- The first McDonald’s in Moscow opens.
- Nelson Mandela is freed after 27 years of imprisonment.
- Millions of people become regular users of the World Wide Web.

Desert storm

On the eve of Aug. 2, 1990, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein led his troops and country into the neighboring country of Kuwait.

Known as the first Persian Gulf War, its cause was said to be a series of breakdowns in negotiations between the two nations over oil production and debt repayment. In no time, Saddam annexed the tiny country and declared it to be Iraq’s 19th province. The United Nations imposed economic sanctions on Iraq in the hope of stopping the conflict.

Fearful that Saddam would roll tanks into Saudi Arabia and control the region’s oil supply, President George H.W. Bush acted on Saudi’s request for military help and on Jan. 18, 1991, Operation Desert Shield began.

In 1991, coalition forces drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. Within hours, Resolution 660 was passed to condemn the Iraqi invasion and demand a withdrawal of its troops. The Arab League passed a similar resolution but added its disapproval of foreign intervention. While some may have looked down on the intervention, Williamson believes it was warranted.

SOUND FAMILIAR? WAR IN IRAQ

Two years ago, American troops went back to Iraq in search of weapons of mass destruction, and while the motivation for war and the reason for U.S. troops to remain there is still being questioned, the fact remains that America’s relationship with the Middle East — the main petroleum-producing countries — is tattered and fragile.

Beyond the Middle East, the world’s dwindling supply of oil scares many people into looking for alternative energy sources. So while looking, Williamson suggests that Americans grit and bear the prices if the results are worth it.