

Kazakh Kids!

An Internet Newsletter for Kazakh-American
Adoptive Families

July 4, 2001

Issue #4

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Staff Sound Off

As everyone can tell, our "little" newsletter is growing...and growing...and GROWING! What started out as a simple idea has become much larger than ever expected. This issue is our largest by far and, in our opinion, contains much more educational and cultural material than we imagined we'd ever be able to find. A big "Thanks" to Sergey for finding such treasures during his recent trip to Kazakhstan. He is diligently translating a treasure chest full of material, and I am working hard to keep up with him! Due to the current size of our issues, we will be publishing them once a month now. It simply isn't possible for us to produce such vast amounts of material on a more frequent basis. We are also working on making the transition to a web-based newsletter rather than email based.

We'd also like to urge all of you to PLEASE send us your comments, stories, photos, etc. It was never our intent for this to simply be all our own material, and

it is much more interesting to read others' impressions of Kazakhstan, their experiences while traveling, and the leaps of faith it took to even attempt such an outlandish thing as adopting a child you have never met. We have tried to throw out ideas in each issue, asking for responses and unfortunately we haven't heard from many of you at all. With over 130 subscribers now, surely someone has something to share!

We hope you enjoy this issue, and we thank you all for your patience as we experience growing pains. I (Cindy) apologize for the delay in getting this issue out to you, but my personal life has been very hectic lately and I have been experiencing some computer problems as well. Hopefully we are back on track and will be Warmly,

Sergey and Cindy

Kids Corner

AMIN AND THE EGGS

Once upon a time a peasant named Amin lost all the crops from his miserable little plot of land in a drought. He decided to seek his fortune in another village, and off he went on his donkey. On credit, he obtained a dozen hard-boiled eggs from a merchant for his journey.

Seven years later, Amin returned to his village. This time he was riding a fine black horse, followed by a servant on a camel which was laden with gold and silver coins. Amin had become a rich man and the news of this soon spread throughout the village. Very soon, the merchant who had given him the dozen eggs on credit knocked at Amin's door, asking for five hundred silver pieces to repay the old debt. Amin of course refused to pay such a large sum and the matter was taken before a judge.

On the day of the hearing, the merchant appeared in court at the appointed time, but there was no sign of Amin. The judge waited impatiently for a quarter of an hour, and was almost ready to adjourn the hearing when Amin dashed in, out of breath. Immediately the merchant started to speak in defense of his demands. "I asked Amin for payment of five hundred silver coins, because twelve chickens might have hatched from the eggs he bought from me on credit, seven years ago. These chickens would have become hens and cockerels. More eggs would have been laid, these too would have hatched, and so on. After seven years, I might have had a great flock of fowls!"

"Of course," agreed the judge. "Perfectly right." And turning to Amin with a hostile air, he ordered Amin to respond to his question "What have you to say for yourself? And, by the way, why are you late?" Amin did not bat an eye.

"I had a plate of boiled beans in the house and I planted them in the garden to have a good crop next year!"

"Fool!" exclaimed the judge. "Since when do boiled beans grow?" To which Amin promptly retorted "And since when do boiled eggs hatch into chickens?"

And with that simple statement, Amin won his case!

Kazakh Names!

We know that all of you have been anxiously awaiting the results of Sergey's research into the meanings of your children's names. As you will see, Sergey went to great lengths to find out the meanings of almost every name provided us. Read on to find out what your child's name means...or perhaps it will be your future child's name!

Hi everyone!

I would like to present to you the result of my work on the Kazakh names list. From first sight I realized that this list consists of not only real Kazakh names, but to my surprise I have found here my own name, the name of my wife (**Irina**) and many other "Russian" names (**Alexander, Anastasia, Anatoly, Dmitriy, Igor, Kirill, Nina, Ludmila, Svetlana, Vladimir, Evgeni, Zoia, Oleg**). I found their meanings through the Internet.

The list has a lot of real Kazakh names that I remember from my childhood like **Aighul, Aizat, Alia, Altynay, Erzhan, Erlan, Nurzhan, Saken, Serik, Zhanserik** but I did not know their meanings.

I have found names that I would call "European" - **Daiana, Flora, Kristina, Laura, Oksana, Yana, Yulia**. I also found their meanings through the Internet as well.

The Kazakhstan republic has very similar cultures with nearby republics of Middle Asia such as Uzbekistan, Kirgizia, Tadjikistan, and Turkmenistan. I was educated at an institute in Uzbekistan and I can say that the names like **Aldar, Dinara, Renat, Rayshan, Alisher, Gulnara** are widely spread in this region everywhere.

Finally, two names on the list (**Indira, Rangil**) can show the influence of the Indian culture (particularly Indian cinema).

While in Kazakhstan I was lucky enough to find a book of Kazakh names that helped me very much. Most of the Kazakh names I found there. Many thanks to a friend of my wife's mother (Kazakh) who assisted me in finding the meanings of names that were not found in the book. As a last resort, when I had a few (but most difficult) names without meanings I went to school nearby and asked teachers to help me. Two young women were kind enough to assist. They were teachers of the Kazakh language there. It was fun, I suppose, to watch as we were sitting in the classroom. I tried to pronounce the names in different ways and they listened to me trying to determine if they sounded like real Kazakh names or not and what they meant.

Sorry that I failed in getting the meaning of two names: **Karizhamal** and **Rangil**. **Karizhamal** sounds very much like a Kazakh name but no one could say what it means. **Rangil** is evidently an Indian name but I have not found its meaning. I have brought the book of Kazakh names from Kazakhstan so Cindy and I plan to supply you with information about Kazakh names and their meanings though I am deprived of the assistance of my Kazakh friends here in Perm.

Happy to work for you and hope you enjoy our research!

<u>Name</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Dictionary</u>
Aday	Male	Turkic	Nestling, kid, child.	
Aiday	Female	Kazakh	The child similar to the moon.	Ai (Tajik) – Moon.
Aighul	Female	Kazakh	Moonflower.	Ghul (Kaz) - Flower.
Aimira	Female	Kazakh	World – wide, global.	Mir (Rus) - World.
Aitkazina	Female	Arab	Dear, treasure.	Kasna (Arab) – treasure.
Aizat	Male	Kazakh	The child similar to the moon	Zata (Iran) - Child.
Akbota	Female	Kazakh	White child of camel.	Ak (Kaz) - White. Bota (Kaz) - Child of camel.
Aldiyar Aldar	Male	Turkic	Cunning person, clever man. The hero of Kazakh tales.	
Alex Alosha (Diminutive of Alexander)	Male	Greer	Defender, protector. Alex means - Defender. Andros means - Man.	
Alia	Female	Arab	Dear, precious,	

			respected.	
Alisher	Male	Arab	High, elevated, lofty, superior.	Gali (Arab) – Superior. Sher (Arab) – Lion.
Altynay	Female	Kazakh	Dear, precious, golden.	Altyn (Kaz) – Gold.
Anar	Female	Iran	Pomegranate.	
Anastasia	Female		Returning to life.	
Anatoly	Male	Greer	Anatoly the ancient Greeks named of the inhabitant of country (ancient name of Small Asia which is taking place in east from Greece). Anatole means – East.	
Anes	Male	Arab	Friend	Anis (Arab) – Friend.
Anna	Female	Hebraic	Abundance given by the God.	
Arstan Arystan	Male	Kazakh	Brave, symbol of bravery.	Arystan (Kaz) – Lion.
Bibikhanum	Female	Kazakh	The queen. A real person in the history of Middle Asia.	
Boolat Bulat	Male	Kazakh	Strong, powerful, hardy. Bulat means– Steel.	
Damira	Female		Long live world!	Mir (Rus) - World.
Dania	Female	Iran	Wise, knowing. Danash means – Knowledge, wisdom.	
Deanna Diana Daiana	Female	Latin	The goddess of the moon.	
Dima (Diminutive of Dmitriy)	Male		The origin of this name is connected to a name of Demetra from	

			ancient mythology. Demetra means - The goddess of ground and fertility.	
Dinara	Female	Uzbek	Dear, gold.	Dinara (Uzbek) – Golden coin.
Erzhan Yerzhan Erzhan	Male	Kazakh	The soul of hero.	Er (Kaz) - Brave, courageous, hero. Zhan (Kaz) - Soul.
Floridy Flora	Female	Latin	Blooming, healthy.	
Galia Alia	Female	Arab	Dear, precious, respected.	
Igor	Male	Scandinavian	Defender, protector.	Var (Scandinavian) – Force, power, army.
Indira	Female	Indian	Moon.	
Irina	Female	Greek	Peaceful, pacific.	
Irlan Erlan	Male	Kazakh	Courageous fellow. Resolute man.	Er (Kaz) - Brave, courageous, hero.
Kanat	Female	Kazakh	Beautiful tiny wing of bird.	
Karizhamal	Female	Kazakh	Sorry. I have not found out the meaning of this name.	
Kirill	Male	Greek	Lord, Master. Kir (ancient Greek) means – Lord.	
Kristina	Female	Greek	Christian.	
Laura	Female		Resolute.	
Lena (Diminutive of Elena)	Female	Greek	Sunny, bright. Elena (ancient Greek) means – Sun.	
Luda (Diminutive of Ludmila)	Female	Russian	Lovely for the people.	Lud (Rus) – People. Mila (Rus) – Pleasant.
Lunara Gulnara	Female	Iran	The blossom of pomegranate.	
Maxim	Male	Latin	Greatest, supreme.	
Nikita	Male	Greek	Winner.	
Nina	Female	Greek	The name occurs	

			from the Greek word Ninos - so called the founder Assyrian of the state. The same name had the capital of Assyria.	
Nurzhan	Male	Kazakh	Light soul.	Nur (Kaz) – Shine. Zhan (Kaz) – Soul.
Oksana	Female	Ukrain	The Ukrainian colloquial form of a name Ksenia. " Ksenia " means "hospitality".	
Oleg	Male	Scandin	The name has the Scandinavian origin and means "sacred".	
Ranat Renat	Male		Revolution. Science. Work. Re Na T	Re (Rus) - Revoliutsia. Na (Rus) – Nayka. T (Rus) - Tryd.
Rangil	Male	Indian	Sorry. I have not found out the meaning of this name.	
Saken	Male	Kazakh	Beauty.	
Sergei Sergey	Male	Roman	The name occurs from the Roman patrimonial name Sergiys , that means "high, respectable".	
Serik	Male	Kazakh	Support. Hope.	
Surum Surym	Male	Kazakh	Riddle. Secret. Mystery.	
Sveta (Diminutive of Svetlana)	Female	Slavic	Name of a Slavic origin, from a word "light".	
Vladimir	Male	Slavic	This name has a Slavic origin, consists of two	

			roots: " Vlad " - (to own) and " Mir " - (World). The name can make sense - "owning the world".	
Yana	Female	Slavic	Western Slavic the form of a name Ioanna that means "Charity of God".	
Yulia	Female	Latin	The female form of a name Yuli , occurs from a Latin word " Yuliys " - "curly, fluffy".	
Zhanserik	Male	Kazakh	Support of soul.	Zhan (Kaz) – Soul.
Pazylbek Bazylbek	Male	Kazakh	Generous.	Bazyl (Kaz) - Generosity
Zhenya (Diminutive of Evgeni)	Male	Greek	The name occurs from ancient Greek word that means "noble".	
Zoika (Diminutive of Zoia)	Female	Greek	Zoia means "life".	
Arman	Male	Kazakh	Dream, reverie.	
Orman	Male	Kazakh	Forester.	
Berkamal Erkamal	Male	Kazakh	Wish of birth of the boy.	
Akerke	Female	Kazakh	White mischievous, naughty child.	
Zhymabek	Male	Kazakh	Friday.	
Mensly	Female	Kazakh	Beautiful birthmark.	
Rayshan	Male	Middle Asia	Pose.	
Yrymbasar	Male	Kazakh	Has taken a name of the grandfather	
Nayryz	Male	Kazakh	Holiday, festival.	
Myhabat	Female	Middle Asia	Love.	

Ainyr	Female	Kazakh	Lunar light.	
Karlygash	Female	Kazakh	Swallow.	Karlygash (Kaz) – Swallow.

Candid Questions

We process mountains of paperwork in an effort to bring our children home, then face even more paperwork after they are finally in our arms. Is it worth all the hassle? Here is a different perspective.

I open the large manila envelope and out slips the long-awaited document...our son's Certificate of American Citizenship. I stand there with my fingertips lightly tracing the outline of the gold embossed symbolic eagle at the top, my eyes taking in the profile of the tiny 18 month old boy pictured there.

While there is no doubt that adopting our children will forever change their lives for the better, and that being raised in a loving family versus an overwhelmed institutional setting is far preferable, there is another perhaps greater gift that is given to our children as an added bonus. Our children have the good fortune of becoming official citizens of the United States of America.

We work so hard to understand the culture our children come from, to help keep it alive in their minds, that we sometimes fail to recognize the significance of their immigration to the US. Sure, there is great value in the Kazakh legacy our children inherit, and we all want our kids to be proud of the rich traditions of their birth country. But in an effort to encourage a healthy respect and appreciation for the Kazakhstani culture, let us not ever forget that our children will be Americans and that is a priceless gift.

I am so very proud to be an American, and I want our children to enjoy all the rewards that come with being a citizen of this great nation. As I hold that precious Certificate in my hand, surprisingly my thoughts do not

wander back through our own personal odyssey that brought this child to our country. No, what keeps running through my mind is that there are so many people throughout the world who would quite literally be willing to give up all they own, to walk away from all their loved ones, and to turn their backs on all that is familiar to them...just to obtain this single document. The value of American citizenship can't be measured.

Are we the greatest country in the world??? Absolutely! If that sounds arrogant, well then I am sorry but there has never been a truer statement uttered. Sure there are other fine nations out there, but when was the last time you heard of someone dying in an effort to cross the borders of Switzerland or Denmark? When did you hear of boatloads of hopefuls trying to land on the shores of Japan, only to have their vessel capsized and be lost forever at sea? Certainly there have never been truckloads of illegal aliens willing to risk their lives in 130 degree enclosed trucks all in the hope that they would enter Italy or India undetected.

America is the ONLY country in the world where people are dying on a daily basis to enter. It is a ray of hope shining on the dim prospects of citizens of communist and former communist countries. America is the promise of a brighter future and a safe haven, offering educational and capitalistic opportunities to every single person who steps foot on her soil, as long as they are willing to work to achieve their goals.

Yes, it is wonderful that our son will now know the love of a family. But above and beyond that, he will now have opportunities that many young people from Kazakhstan only dream of. I recall the many teens and young adults we met while in Kazakhstan, all expressing that it was their fondest desire to come to America. Our children are blessed with more than just their adoption.

So as you watch the fireworks this Fourth of July, take a moment to look into the eyes of the future of our country...the eyes of your own child. Like so many millions before them, they have traveled far to face the unknown and unfamiliar. And like so many others they will live lives full of love and prosperity, and will become Americans in more than name only.

Happy 4th of July!

Sergey's Trip



Kustanay Boarding School

This is not an orphanage. This is a boarding school for the children (7-17 years old) who live in small villages far from town and where there is not regular school. All the time this school has been located in the building that you can see in the picture. It is in the center of a town in Kazakhstan called “Kustanay”.

I visited the boarding school in the morning at 11 o'clock or so. I entered into the courtyard. It was very neat and green there. It was during a recess between lessons when I saw three or four groups of children marching on the path around the small garden in the middle of the court. Each group consisted of about 30 children. In the front row were the oldest children and to the rear side of group I noticed younger kids. The teachers or mentors led every group.



In the garden there were three children with young woman planting something. I don't know if this was a punishment for poor behavior in class or if it was just part of a school planting program.

I asked for permission to make some photos and, to my surprise, got it without any questions being asked such as who I was, and what I did it for. It was hardly a single case while my visit in Kazakhstan.

I would like to say to everyone who travels to Kazakhstan and wants to make photos there that you should be ready to get these questions and to answer everywhere you want to make photos. If you photograph a street, building or some remarkable sight it is OK. But if you take a photo of people, you evidently will be asked. I do not know if it is suspiciousness and distrust or something else.



Traditional Games

Ketty, Ketty, Oramal

The main task in this game is to find a handkerchief. It is very, very difficult to do here. You see, the handkerchief becomes invisible...

Do you want to learn the secret? Gather everyone to sit in a circle. Each person's shoulders should be touching the person's sitting next to them. Then extend your legs and slightly bend knees.



The only person standing out of the circle is the leader.

Are you all ready? Let the game began!

You quickly hand the handkerchief to each other under your knees saying the words:

“The handkerchief is running there, the handkerchief is running there!”

The task of leader is to guess who has the handkerchief at the moment and to name the player quickly.

This is more difficult than it seems! You see, all the players sitting in the circle must repeat the same movement - as though they are each passing the handkerchief.

But suddenly the leader notices that one player has delayed for the moment.

For example, the person who actually has the handkerchief is named Marat, and a piece of the handkerchief has flashed in his hand.. “Marat” – the leader must shout loudly. If Marat is the one with the handkerchief, then he must change roles with the leader and it is his turn to guess. If the leader makes a mistake and guesses incorrectly, the leader should apologize to the “injured” Marat – and then must sing a song or read a poem.

Culture Connection

DASTARHAN

Kazakhstan has a very ancient, rich and colorful tradition of feasts. The main feast is called **Dastarhan**. There are many legends, rituals and customs connected to it. Many of these legends are the direct result of the nomadic lifestyle of the Kazakhs.

Dastarhan has it's own history, traditions which is inherent only to the Kazakh people. The specificity and features are an original art of organization of reception and service of the visitors.

Meeting the visitor with **Dastarhan**, Kazakhs slaughtered cattle, even though in the house there was already probably meat of some sort. As usual, a ram was slaughtered for the guest. The body was cut into pieces for **besbarmak** or other banquet dishes without chopping bones. These pieces were boiled as a whole and put on the table together with the bones. For a particularly honored guest, a proprietor would slaughter and cook a foal of three years old. If he had a lot of visitors a horse or camel was prepared.

The Kazakhs keep a very ancient custom of distribution of the prepared meat

among guests. The honorable visitor receives the head of the ram (**koidyn basy**), cuts off the ears (**kylak**) and hands it to children and young men, while the upper part of the mouth (**tandai**) is given to girls or young women. People thought that it helped them to become beautiful, hardworking, eloquent and to have a nice voice. Then the honored visitor (**ylken kisige**) would cut off small slices of meat from the head and hand them to other people. Then the head would be transferred to the person sitting next to the and so it went from one visitor to another.

The large dish (**tabak**) with **besbarmak** (on which meat with the boiled slices of paste, unrolled out in the rhombic form, are spread out) is put in the middle of the table. The host would cut into piece meat, but hand out the bones with the meat on it to guests. When they ate off the meat from bones the hosts would invite the visitors to eat pieces of meat with paste from dish. Just before it the **besbarmak** is poured with **tyzdyik** (sauce – fat broth with chopped onion and pepper). After the **besbarmak** the strong broth (**sorpy**) is put on the table. Sometimes **sorpy** is mixed with **airan** (sour milk) and **kyrt** (dried cheese).

According to ancient custom, before and after the meal all the guests would wash their hands. For this purpos somebody from the household, a teenager as a rule, approached everyone, pouring from a teapot (**kymgan**) water on hands of guests above a basin.

The most honored visitors would be **aksakal** (oldest men of a tribe), relatives and marriage relatives. According to custom the best parts of a mutton's body (**myshe**) are given to them. As was mentioned above, the honorable visitor would be given the head and **zhanbas** (part of rear leg). If there is not a **zhanbas** on the dish, the visitor has the right to take offense. There is a proverb kept by the folk: "If there is a head, where is a **zhanbas**? But if there is not a **zhanbas**, then why is a head here?" (**Bas bar – zhanbasyn kaida? Zhanbasyn bolmasa bas negde keldi?**)

Tos (the best part of the brisket) is given to the son-in-law. If there is not a **tos**, he has the right to be offended. When a son-in-law was treated in the house of his bride for the first time, certainly he was given a **tos** and he should respond by giving a gift of some sort. The brisket of the ram for this purpose is sometimes prepare separately, cutting off the meat with a skin and fat, but without bones. Then it is cleared, salted and fried as BBQ (**tostik**) but in spits. **Tostik** – is a food that should be presented in any case at the moment when parents of young man and woman meet for first conversation of their children's marriage. It is a favorite meal of the Kazahs. Giving a **tostik** means to touch by breast each other, to become as close to each other as relatives.

The married girls were sent **kabarga**, **kyiymshak** (tail part). The owner of the house and matchmaker were given pieces of **kyrdiuk** (stomach) and liver. Along with it there were various superstitions and traditions. For example, if the father is alive, the son can not be given **koidyn basy** (head). It may cause the father's death. Brain has never been given to children – "will be flabby"(not fish, not meat) as

well as spinal cord – “may to sink”, and **bygana** (two first ribs) – “won’t be adult”. Girls were not given by **kari zhilik** (scapula) – “won’t be married”. **Moiyn** (neck) can not be given to guest. A woman who was recently confined gets it. In addition, it must be eaten in a way that does not divide the vertebrae. In this case the neck of the baby quickly will strengthen. **Tok shek** (thick intestine) was presented to shepherd. The Kazakhs have a proverb: “Instead of being lazy or play somewhere, it is much better to graze rams and eat thick intestine (to be full)”. The bride was given the **zhak** (lower jaw with tongue). In very exclusive cases some woman could get **koidyn basy**.

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN KAZAKH NATIONAL DISHES

KAZAKH SALADS

Boiled meat, potatoes and carrots, cucumbers, apples with seeds removed should be cut into thin slices, then salted, peppered, mixed, filled with sour cream and mayonnaise, stacked by mountain in a salad-dish, decorated with green pea, slices of meat, apples.

An omelette is baked in the form of a pancake, cut in the shape of straw and used for decoration in the salad. The salad is sprinkled with cut green parsley.

Gammon mutton, scapula part boiled - 200 gram, egg for an omelette – 2 eggs, milk or water - 2 spoons, margarine or butter – 1 tea spoon, potatoes boiled - 2 potatoes, cucumbers marinated – 1 cucumber, carrots boiled - 1 carrot, green peas - 2 spoons, apples - 1 whole apple, sauce - mayonnaise - 2,5 spoons, sour cream - 2,5 spoons.

Contact Information:

Sergey Davidov:
Sdav2000@rambler.ru
Sdavidov@usi.ru

Cindy La Joy:
CyndiLJ@aol.com