



# SILK ROAD ADVENTURES

TUCSON-ALMATY SISTER CITIES COMMITTEE

The mission of Tucson-Almaty Sister Cities Committee is to promote and develop people-to-people diplomacy between the citizens of Tucson, Arizona, and Almaty, Kazakhstan, through educational, cultural and economic relationships.

August 2008

Volume I, Issue I

Silk Road Adventures is a proprietary publication of the Tucson-Almaty Sister Cities Committee. Editor/composer Jerry Gary, 520-886-1260. Deadline for submittal 25th of each month.

## Chairman Chuck



WOW! What a way to start out as your new Chairman. Saumya was just notified that TASCC has been approved for another Open World grant. Scheduled to take place between October 25th and November 1st, this program has to do with

Women as Leaders: Nontraditional Educational Opportunities. Please put on your thinking caps early and help us identify home hosts for the four delegates and their facilitator from Kazakhstan. Also, let Saumya know if you are available to help during the week of their stay. CONGRATULATIONS to Dan and Karen on their return and successful completion of their mission to teach English in the 'outback' of Kazakhstan under the TASCC/TFF partnership banner. Below is an excerpt from Dan's trip report. His full report will appear in the September edition of Silk Road Adventures.



TFF Students in China, courtesy of the Teach For Friendship Web site.

"Many letters, lost passports and last-minute airline schedule blunders later, on July 7, 2008, Karen Loquvam and I stepped off of the Air Astana flight to Ust-Kaminogorsk in the northeast of Kazakhstan. After a brief, apprehensive

wait in this tiny airport, Anara and her brother, Aslan greeted us. We were packed into Aslan's Lada Sedan. Listening to Aslan's favorite "Techno" music, off we went to Pervomayskie. "

(Continued next month)

## Sister Cities International Meetings

July 29-August 1, 2009 Belfast, Ireland  
July 29-31, 2010 Albuquerque, New Mexico

- [www.sister-cities.org/](http://www.sister-cities.org/) for information on Belfast, Ireland in 2009

## The Bulletin Board

Join us in presenting a free concert on September 11, 2008, as a statement about World Peace. Call 886-1260 for info.



Catch the Chuck and Jerry show at the Glassware Gallery's IGNITE TUCSON (see page 4) on Thursday, July 31, 7 pm 127 E. Congress

### OPEN WORLD PROGRAMS

AED and World Services of LaCrosse, Inc. has announced grant opportunities available. In October 2008 in the areas of Public Health, Women Leadership in Technology and in Law.

Saumya VanderWyst and Jerry Gary are in charge of pursuing Women Leaders and Public Health

### Sister Cities International Tool Kits

<http://www.sister-cities.org/ToolkitsGuides/index>  
[Membership Toolkit](#), [Member Toolkit](#), [Guide to Visas](#), [Assessment Toolkits](#), [Communications Toolkit](#), [Guide to Media Relations](#), [Fundraising Toolkit](#), [Youth & Education Toolkit](#), [Community Summits on Citizen Diplomacy Toolkit](#)

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## TASCC MONTHLY MEETING

Friday, August 15th

6.00 pm Board Meeting  
6:30 General Meeting  
FOOD AND DRINK PROVIDED

## Board of Directors

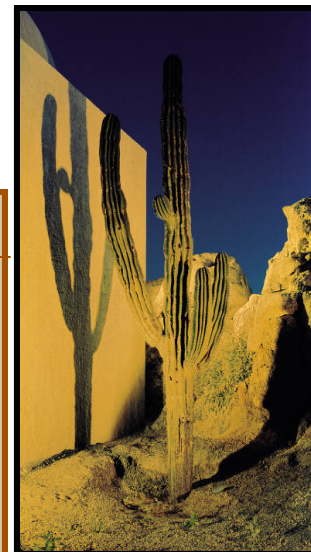
Chuck Yungkurth  
Chairman  
cby00@netzero.net  
520-744-7636

Anton VanderWyst  
1st Vice-Chairman  
antonv@umich.edu

Sally Gary  
Secretary  
Sallydiva@aol.com  
520-886-1260

Jerry Gary  
Treasurer  
JerryMGary@aol.com  
520-886-1260

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE PERSON: Saumya VanderWyst, saumya.vanderwyst@gmail.com



## Irish Dancers



Belfast in 2009...the theme of the Friday night reception at Union Station in Kansas City, Missouri on July 18th.



A beautiful group of Irish lassies put on a show for the attendees at the 2008 Sister Cities International meeting.

A change in procedures has led SCI to schedule



a meeting out of the US every 5 years and Belfast, as the first, came charging in to

show everyone that they mean business. Bringing 46 mayors, city officials and tourism boosters, they treated a crowd of nearly 500 people to food, drink and entertainment that was still in evidence when the last guest departed.

### Teach for Friendship

By Dan Davidson, Chair of TASCC/Teach for Friendship Committee

I am now in Almaty and again have access to the internet. Where we taught in Pervomayskie there was only contact to email a few times through a cell phone. That place is really rural. The schoolhouse had only outhouses and few amenities. I stayed with a family in their son's bedroom. He slept in the living room. The man, Igor, spoke only a little English and we had to use hand signs and pictures to communicate. They had a dog, cat, rabbits and a big garden. Everyday a real cowboy passed with his herd. Actually it was mostly interesting and fun. Oh yes, we got invited to a traditional Kazakh wedding. Wow! Now we're in Almaty, things are different. Rather than live with a family, Karen, and I are sharing a HUGE two bedroom apartment. There are two

*Continued next column*

### Teach for Friendship, continued

bathrooms, a fully hooked up kitchen and a satellite TV. The apt is in the center of the city, so it's easy to get to markets, stores, restaurants, and an internet café. The price is \$100/day - \$50 each. It's a real bargain

We had appointments with two agencies so far. Both were very encouraging regarding finding programs in Almaty. One was quite interesting, bringing Afgan students headed for the US to Almaty for acculturation to Western customs, boys and girls together, etc. It's perfect for TFF teachers. (NOTE: Dan and Karen returned from Kazakhstan July 29th. Look for their thrilling story of teaching English there in the next *Silk Road Adventures*.)

### Partnerships.....A PLAN FOR SUCCESS

By Jerry Gary

*Volunteer-run organizations sometimes, literally, run out ideas on how to best perpetuate their mission. Focusing internally can have devastating effects, especially if the over-worked 'core' group of movers and shakers starts building a case of burn-out, and their vision becomes clouded. TASCC has found a way to keep themselves on-track through the extensive use of partnerships with businesses, other non-profit organizations and all levels of government. Most recently, a multifaceted partnership grew up around the committee's desire to bring the Almaty Isker Boys Choir to Tucson, in pursuit of its goal of creating people-to-people diplomacy through education, CULTURE, and economic development. The Isker project started in 2003, when Maira Tungatarova asked to meet with Jerry and Sally during their visit to Almaty with a teenaged Mariachi group. She met again with Mayor and Mrs. Walkup and Chairperson Barbara the following year....and the idea started taking shape when Beth Walkup urged Maira to bring the Isker to Tucson. Partners involved in that very successful project in January, 2008 were the Tucson Arizona Boys Chorus,, the Flagstaff International Sister Cities Association, the South East Arizona Children's Choir, members of Tucson City Government, Tucson and Sierra Vista-area schools and churches.*

### In the Spotlight

"The glue that holds things together" adequately describes the function of Secretary of TASCC. Sally Gary has held that position since 1992, when she and Jerry got involved with TASCC. She considers her first trip to Almaty as the hook that got her on board and interested in sister city programming.

"There was a lot of the unknown, and even fear in my mind about the USSR, location of this place called Kazakhstan", she said. "But once there, and seeing how great the people were, it became a matter of relaxing and enjoying the trip". She remembers landing in Almaty at 2am and seeing this very handsome young Kazakh man dressed in an immaculate suit and London Fog overcoat come bounding up the stairs to where we were seated, extending his hand and saying, "Mr. And Mrs Gary, I am Serzhan.....welcome to Almaty... Right out of a Bogart movie.



Article by Jerry Gary

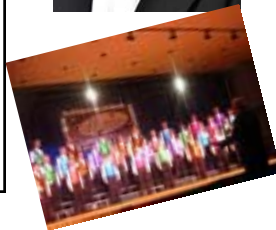
# Tucson-Almaty News

**Boys Chorus Serves as Emissaries to Kazakhstan, Czech Republic.** *Courtesy of the TABC website, by Dr. Julian Ackerley, Director and the Tucson Citizen*

On the way to Kazakhstan we had a significant layover in Moscow. We took the opportunity for a visit of Russia's capital.

Our next stop was Almaty, Kazakhstan, which is one of Tucson's sister cities. The boys were definitely celebrities. The Kazakh people were exceptionally curious about everything American. From our early morning welcome at the airport until our departure one week later, the boys were treated to enormous kindness and generosity. They stayed with local host families providing them a first-hand understanding of Kazakh daily life.

The numerous concerts in Almaty were remarkable. Each was packed with standing-room only crowds. I was



very proud of the high quality performances of our boys. And the audiences loved them. An interesting custom that caught us a bit by surprise was the applause. The enthusiastic applause began as usual but became a synchronized and thunderous clapping and yelling. I was told that this is the highest form of audience appreciation similar to a standing ovation. In between pieces, people from the audience would come to the stage presenting flowers.

Leaving Almaty was difficult as international bonds of friendship had been powerfully established. Tears of joy and sadness were evident during goodbyes.

Stereotypes of Russian, Kazakh, Czech and American people are often based on conflicts of the past. But cultural exchanges such as these are changing preconceived views and building international friendships for the future.



**AROUND THE COMMITTEE CORNER**

WITH

**Saltanat Satabayeva**

**Question:** As a child and teenager, what opinion did you have of America?

**Saltanat:** I started studying English in the first grade of the elementary school and was taught a lot of interesting facts from the history and modern time of the US. English classes were always exciting for me and since then I always had a dream to get to see the United States of America with my own eyes. I thought of the US as a country where everything was simply different. As the time passed and I grew up, I found out that America is not "simply different" but takes a very important place throughout the whole world as a huge economic power.

**Question:** How did your opinion change when you came here and saw the US with your own eyes?

**Saltanat:** The first time when I came to the US I was eighteen years old and was very excited not just to come and see the country but actually study here. There was a group of thirteen students from Kazakhstan who came to Tucson, Arizona, to refine our English and become University students. The first things we saw were cactuses, olive trees and wild orange trees. Well, nobody knew that the oranges were wild and we decided to try them. Everything was new to us, from food in the Student Union to the living conditions.

**Question:** We know that the educational systems differ between Kazakhstan and this country. Can you explain some of those differences?

**Saltanat:** One of the first differences which is very important for the educational process is the technological facilities. There is a lack of computers, projectors, and display screens for the students to improve their speed of learning and quality of information they receive. But, there are many new programs that our government works on in order to change the situation and equip every classroom with this kind of utilities. The second difference is the grading system. Grades in Kazakhstan are in a quantitative count (5, 4, 3, 2) versus the alphabetical count in the American system (A, B, C, D, E). The third difference is the academic four

*Continued on page 4*

## AROUND THE COMMITTEE CORNER, *continued*

year plan. Students of the same major in Kazakhstan are divided into groups and attend all classes together. On the contrary, in the US, at least during first two years of college, you might not meet people who would have the same major, but you meet a lot of different people with different academic goals and this helps to find out if your major is the one you want to be involved in for the rest of your life. Talking about exceptions to the educational system in Kazakhstan, I need to mention that there are a few Universities that are based on the American system.

**Question:** Why did you pick America as a place to study? Could you have chosen another country?

**Saltanat:** Yes, I definitely had a choice to study wherever I want in the whole world. I chose to study in America because, as I have said before, that was my dream for a long time and I think that this country is capable of giving me the knowledge I need to help Kazakhstan to get to the next level of compatibility.

**Question:** Can you tell us about your family? Professions, hobbies, pets, kind of music they like, etc

**Saltanat:** My both parents, Mom and Dad, work in the field of Public Health in Kazakhstan. We like to go on a hike, travel, swim in lakes, cook, or just have fun together.

**Question:** What are your dreams and plans for the future?

**Saltanat:** In the future I just want to make a difference everyday while working and making our world a better place to live. I am dreaming to be a great professional, good wife and a wise mother.

**Question:** Do you plan to pursue advanced degrees, like a Masters or a PhD. at the University of Arizona?

**Saltanat:** I would love to get a Master's degree at the U of A but, first, I need to finish my Bachelor's...:>).



On July 31st, Chairman Chuck did a 15-minute presentation at the Dinnerware Art Gallery on the subject of Education and Culture on the Silk Road. Highlights were some of the beginning history of TASCC and educational and cultural projects that span the last 20 years. This effort signals our new Chairman's objective of letting Tucson know about our committee and building up our membership base.

### The September Concert

The September Concert is a series of free musical performances held in cities around the world on September 11th every year. The concerts offer a way for our community to commemorate this historic date and focus on bringing all communities together, reaffirming our hope for world peace and celebrating life and universal humanity. Sister Cities International and its members are delighted to partner with The September Concert Foundation to host annual events. In

2006, 225 individual concerts were held and close to 50 sister cities participated. September 11th, 2006 marked the fifth anniversary of the September 11th attacks on the United States, and was also the 50th anniversary of Sister Cities International. The sister city movement in the United States emerged from a White House Summit on Citizen Diplomacy held September 11-12, 1956, where President Eisenhower called on Americans to practice people to people diplomacy in the name of peace. This event is an unprecedented opportunity to spread a message of hope through music.

### OPEN WORLD PROGRAMMING

A wide range of non profit and governmental organizations host Open World delegations. TASCC undertook its first program in April of this year, and hosted a Rule of Law delegation, the FIRST delegation from Kazakhstan that has come under this program. The OW program has operated for several years, but only sought delegations from Russia. Operated with funding from the Library of Congress, several grant agencies in the USA now receive funding to foster visits to communities in various fields of activity, such as Rule of Law, Public Health and Women in Technical Leadership. Sister Cities International has established a partnership with World Services of LaCrosse, Wisconsin, under the direction of Sandra McCormick. Sandra was instrumental in bring the 5-year Hospital-to-Hospital program to TASCC back in the early 1990s. TASCC will host a Women in Leadership delegation in October of this year.