

Kaz here we come!



The expectant family



Volkman/Ternullo Adoption Journey

Our Pre-Kazakhstan Roller Coaster Ride

My sister is coming to Kaz for a week!

June 2, 2006

My sister Pam just got clearance from her boss at the US Dept of Ed to take a week or so off and come over to Kazakhstan! She hopes to come the week of July 1-8, a few days after Janus and Devin will come home. That means I'll have less solo time in Ust. I'm so happy about this! She's working on plane tickets now. Wow, this is sounding like a pretty fun trip..... I can't believe it's the one WE'RE going on in two days!

We bought the tickets

June 1, 2006

We are 100% confirmed to leave Boston Sunday night on a 9:50 PM flight. WOOO HOOOO!!!! We have several connections but ultimately arrive in Ust-Kamenogorsk on Tuesday at which point we will drop our things off at the hotel, take a quick shower, and then be whisked away to the baby house to meet our new little one. WOW! The dog charm worked!

As you can imagine, things are a little ramped up around here as we get ready AGAIN (you'd think we'd be good at it by now). I don't expect to post an update until we are in Kazakhstan. It's really happening...I hope I remember how to change those diapers...

95% Likelihood of travel on Saturday, June 3

May 29, 2006

This time it might really happen (I feel like the meteorologist who graduated at the bottom of the class). Why do I think so? Not because of the assurance of our agency, but because Sue is going away on Thursday. That means Tarin et al will be taking care of her dog so it would be most inconvenient for her to also have to take care of our 2 dogs. 4 dogs at once (she has one of her own) seems like some kind of magic charm. May be we should name the boy "sobaka" (Russian for dog).

Anyway, the Kaz coordinator asked for copies of our passports so she could book our flights from Almaty to Ust. Sounds promising! So, the theory is we leave from Boston on Saturday, arrive in Almaty Sunday, catch a few winks in a hotel, fly up to Ust in the morning and meet the baby in the afternoon. Doesn't that sound nice?

Travel by June 8th

May 25, 2006, 2:40 PM

The Kazakhstan coordinators have confirmed that they would like us to arrive in Kazakhstan at least a few days before our visas expire. Our visas expire on Monday, June 12. They say it is easiest to renew them once we are in country. So, it takes 2 days to get there which means the latest we'll leave will be Thursday, June 8. The only down side is that June 8 is the

Our Kazakhstan Timeline

12/17/05: Dossier submitted to our agency (they sent it to Kaz for translation)

1/23/06: Arrived at Kaz embassy in DC

2/24: Left DC embassy

3/3: Checked into the MFA

3/28: Through MFA and MOE and sent to Guardianship body at Baby House

4/10: LOI Received at the DC Embassy

4/11: Expedited visas arrive via Fed Ex

4/15: Go to KAZ

4/12: Travel on hold

5/12: Go to KAZ

5/10: Delayed again

5/26?: Go to KAZ?

5/22: Delayed for the third time

6/4!: Go to KAZ

6/26?: Court date?

6/28?: Janus and Devin come home

7/18?? Julia & baby come home :)

Click on our name to email us:

[Janus](#)

[Julia](#)

[Devin](#)

day of Devin's 6th grade graduation so we know she will definitely miss it. Luckily, she'll have a rather amazing trip to remember in its place.

[Em](#)

Slowly but surely, we're getting closer to our goal. I can't wait to see that baby!

Travel by June 12th

May 25, 2006, 9:00 AM

The Program Supervisor for our agency is now involved in our case and we are optimistic that we will actually travel before our visas expire (6/12). It is possible that we will travel next week but we're not posting other dates until we have a commitment that they are real dates. In any event, if our visas do expire, our agency has agreed to have them reissued at no expense to us. So, they are trying to do the right thang. Good for them!

This is like one of those epic sequels...there always seems to be another version coming out in the near future. So, keep your eyes and ears open as our little drama continues to unfold...

Not this weekend

May 22, 2006

More poor communication on our agency's part. Apparently the documents for the other families were ready at the Kaz government but not yet released. They should be released this Thursday (5/25). So, no travel this week. May be Friday, June 2.

Frustration is an understatement....nuff said.

Leave in about 10 days

May 18, 2006

This just in: The other 2 families are now document ready so we will be going through the process as a group. In theory, that means we'll be leaving "in about 10 days." In practice, I think that will mean next Friday (May 26). We will get this confirmed or adjusted early next week (hopefully before Wednesday at midnight as happened last time).

I guess this schedule seems at least plausible so we're optimistic. Stay tuned for details!

Leave Next Friday?

May 15, 2006: Part 2

So, the other 2 families have not yet had their letters of invitation released from the Ministry of Education in Kaz which means even if they were released tomorrow, they would not be ready to travel this weekend. Hopefully, things will line up for next Friday (May 26). We'll have that date confirmed or dissolved by Monday at the latest.

Still Waiting for Travel Date

May 15, 2006

We have learned that our regional coordinator in Kazakhstan works with 3 to 4 families at a time. Our US coordinator just discovered this as she spoke with the regional coordinator for the first time on Thursday. So, we are waiting for a couple of other families to get their paperwork in order for travel. Hopefully we will have news on that this week. With this news comes frustration that we could have avoided these false starts if there had only been better communication earlier on.

The good news is that this delay allowed Devin (and us) to go on her big 6th grade field trip to NY on Friday. The bus dropped us off in Times Square. We explored there and then took the subway to the Museum of Natural History. It was a fun and relaxing day :) Devin will also get to participate in her class' spring show on Wednesday. But she will definitely miss her 6th grade graduation. Oh well, 2 out of 3 I guess.

Delayed AGAIN!!!

May 10, 2006: 11:50 PM

We're not leaving in 2 days after all. No details available as to why. We are frustrated, cranky, and all out of sorts. This stop and go is very difficult. We are waiting to get info on what's really going on. There doesn't seem to be much point in posting the new tentative date they gave us as we have no faith in it. We're waiting for a "buy the tickets" date.

Still waiting to confirm travel dates

May 8, 2006

Tomorrow is Victory Day in Europe and Western Asia. It's a huge holiday in Kazakhstan to celebrate the end of WWII. There ain't nobody working in Kaz. So, we have to wait another day or two to have it confirmed that we actually will be traveling on Friday evening. Fortunately, we're all getting used to this scheduling roller coaster (read sarcasm). It would be nice to know if we are really leaving or not.

A bunch of wonderful Westhamptonites took us to breakfast this morning at Westhampton's brand new Strawbale Cafe (aka Hanging Mountain Farm). If we have another delay, may be we can milk a few more free meals out of it!

We leave in 2 weeks!

April 28, 2006

We just got the call with our new departure date: Friday, May 12!

We'll fly out of Boston and be at the baby house with bells on on Monday May 15...that's when we meet our baby!

This new date will have us arriving the week after their big national holidays (where a lot of government officials are on vacation). So, everyone should be in the office and ready to be most excellent bureaucrats.

This means our 14-day bonding period should end on May 29. With any luck, we'll get into Court by June 1 or 2 so Janus and Devin can come home the weekend of June 3. Keep your fingers crossed since this will get Devin home just a day or two before her 6th grade graduation ceremony!

Trip Delay

April 12, 2006

Well, it looks like we are entering a holding pattern on travel. We are not going Saturday after all. Apparently there is a staffing change in the Kaz government that will slow things down for a few weeks. Our in-country coordinator is glad we aren't already in the air! She feels that if we went now, we may have a long delay in country while the staffing situation adjusts. So, we're going to stay home for a few more weeks while the stone wheels of government grind upon the bumpy, cobbled roads of bureaucracy. So, since our time pressure is off, I guess I have no more excuses not to clean the house...

From Devin: When I found out that we wouldn't be going this Saturday (4-15-06) I cried for 20 minutes straight. At least I think I did. That's mainly because I'm probably going to miss my class's field trip to NYC and our school-wide spring show. I had a solo too! Anyway, life goes on. Right now I'm very disappointed that I'll probably miss the field trip and spring show. At least I can wear the outfit I was planning on packing! Peace!

We're going to Ust-Kamenogorsk!!

April 5/06

This just in...we're going to the baby house in Ust-Kamenogorsk which is a good size city in northeast Kazakhstan (right near the Russian border and the beautiful Altay mountains). We think we're leaving next Saturday...OH MY!!! We are not even close to ready so we'll be scrambling to get our businesses in order and to manage all the details in the few days we have left before we fly out. Holy Cow!!! Janus and I (Devin too) all slept poorly last night...too much to think about. I told Devin I can't wait to get to Kazakhstan and I hope I get really really bored :)

[A little overview of our trip \(4/06\)](#)

All three of us will be traveling together. We fly into Almaty and then transfer (via train or plane) to the region where the baby house is located (there are lots of them all over Kazakhstan). We'll probably stay in an apartment once we arrive. Then, we'll go straight to the baby house and meet our child...wow! Once we're happy with the match, the clock starts ticking on a required 14 day bonding period. During that time, we'll visit the baby at the baby house every day. As soon as 14 days have passed, we'll apply to go to Court and formally adopt him. It can take 1 to 2 weeks to get a Court date. Assuming the judge approves the adoption, Janus and Devin can then come home. Julia has decided to stay and keep visiting the baby during the following 15 day appeal period. Once those 15 days have past, Julia will take custody of the baby and head back to Almaty to get passports

and visas. That should take about a week. Then, we'll come home!

You're adopting? How did that happen!!

Janus and Julia have always wanted more children (Devin is such a joy...how could you not want more of that?) Nature has been rather non-cooperative, even with a little help from modern medicine. Fortunately, adoption is an option!!!

We first registered with our Agency (Wide Horizons for Children) in September of 2004. We chose it because they were well recommended, had a long history of successful adoptions in many countries, and were very responsive and intelligent in answering our questions. We had hoped to find an agency with a Kazakhstan program but the agencies we found that had one did not seem easy to work with. So, we applied for WHFC's Russia program.

We dragged our feet a bit and didn't get our next batch of paperwork submitted until January 2005. Our homestudy followed soon after and then the real paperchase began. We've been certified competent by several governing authorities, our psychiatric profile has been evaluated, our medical history has been approved, our home has been inspected, and our fingerprints have been checked...we're clean!

Over the summer, we received our Immigration and Naturalization (INS) approval (that allows us to adopt foreign orphans) and pulled together our dossier (it weighed 7 pounds!). Then, we got some news that the Russia program was on hold. (Things got a little bureaucratically messy over there.) At the same time, our agency opened up the Kazakhstan program. How cool was that! So, we restarted the paperchase to get all of the documents we needed for Kazakhstan...another few months. We sent our Kazakhstan dossier (about 1 pound) to our agency in November...and on the day they received it learned that Kazakhstan had changed their dossier requirements. UGH! So, we jumped through a few more paperwork hoops and finally got our final, final dossier into the agency in December. The rest of our timeline is on the left.

Cool Links

Ust-Kamenogorsk Info

<http://www.world66.com/asia/centralasia/kazakhstan/ustkamenogorsk>
[Altai Adventure Eco Tours in Ust-Kamenogorsk](#)

Basic Kazakhstan Info

<http://www.graphicmaps.com/webimage/countrys/asia/kz.htm>

Kazakhstan Maps

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/kazakhstan.html>

Kaz Adoption Blogs (other families)

<http://kazakhadoptivefamilies.com/families.html>

Our Agency

<http://www.whfc.org/>