



**Brittany's  
HOPE**

*Aiding Adoption of Special Children Worldwide*

# The Perennial Path

*Quarterly Newsletter of the Brittany's Hope Foundation*

## *Featured Family*

# Daniel Is Our "Little Whirlwind"

*by Stacey Gasper, proud mother of Daniel*

Hi, we are Rick and Stacey Gasper and our second adoption story began about four years ago when we decided to search for another child. We already had a wonderful son Eric, who we had adopted from Korea when he was 6 months old. By now he was about 4 and stating often he dreamed of having a little brother.

Needless to say, this pulled at our hearts. However, recently my husband's business had hit a really slow period and this did not seem to be the time to be thinking of bringing another child into our lives. On the other hand, Eric kept insisting and he was not getting any younger. We really felt it was important for brothers to be fairly close in age.

### *"Now or never"*

We also believed our family was not yet complete, so it was now or never! My parents ('Mimi' and 'Popi', to the boys!) graciously offered to help us with the costs and we will be forever thankful. We truly wanted our sons to share the joy of having one another. So our journey began.

We attended a Welcome House Social Services information meeting where we met Jane Kramer and we listened to all the countries requirements. We were disappointed to learn it was unlikely to find a child about 3 years in age from Korea. All the children coming out of Korea were within 4-8 months old and there was a waiting list until the following year.



*Daniel, Stacey and Eric Gasper on the trip to bring Daniel home.*

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At the end of the meeting, Jane approached us with pictures of "waiting children" and gave us general information about them. We learned that a waiting child is one that is ready for placement, with some sort of special need.

### *Sung Kook and Brittany's Hope*

Jane drew our attention to this one little boy, Sung Kook Choi, and told us about a wonderful organization named "Brittany's Hope" that helps special needs children find loving homes. It turned out Brittany's Hope was sponsoring Sung Kook Choi with a grant to help a family

bring him home. Someone else cared about Sung Kook enough to advocate for him!

### *Going home with heavy hearts*

We went home with heavy hearts and piles of paperwork. We were not sure if we could handle the emotional and financial demands of a special needs child. What if this child needed extensive medical treatment? We were not in a position financially to juggle medical bills. We had never really considered a special needs child, and were a bit afraid of what this might mean.

*Continued on page 2*

## Guest Feature

# We're Spreading The Message

by David Z. Abel

*Dear Friends,*

Brittany's Hope is growing and the word is spreading. The more people we talk to, you talk to, and they talk to, the more and more people hear the message.

When Candy Abel spoke at a function, a special person was touched enough to spread the word... which led to a benefit concert that raised over \$10,000.

The planning efforts for the benefit concert led to a Drexel University professor creating a DVD about Brittany's Hope, which we will use as an aid for fund raising. The DVD, filmed and duplicated at a cost of approximately \$12,000 to \$15,000 was given to us free because Drexel University heard our message.

We showed the movie about Brittany's Hope at the benefit concert. A family who was moved by the message in it is now pursuing an adoption.

Last year, I bought a beautiful music box from Al and Linda Loughry of the Grande Place in Kitchen Kettle Village, Intercourse, PA. While I was purchasing it, I told the story of Brittany's Hope to the Loughrys and invited them to the Christmas Home Tour. Eleven months later, they came to the Home Tour and met with Candy and I. They were so moved by the story of Brittany's Hope that they offered to raffle off a \$15,000 music box and donate all of the money to the Foundation. Wow!

As I walked through the airport with my newly adopted daughter Tianna, a couple approached



*David and a Vietnamese orphan.*

me to talk about our adoption experience. Already considering adding to their family by adopting, they later called to meet with us. They went on to adopt two children through an affiliate agency, and the wife became a Brittany's Hope board member.

Cris Foehlinger, a news reporter from the Lancaster New Era interviewed Candy for a  
*continued on page 7*

## Daniel Is Our "Little Whirlwind"

*continued from page 1*

I continued to read the reports of waiting children over and over again. Sung Kook's paper kept appearing at the top of the pile and I was drawn to him. I received additional information and medical examination reports. They said he had a motor development disorder and he had been receiving physical therapy.

When he was born, the doctors did not see any problem with his health, so he had been matched with a family in the US for adoption. At about 4 months old, he developed some problems and cerebral palsy was mentioned. The family who had been matched with Sung Kook must have gotten scared and refused the referral. So he went on with his therapy and went through all kinds of tests. Sung Kook was not gaining weight and was failing to thrive; it seemed to us as if he was just pining for the love of his forever family.

### **Meant to be ours forever**

It was time for us to search our souls. We felt a connection with this baby and began to believe we could handle whatever was to be, as long as Sung Kook was home with us. Rick and I realized with the financial help from "Mimi and Popi", and the grant from Brittany's Hope, we would be in a better position for any medical expenses that may be coming with this little guy. Somehow we felt this was the road we were meant to take. Our Daniel Sung Gasper (Eric named his brother) was waiting for us... meant to be ours forever!




*Eric and Daniel got into the spirit of Halloween last year!*

Now came the hard part... the wait... we wanted him home right away! We ran into a few delays, and he did not come home as soon as we had anticipated. He was almost 18 months when he arrived home on March 14, 2002. We were so overjoyed! Eric was so very excited, and he could not wait to hold his new brother! They loved each other right away... smiling and giggling with excitement.

### **Our family is complete**

To our amazement Daniel's health is just fine! He walks, runs, and climbs, just perfectly. He is

our little whirlwind and never gives up! He has the kindest loving heart and a buggerish way about him! He loves to find trouble, and when he knows he is busted, he will walk up to you innocently and give you a big hug!

Daniel is thriving and blossoming every day in our loving family. We thank all of the wonderful people at Brittany's Hope Foundation and his Mimi and Popi who helped make our family complete with the adoption of Daniel! We will be forever grateful for this precious gift from God! 

## Special Feature

# Memorial Day Picnic Raises Adoption Awareness... and \$4,000!

Michael and I couldn't have been happier with the generous response of our family and friends at our annual Memorial Day Picnic!

For the past four years we have been hosting a Memorial Day picnic for family and friends. The first year was quite small with just a few family members and friends. In the second year we thought, why not invite a couple of the kids' friends and their families? By the third year, the neighbors were enjoying the picnic too. Before we knew it, this small family picnic was a huge event!

Mix together a little baseball and hotdogs, snow cones, fireworks, a band for music and dancing, friends and family, and you have "good times" and "great memories". What an opportunity to share information about an inspiring heart-driven foundation to so many good hearted individuals and families. So this past Memorial Day that's exactly what we did!

This year we asked our guests for a small donation toward Brittany's Hope Foundation instead of a side dish as in previous years. Wow! We were so pleasantly overwhelmed by the generosity of those who attended. They were so generous that we were able to give David and Candy nearly \$4,000 toward the foundation as well as raise awareness of its cause.

Michael and I will always wholeheartedly support Brittany's Hope Foundation as well as David, Candy, and their family. Their faith, loving devotion, and strong perseverance serve as an example and inspiration to all. Thank you for continually showing us how blessed we all truly are and the difference we can make in a young child's life. We love you!

Michael and Julie  
Ryan, Alex, Matthew, and Grace

## Spotlight Feature on Brittany's Hope Board Members Beauty In Our Garden

by Mary Jean Risser, Board Member



Alice Clouser and Candace Abel

Beauty is defined as that quality in a person or thing which makes it pleasant for one to look at or think about: an individual who possesses grace and charm.

When one first meets Alice Clouser, vice-president of Brittany's Hope Foundation, one immediately knows one has met a lady of beauty. Sparkling eyes, a captivating smile, and words of friendship greet everyone she meets.

Love, understanding, creativity, and commitment describe Alice's inner beauty. These are the qualities she brings to Brittany's Hope.

Having lost two mothers by age eight, Alice learned early that many people have disadvantaged and difficult lives. She has always felt a need to help anyone who is struggling – physically and emotionally. Her need to comfort others led to her career in nursing. Love of children made her work with profoundly disabled children a natural.

Beauty in creativity is one of Alice's obsessions. Some people "shop 'til they drop". Alice "creates 'til she drops". Her talents include knitting, crocheting, sewing, counted cross stitch, quilting, needlepoint, jewelry making, doll making, china painting, decorative painting, and cooking. Alice says, "I believe that the creation of beauty in your life, using whatever talent God has given you, will bring a much-needed balance to your life."

Following the death of her granddaughter, Brittany, Alice returned to her cottage industry "Memories". She has devoted her creative talent to the benefit of Brittany's Hope Foundation. All proceeds from the sale of her beautiful hand-made dolls, jewelry, Christmas ornaments, and other lovely items are donated to the foundation.

The beauty of motherhood is exemplified in Alice's love for her family. She has been married to Richard Clouser for thirty-six years and is the mother of five children, grandmother of seventeen (soon to be nineteen), and a great-grandmother of three. One daughter is Candace Abel, the extraordinary founder and president of Brittany's Hope. Abraham Lincoln said, "All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my dear mother." CANDACE ABEL AGREES!



**Did you know that Brittany's Hope  
has handmade dolls for sale?**

See photos on page 15 or visit our web site at  
<http://www.brittanyshope.org/dolls.html>

The beautiful dolls are handmade by Alice Clouser, Vice President of Brittany's Hope.



## Feature

# Brittany's Buds: *Granted Children Waiting For Families*



Precious **Ruslan** was born in Russia during the spring of 2003. He needs a loving family to accept that he's a little person. He is diagnosed with achondroplasia (dwarfism). Otherwise, he is ideally healthy and right on target developmentally. He eats and sleeps very well and even knows his own name. He turns around without support and loves to smile and babble. He enjoys handling and playing with toys that make lots of noise. For more information about him, contact Linda Perilstein from Cradle of Hope at 301-587-4400. Ruslan's grant is \$8,500.



This sweet Russian girl, **Ekaterina**, was born in the middle of 1995. She has a beautiful smile and a wonderful sense of humor. She is both easygoing and adaptable. Her developmental delays will require a family with encouragement and love. Her grant is \$7,500. Please Linda Perilstein with Cradle of Hope at 301-587-4400.



**Zhenya** is a very adorable boy from Kazakhstan who was born in early '97. He has a delightful smile and a disarming personality. It appears he has some learning delays, but otherwise he is in good health and physical development. He is in need of a loving family who can help him reach his full potential. His grant is \$7,500. Please contact Stacey Dudley from MAPS at 207-775-4101.



**Dimitry** (3/12/94) and **Olga** (12/16/95) are gorgeous and precious siblings from Russia. They are in good health. Olga is active, very merry, and shows good communications skills. She also shows great respect to adults and is helpful. Dimitry is outgoing, friendly and has a good spirit. He has a great imagination, good ambition, and loves memorizing poems. This wonderful sibling pair are very bonded and are eager to have a family. They have a grant of \$12,000. If you think they are the children for you, contact Linda Perilstein with Cradle of Hope at 301-587-4400.



This very adorable Taiwanese boy was born in April of 1993. **Yi-Wei** is in great physical health. He has some delays in speech, language, and motor skills, and may be low IQ. Brittany's Hope had the opportunity to meet this young man, and can personally say his smile will melt your heart. Yi-Wei's grant is \$7,500. Please contact Eric Rogers with Commonwealth Adoptions at 813-909-4455.



**Daniyar** is a cute boy from Kazakhstan who was born in early 1998. Since he was premature, he's cross-eyed, has had multiple infections, developmental delays, and is active. His wonderful, outgoing personality makes up for these minor inconveniences. His host family says he is a special and loving child. Daniyar is a fun and happy little boy who has waited a long time for his family. Daniyar's grant is \$7,500. If Daniyar is your son, contact Lesley Siegel with Across the World at 1-800-610-5607 for more information.



**Sirah**, born in Sierra Leone on 3/24/94, is a truly touchingly gorgeous little girl. She is in generally good health, but is recovering from severe malnutrition. This wonderful girl needs a secure and nurturing home. Her grant is \$5,000. Please contact Cindy Boody of MAPS at 207-532-9358.

*Some orphanages do not allow publication of adoptable children's photos or names. Information about the children listed below is available by contacting Holly of La Vida at 1-800-513-1910.*

**Asia 01** – A darling little boy, born December 2002, with a cleft palate and lip. This little guy is really adorable and is available to married couples or singles older than 30. This country also has requirements for minimum income and access to health care resources. Do not let this little sweet pea wait too long for his family. Grant: \$5,000.00.

**Asia 02** – This absolutely beautiful 5 year-old is visually impaired. She is described as shy, but happy, having good self-control, helpful to other children, and very smart. She brushes her teeth, dresses, and goes to the restroom herself. She loves to sing, and recites many poems by heart. Grant: \$6,600.00.

**Asia 04** – This cute 10-year-old girl has some deformities of the hands and a teratoma on her left eye, but is otherwise healthy. Her caregivers say that this does not stop this kind little girl. She helps with the cleaning, dishes, loves to recite poems, and can read in Chinese. Her grant is \$6,600.00.

**Asia 06** – This sweet, round-faced 7-year-old girl is kind and gets along well with her caregivers and the other children. She loves to paint, has a good imagination, is smart and has good language abilities. She was treated for Hepatitis B, but is healthy today. Her grant is \$5,000.00.

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## Special Feature

# Brittany's Blossoms: Sunbeams in Our Garden



Beautiful and sweet sisters, **Lubov** ("Luba") and **Dianna** ("Dasha"), born 7/3/92 and 8/11/96 are eagerly awaiting a Mom and Dad to make them a family. Born in Russia, they are in good health, however Dianna has suffered significant burns over her arm, torso and leg.

Dianna and Lubov visited California last summer. Their host family describes Luba as athletic, helpful, cooperative, intelligent and eager to learn English. Dianna is determined, energetic, quick to laugh, and charming. Both are described as affectionate and adaptable, with a good sense of humor. Their relationship is described as typical with Luba watching out for her younger sister.

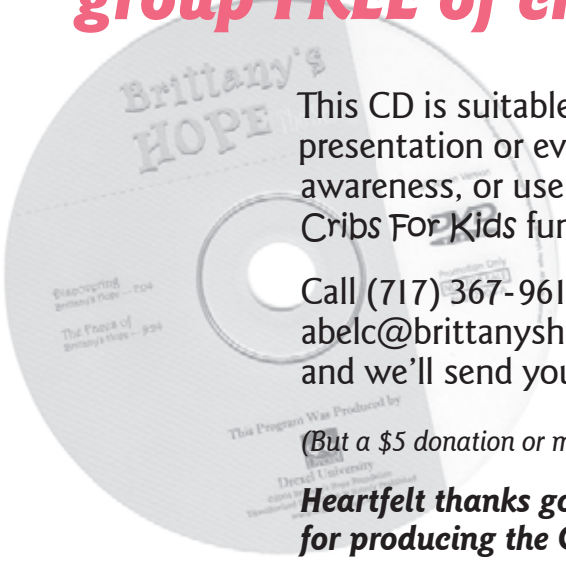
The agency fee has been reduced by \$1,500 and the foreign program fee has been reduced by \$2,000. If you are Lubov and Dianna's forever family call Linda from Cradle of Hope at (301) 587-4400 for more information about these gorgeous siblings.

**We are so dedicated to finding a forever family for these sweet girls that we have raised the amount of their grant to \$15,000.**

**Every child deserves a loving family.**

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**Heartfelt thanks go to Drexel University  
for producing the CDs for FREE!**

## **2004 Brittany's Hope GOLF BENEFIT**

**Friday, September 17**

to be held at

**Cool Creek Country Club**

Wrightsville, PA

**\$85.00**

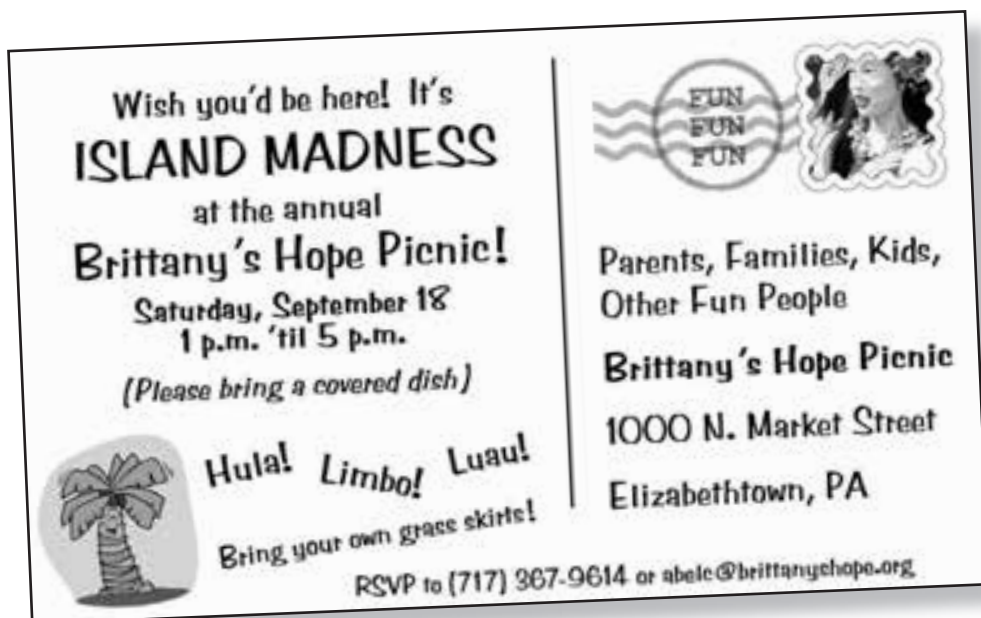
per person

**Includes a fun-filled  
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For more information or information regarding Corporate Sponsorship, contact Vanessa Hoke at 717-964-3642, ext. 214 or email: [vhoke@das-roadpro.com](mailto:vhoke@das-roadpro.com)

**All proceeds benefit  
Brittany's Hope Foundation**



Wish you'd be here! It's  
**ISLAND MADNESS**  
at the annual  
**Brittany's Hope Picnic!**  
Saturday, September 18  
1 p.m. 'til 5 p.m.  
(Please bring a covered dish)

**Hula! Limbo! Luau!**  
Bring your own grass skirts!

RSVP to (717) 367-9614 or [abelc@brittanyshope.org](mailto:abelc@brittanyshope.org)

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FUN  
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**Brittany's Hope Picnic**  
1000 N. Market Street  
Elizabethtown, PA

### **ISLAND MADNESS**

**at the annual Brittany's Hope Picnic!**

**Everyone's invited to join the fun at the Abel's house!**

**Saturday, September 18, 2004 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

We'd love to try your specialty – please bring your favorite covered dish

R.S.V.P. to (717) 367-9614 or [abelc@brittanyshope.org](mailto:abelc@brittanyshope.org)



## We're Spreading the Message

*continued from page 2*


story. After the interview, (and a few tears) Cris was so inspired that she and her family adopted one of the children sponsored by Brittany's Hope.

After seeing our family in church every week, a couple felt inspired to talk to us about expanding their family through adoption. They fell in love with one of the children Brittany's Hope was sponsoring and have now added a precious daughter from Russia to their family.

These are only seven of the many stories about how the Brittany's Hope message is spreading. We want to expand our efforts further, and I'm asking for your help. There are so many ways... hand out brochures or free DVDs to your doctor, banker, lawyer, pastor, and friends. (Give us a call; we'll send you as many free copies as you need) Tell everyone about the Brittany's Hope Golf Tournament and Civil War Christmas Home Tour. Ask them to buy tickets. With your help, we will achieve our goal of raising \$500,000 this year. Achieving that goal will allow Candy and I to give our full pledge amount of an additional \$250,000.

God has blessed Candy, myself and our family in so many ways. We believe that "to whom much is given, much is expected." We believe we must give back because of the blessings God has bestowed on all of us; giving of our most precious time, giving of our most valued talents, and giving of our worldly treasures.

We do these things through our work with Brittany's Hope, where 100% of every dollar we raise is put into grant money. Every dollar goes directly towards uniting children languishing in orphanages and loving families who know that the rewards of raising a special needs child by far outweigh the challenges. Most of all, we believe we are helping God's children find the love, guidance and strength of a family.

Thank you for giving your valuable time to read this newsletter. May God bless you and your family. 

*In peace,  
David Z. Abel*

*In our previous issue, we listed the names of donors in 2003. In our haste to go to press with the issue, we may have omitted or misprinted the donor names or amounts donated. Please accept our apologies, and thank you to Helen Myers of Elizabethtown for bringing this to our attention. Helen is a Violet donor.*

## Special Feature

# A Healthy Heart for an Angel

*by Candace Abel*

Little Pham Hoang Ngan is the picture of health these days. On the day that I visited with her adoptive parents and brothers, Ngan spent much of her time in cheerful play at our feet. Her sweet voice and happy spirit filled the tiny house in Vietnam as Mr. and Mrs. Pham and I shared tea and polite chatter. Looking at Ngan, I could not believe that this was the same child who was fighting for her life only 5 months prior to our visit!


Mr. and Mrs. Pham were faced with a difficult situation on September 1, 2000, when Mrs. Pham's sister died during childbirth leaving infant Ngan with no one to care for her. Even though they had two boys of their own to care for, the Phams decided to adopt Ngan and move from Cao Bang to Ho Chi Minh City in search of a better life. In 2002, Ngan was diagnosed with a heart condition and in April of 2003, the family was informed that it was essential for Ngan to have surgery at the only Heart Institute in Ho Chi Minh City. The cost for the surgery would be \$2,000, which needed to be paid in advance for Ngan to be placed on the waiting list. And even if they had the money, the wait for the surgery would be about 6 months due to the 6,000 other patients also waiting, most of whom were children. Dr. Alain Carpentier, a French doctor and the founder of The Heart Institute is proud of its 95% success rate and relatively low fees, however very few families living in Vietnam have the resources to afford such an expensive medical procedure. The Pham's resources as well as those of their extended family were depleted and they did not know where to turn



*Today, Pham Hoang Ngan is a healthy little girl. A \$2,000 donation from Brittany's Hope enabled her to get the life-saving heart surgery she desperately needed. Pictured here: Mrs. Pham, Ngan, and Candace Abel.*

to get the funding they needed to save their daughter's life.

While they were struggling with this dilemma, they met Joy Degenhardt from MAPS, an affiliate agency with Brittany's Hope Foundation, and an organization which has been helping Vietnamese children and poor families for over 10 years. As part of their humanitarian aid program, MAPS has in the past provided funds for heart surgery, however due to the current hold on adoptions in Vietnam, there were no funds available. Recognizing the urgent need, Joy contacted Brittany's Hope Foundation and after reviewing the documentation, the board members unanimously agreed we would answer the call and provide the funds needed by this deserving and loving family. The Phams had helped little Ngan when she had no one, and now it was our turn to help the Phams. Our simple gift put her on the list and eventually provided her with lifesaving surgery on December 26, 2003.

In May of 2004, I had the opportunity to visit with Ngan and her family. I felt so honored to spend time with this wonderful family. I was impressed by the love and devotion they expressed to the beautiful daughter they have adopted. As I watched this sweet cherub play, my heart swelled with the knowledge Brittany's Hope had made a difference in the life of this beautiful child. With God's grace and the love of her family, Ngan will continue to develop into a strong, healthy little girl and live the childhood she would have been denied without surgery. Heaven will have to wait a little longer for this angel! 



## Guest Feature

# “Karina, You Are My Best Friend.”

by Kristen Kandel

Looking at us you see what most people do ~ a happy, healthy, loving family. If you were to meet us at the park, out to dinner or at church you would perhaps smile at the sight of two young parents with two beautiful, energetic little girls. Yet things were not always this way. There was a time quite recently when we were not a family. Today I invite you to take a glimpse into our lives as I share our family story and the crucial role Brittany's Hope Foundation played in its formation.

Our names are Korey and Kristen Kandel. After several years of marriage we discovered that our family would be one formed through adoption. After much research we decided to adopt internationally from a former Soviet Union country called Kazakhstan. Our greatest dreams were realized in May 2001 when we adopted our 1 year-old daughter, Mia from Kostanai, Kazakhstan.

### **Our experience in Kazakhstan was fantastic**

We spent nearly one month in country fulfilling the required visitation period and filing necessary paperwork. Upon returning home we met and formed close friendships with many other families who had adopted children from Kazakhstan. It was through these families that we would hear about the child who would become our second daughter, Karina.



Karina, dressed in traditional Kazakhstan garb.

Karina's journey to us began back in February 2002 when a family who were in Kazakhstan adopting two children asked about special needs children available for adoption. Their translator, Elena immediately took them to her favorite child, Karina, whom she feared would never have a family because she was born without the lower portion of her right arm. Karina was represented by an adoption agency, MAPS International for some time, MAPS was unable to find an adoptive family for this otherwise healthy child. The Daniel's family visited with Karina and were troubled to learn that she was a very sad, lonely little girl. Armed with a video and pictures of Karina, the family returned to the US and set about telling anyone who would listen the story of a girl who needed a family.

***“I came to the realization that the best way to help orphaned children is to get them out of the orphanages and into families.”***

### **We could not stop thinking about Karina**

Korey & I were touched by Karina's story and we carefully considered if we could adopt her. We knew of the prejudice that existed in the former Soviet Union toward not only orphans but also the handicapped. Karina was both of these and her future was very bleak if she remained in Kazakhstan. Despite our concerns for Karina the negatives (and excuses) for not adopting Karina were all there. Most importantly we had not recovered financially from the expenses of Mia's adoption just a year previously. Even with all the valid concerns, we could not stop thinking about Karina. Common sense told us to just drop the issue and move on. As a Christian couple we knew that God's greatest concern was for the fatherless and we felt Him urging us to simply pursue Karina's adoption and see where it would lead. We wanted to be obedient but we could not avoid the most important detail – financially we could not afford the adoption fees.

### **Could this adoption really happen?**

Having completed our first daughter Mia's adoption through MAPS International Adoption



Karina in the orphanage.

Agency, I felt comfortable calling the agency and casually inquiring about Karina. I spoke to Libby Walch, the Kazakhstan program coordinator and shared our desire and concerns with her. It was then that Libby told me Karina had been submitted to Brittany's Hope for financial assistance. My heart nearly leaped out of my chest at this news! Could this adoption actually happen? The Brittany's Hope grant solved our greatest need and we decided to move forward towards adopting Karina.

In July 2003, we made our first of two trips to Kazakhstan to adopt Karina. It was quite an eye opening experience. Our impressions of life in an orphanage were based on Mia's adoption as an infant in a baby home. This time we were seeing the life of 3, 4 and 5 year olds. We were not prepared for the range of emotions that we were experiencing. We spent 3 weeks with Karina visiting and officially adopting her in a court. This time allowed us to fully experience the situation Karina was living in. Although the orphanage gives the children what they can, it is certainly not enough. The children are provided the basics of life, but never enough food and attention to fill them fully. Our visit was bittersweet. While on one hand we were supposed to be experiencing overwhelming joy at meeting our daughter, we couldn't reconcile that with our intense feelings of sadness, helplessness and anger at the unfair life of the children in the orphanage. During my stay I came to the realization ***that the best way to help orphaned children is to get them out of the orphanage into families.*** This is the work of Brittany's Hope!

### **A visit to an orphanage has a deep and life changing impact on your heart.**

As many families who travel to orphanages overseas can attest to, a visit to an orphanage has a deep and life changing impact on your heart. We not only form a bond with the child

*continued on page 10*



## ***"Karina, You Are My Best Friend"***

*continued from page 8*

we take home, but also with children we leave behind. I have met many families who want to adopt, but decide against it once they hear the high cost. It seems like such a waste when I think of the waiting children we left behind and realize the only thing standing between them and a family is money.



*With love,  
Korey, Kristen,  
Mia & Karina Kandel*

Season's Greetings  
2003

It is now 10 months since our trip to Kazakhstan and Karina is home! She is a beloved daughter, sister, granddaughter, niece and friend. Karina is now glowing with happiness and health. The child that was once angry and never smiled is now open, affectionate and never without a smile on her face. She can count, tell us what sounds animals make, speak small sentences and is a quick learner. Our concerns about her disability were without merit ~ she functions beautifully. Karina has grown to accept and love herself. She proudly shows her arm to curious children with an attitude of "this is me, this is what I look like".

### ***Life has changed***

Perhaps the most wonderful development is the relationship between sisters, Karina and Mia. Their relationship is beautiful, sweet and caring. They are 3-year-old sisters who genuinely enjoy having each other. Karina gives Mia hugs and

kisses and is always sure to get an extra sticker or candy for her sister when one is offered to her. I recently overheard Mia say, "Karina, you are my best friend". Life over the past year has certainly changed for little Karina!

### ***A family fills the deepest desire***

We have absolutely no doubt in our mind that without the help of Brittany's Hope Foundation Karina would not be here with us today. The generosity of those who give to Brittany's Hope offered Karina this chance at a family. A family fills the deepest desire that Karina had. She desperately needed to feel loved and most importantly, wanted.

If you are considering a financial gift to Brittany's Hope I urge you to follow through and offer whatever amount is possible for you. You are enabling real, tangible change to occur in the life of a child with whatever amount you choose to give. Just as it was no accident that I stepped out and inquired about Karina, it is no coincidence that you are reading this today.

Thank you for allowing us to share our family story with you. We hope it gives you a picture of the heart of an adoptive family assisted by Brittany's Hope Foundation. I wait with excitement to hear of each child brought home through the work of this fantastic organization!



# A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS HOME TOUR

at STONE GABLES

1000 North Market Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

**Saturday, November 6, 2004, 9:00 am to 7:00 pm**

**Sunday, November 7, 2004, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm**

**Tickets \$25 each**

- Stroll the encampments as Civil War Re-enactors portray scenes from the Civil War in each room and on the grounds
- Live entertainment
- Civil War Santa Claus
- Rooms decorated by local designers and floral artists

Tickets are available online using PayPal at [www.brittanyshope.org](http://www.brittanyshope.org) or by calling 717-367-9614 or at the following locations:  
Mueller's Flower Shop, Roth's Furniture

*All proceeds from your tax-deductible contribution benefit Brittany's Hope Foundation.*



## Special Feature

# Blessings

by Allen and Linda Loughry

Hi, our names are Allen and Linda Loughry, owners/proprietors of Grande Place Music Boxes. We have been in business at Kitchen Kettle Village, Intercourse Pa. for over 18 years. Since that time, many wonderful patrons have blessed our lives... but never have any of our wonderful patrons made such an impact with our hearts, as the man who wanted to buy a music box for his wife at Christmas. Not just any music box though, this patron wanted a very special music box for his very special wife. The man's name was David Abel, and his wife was Candace.

The box he chose was indeed special. The Porter Baroque Disc Box is hand inlaid in Italy with designs that are registered and copyrighted exclusively for Porter Music Box Company. Porter then installs two of their own combs each with 76 teeth that play the richest, fullest music imaginable from an instrument of this size. The spring wound clockworks drive a 15½" copper plated disc. A gentle winding will provide approximately 20 minutes of uninterrupted music.

I give all these specifics not only to tout the qualities of this box, but so you will understand how this purchase produced a domino effect that will forever change the quality of our lives.

While finalizing the details of this gift, Dave told Allen about his very special wife and the work she does with Brittany's Hope. He

**Enter for your  
chance to win this  
beautiful music box  
valued at \$15,000!**

**\$5 for one chance  
\$20 for five chances**

*Drawing on December 10, 2004*

learned about Brittany and how her life has influenced countless numbers of changed lives. Dave told him about his wonderful family and how proud he was of each and every one of them.

As Allen told me about this man and his story, I thought how very perfect to hear such a story as the snow was falling and we were listening to Christmas Carols over dinner... a nice warm fuzzy feeling, just in time for the holidays. I truly didn't expect to hear much about this family again, until we were contacted last year about the Holiday Open House at the Abels' home. It was then that the real impact began to evolve. We met the lovely older children; some dressed in native costumes, others parking cars and generally showing hospitality with grace and charm. Meeting Candy was like reconnecting with an old friend, such was her



warmth, humility and friendliness. And Dave... well, he warmed my heart as he talked about the younger children that weren't there; this made me yearn to meet them too, especially Emily.

The idea to "do" something of benefit to Brittany's Hope had been on Allen's mind from the first time he met Dave. But what could we do? Our ever increasing years prevented us from plunging into adoption. Allen knew... we'll donate a music box just like the one Dave bought for Candy. We would sell raffle tickets in the store and out of Brittany's Hope functions with all proceeds going to Brittany's Hope. The Porter Box raffle has been up and running for a few months now. Our plans are to have Emily pull the lucky ticket on December 10, 2004 at our shop in Intercourse, PA. Please consider contacting Brittany's Hope or visit us at Grande Place and buy a chance on this beautiful music box. Tickets are \$5.00 each or buy 4 and get the 5th free. Blessings, indeed, come to us in such unexpected ways. How many blessings we would have missed had Dave not wanted to buy a special music box for his beloved wife! 💕



Allen and Linda Loughry with Emily, Candace and David Abel.

To purchase tickets, contact  
Brittany's Hope at (717) 367-9614 or  
[www.brittanyshope.org](http://www.brittanyshope.org), or visit Grande  
Place at the Kitchen Kettle Village,  
Intercourse, PA, (717) 768-8730,  
(800) 418-1875, or [www.musicbox.us](http://www.musicbox.us)

## Special Feature

# Sol Siden & Friends: A Night of Hope

by Mary Jean Risser, Board Member

It was the desire of Sol Siden music duo, Nicole Brubaker and Barry Atticks, to use their talent to enhance the lives of those in need. When they learned about Brittany's Hope Foundation, they contacted Candace Abel, president. Immediately, plans were underway to produce "An Evening With Sol Siden and Friends: A Night of Hope."

The elegant benefit concert was held March 19, 2004 at Leffler Chapel on the Elizabethtown College campus. Lori Burkholder of WGAL-TV News graciously served as mistress-of-ceremonies.

Throughout the evening, the audience enjoyed presentations by Sol Siden, The Harrisburg Singers, Drexel University Dance Ensemble and pianist Michael Reale.

A special highlight of the event was the appearance of Candace Otto, Miss Pennsylvania 2003. Miss Otto treated the audience to several vocal solos and a message, "Answering the Call to Service."

Karin Kelly, Program Director of Film and Video Programs at Drexel University produced a video entitled "Brittany's Hope and Faces of Brittany's Hope." The film illustrated the heartwarming story of the Abels as they established the non-profit organization dedicated to finding loving homes and families for special needs children. Several children and families who have received grants from Brittany's Hope were welcomed to the stage midst rounds of applause.

Because of performers, sponsors, and friends who joined together to produce this show, Brittany's Hope continues its mission of HOPE ----- HOPE for the potential beautiful children possess, HOPE for victory over despair, and HOPE for the blessed joy of a family.

We at Brittany's Hope have HOPE that others will protect and nurture the light of God's littlest lives through adoption or donation.



Candace Otto, Miss Pennsylvania 2003, singing a vocal solo.



Lori Burkholder of WGAL-TV News



The Harrisburg Singers performed several selections including a Korean folk song.



The exciting and innovative Drexel University Dance Ensemble put on a creative show.



Thank you to the Board members who worked so hard! First row, l-r: Rose Block and Alice Clouser. Second row, l-r: Candice Hozza, Mary Jean Risser, Pam Grosh and Candace Abel. Third row, l-r: Lori DePoto, Cathy Miller, Barb Sample, Marcy Fahnestock. Back row: Barb Diener.



Barry Atticks and Nicole Brubaker of Sol Siden.



Feature

# Brittany's Blooms... We're Home!



☛ The Silvers family adopted Sergey, second from left, and recently brought him home. Necia, Sergey (3), Terry, Andrew (6), and Anya (4). All 3 children are adopted from Russia.



☛ Ansu, home from Sierra Leone, has plenty of kisses to give his baby sister.



☛ Ansu's [Sierra Leone] radiant smile shows his happiness.



☛ The Renaert family adopted Aminata and Augusta from Sierra Leone. With two other children and a new baby, their family is seven people strong!

Somehow destiny comes into play. These children end up with you and you end up with them. It's something quite magical.

**Nicole Kidman**, Adoptive mother



☛ Jacob and Katya [Russia] Heffner dressed in their finest for their first Easter as a family.



🕒 Ty [Meng-Wei, Taiwan] is happy to have his little sisters pile up on him!

🕒 Kaday [Sierra Leone] arrives at the airport on her homecoming day.



*Time and experience have taught me a priceless lesson: Any child you take for your own becomes your own if you give of yourself to that child. I have borne two children and had seven others by adoption, and they are all my children, equally beloved and precious.*

**Dale Evans**  
Adoptive mother

🕒 Sisters McKenna and Riley [Natalya - Russia].

*It is a colorful litany that winds toward me from the horizon like a road across a rocky desert... And the road ends in my arms at my own oasis – our daughter.*

Adoptive mother

🕒 Sister McKenna, cousin Abby and Riley [Natalya - Russia] sparkle in their dress-up clothes!



# Sowmya Shines With Self-Confidence

by Traci Monju, proud mother of Sowmya

When I was fourteen years old my parents adopted my sister Beulah from India. She has Down syndrome, and I was not sure if I was going to like her or not. She arrived 3 days before Christmas. She was very shy, wouldn't talk to anyone, and took all of my mother's attention. The first time she smiled was on Christmas morning, when one of my brothers was being silly with a new gift.

Since that time I have come to love Beulah very much. Because of her Down syndrome she is not very advanced mentally, but she had the most loving heart of anyone I have ever met. She is so sweet and fits into my large family wonderfully. Because of this great experience, I hoped that one day I would be blessed with an adoptive child of my own.

## **We knew we wanted to adopt at least one child**

Before my husband and I got married, I told him that I really wanted to adopt children as well as having them biologically. About five years and two biological children later we decided to start looking for available children to adopt. We just knew that our family wasn't going to be complete until we had adopted at least one child.



## **Her disability didn't matter to us**

Two days after Christmas in 2002 while we were visiting my family in Albuquerque, New Mexico, they received a pamphlet from the adoption agency that they had adopted my sister from with pictures of waiting children. My husband Mark and I each looked at the pamphlet at separate times that day, and each had felt a bond with the beautiful little girl born with no arms. We knew that we wanted her to be part of our family. Her disability didn't matter to us, we just knew that she was supposed to be our daughter.

## **Concerned about the costs**

We knew that international adoptions could be very expensive and we were trying to figure out how to pay for it. Mark was getting a bonus from his job and we calculated that it would cover about half of the adoption expenses. We were concerned that we would have to take out a substantial loan to cover the remaining costs.

When we called to inquire about how to get started, the agency told us that there was a grant helping to pay for this particular child's adoption. The grant from Brittany's Hope was courtesy of a private sponsor, Colonial Craft Kitchens in Annville, PA, owned by Jerry and Linda Hoffsmith, and would enable us to pay for all of our expenses without going into debt. If we had to pay for all of

our adoption costs, we would have gone in debt over \$8,000.00. We are a one-income family and on Mark's salary we would have been paying off that loan at \$180 a month for the next five years. That would have left very little for actually feeding and clothing an extra child. As you can see, the grant money not

only helped my family avoid debt, but it freed up enough money monthly to actually care for our new child.

## **A year and a half later, Sowmya came home**

It took a year and a half to finish all of our paperwork and await government approval before we could bring our daughter Sowmya home. Sowmya is from India (just like my little sister). India's culture is 30% unemployed and homeless. To make matters worse, people with any disability are automatic outcasts in their society. Our daughter would have ended up on the streets, probably begging with no hope of a future or a family.

## **She has something she never had before: self-confidence**

Now that she is in our country, she has a family who loves her and she can have whatever kind of future she desires. When I first brought her home she had no self-esteem. In the orphanage they treated her like she wasn't capable of doing anything on her own. She didn't want to do anything herself, because she had been raised to believe that she couldn't. Now it is 4 months later and she can do nearly everything our biological children can

*continued on page 15*

*Left: Sowmya at the orphanage in India.*

*Top: Sowmya at home with her family.*



### ***Sowmya Shines with Self-Confidence***

*continued from page 14*

do. She feeds herself, has wonderful manners, potties and bathes herself she has something she had never had before: self-confidence.

Two weeks ago she got her first prosthetic arm. She says it is "very pretty" and you can see in the way she carries herself that she thinks she is pretty now. We are so proud of Sowmya and are looking forward to seeing what she does with her future and newfound independence.

Sowmya is a very loving child. She loves to give us hugs and say "I love you" all of the time. She loves to talk and sing and play with her brother and sister. Today she even helped her little sister put on her shoes. She doesn't let her lack of arms impair her. You should see her eat French fries! She can even dip them into ketchup and turn them around to put in her mouth ketchup side first without getting any on herself.

### ***What a different child she is now***

She loves pretty things. She always gets excited on Sunday morning when we let her pick out her own dress for church. What a different child she is now! When I went to India to get her, she lived in a tiny, dirty little room with 10 other children. She wasn't potty trained, and had never fed or dressed herself. She has never even been outside of the orphanage. In fact, the first time she played in our yard, she was scared of the grass! Now she laughs and runs, rides a bike, and loves to play soccer.

### ***We are so blessed***

We are so blessed to have Sowmya in our family. We love her just as much as our biological children, she is our child. We are so thankful to Brittany's Hope for helping us to pay for all of the countless expenses that accumulate during adoptions. Thanks to Brittany's Hope our family is complete, happy, and free of debt! 💕

*We look at adoption as a very sacred exchange. It was not done lightly on either side. I would dedicate my life to this child.*

**Jamie Lee Curtis**  
*Adoptive mother*

## ***The Ultimate Gift: Handmade Dolls for Sale***



**Elizabeth** (left) is 21 inches tall and dressed in a cream colored satin trimmed with pale apricot lace and ribbon. Entredeaux bib on bodice. Small floral nosegay included.

**Brittany** (right) is 21 inches tall and wearing a dress of vintage apricot crepe material trimmed with old lace.

Minimum donations: Elizabeth—\$175, Brittany—\$169, plus tax & s/h for each.

Every doll we have for sale has been carefully and lovingly made by Brittany's grandmother, Alice Clouser, a dedicated craftsman and artist. Each one-of-a-kind doll is poured, fired, assembled, painted and dressed exclusively for the benefit of the Brittany's Hope Foundation. We hope you will enjoy our presentation of dolls by Alice Clouser's *Memories*.

To view the dolls currently on display, visit <http://www.brittanyshope.org/dolls.html>. Each doll is shown in a photograph with a description and price. The dolls sometimes take months to complete; Alice painstakingly hand-crochets or sews each outfit, paints and assembles each body part, and styles the doll's hair. Clothing for the dolls often feature vintage fabrics and lace.

Alice does not keep any of the proceeds from the sales of these dolls, and purchases the materials with her own funds. All proceeds from your purchases go directly towards the work done by the Brittany's Hope Foundation. 💕



**Brittany's  
HOPE**

## Brittany's Hope Foundation

1000 N. Market Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022  
(717) 367-9614

*Aiding Adoption of Special Children Worldwide*



**100% of your donations are used to place  
special needs children with loving families.**

Visit us on the web at <http://www.brittanyshope.org>



PRESENTS

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at

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Portray Scenes from the  
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Rooms Decorated by Local  
Designers and Floral Artists

Live Entertainment

Civil War Santa Claus

Tickets - \$25 each

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All proceeds from your tax deductible contribution benefit  
Brittany's Hope Foundation  
aiding adoption of special children worldwide