Book Review by Carolyn Gorr

The Volga Germans
Krasnoyar (aka Krasnojar), Chicago, Everywhere
Volume 1 - Their stories, their words
A compendium of history and family
October, 2001
researched, compiled, edited and published by
George Valko, Chicago, Illinois 60614

In his latest book, George Valko has assembled a great collection of Volga information under "one roof," so to speak. Using a wide variety of sources, which he credits generously, George relates the stories of those Volga Germans who lived along the Karaman River; emigrated to Chicago, IL and Sheboygan, WI; those who were deported to Siberia in 1941; and of the survivors who, when the Berlin Wall fell, became the Aussiedler. Woven into this landscape are the stories of George's ancestors.

The book has plenty of maps, charts and photos along with personal family recollections of life in Russia as well as in the USA and especially Jefferson Park in Chicago. Many of the more interesting remembrances are from Valko's Franz and Veller cousins. Since I grew up in the Mayfair neighborhood [adjacent to Jefferson Park] of Chicago the street names and other identifying landscape mentioned were familiar to me and I could picture reminiscences clearly.

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George has spent ten years corresponding with Volga Germans in Germany and Russia. You can read first hand experiences as they were deported from their beloved Volga to the Trudarmee in Siberia. I especially liked the discussion regarding "Beinamen, clan names and nicknames" - how, why and when they were used. The nick-names have always fascinated me because they are used in all ethnic groups to further define the person one is trying to identify.

My criticism with the book is mainly cosmetic. It would be easier reading if there had been more use of white space. For example: spacing between many of the paragraphs; blank pages between the individual chapters and essays. As it is, one section runs into the next which probably only annoys former journalism students like myself.

If you wish to purchase a copy of the Valko book please contact George Valko, 325 W. Belden, Chicago, IL, 60614, phone 773.477.8619. Check out his website at: http://www.georgevalko.com

330 pages, 8½×11, plastic comb binding, color covers, photos, maps, charts

Subject: Volume 1, your Volga German Book
Date: Fri, 28 Dec 2001 19:13:18 EST
From: PaulK@aol.com
To: george@georgevalko.com

Hi George:

Just finished reading your book "**The Volga Germans**" and it was very well done. I read the entire book and it brought back some memories from days gone past. I can see where it took 10 years to put it together and put it on paper. Your family has to be proud of your achievement. Cheers from Florida Paul K

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Chicago, Illinois 60614

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