

Fenia And Esiah Kleiman With Their Friend Leonid Fuks



This is a picture of me and my husband Esiah Kleiman with the chairman of Chernovtsy Hesed, Leonid Fuks. The photo was taken in Fuks' office in Hesed in Chernovtsy in 2000. I retired from teaching in 1982. My work didn't give me any satisfaction. The children weren't interested in studying. They just wanted a certificate of secondary education. I didn't regret my decision to quit work. My husband worked until he turned 68. He had good relationships with his colleagues and they are still in touch. After Ukraine declared independence in 1991 our life changed even more. Jewish associations began to revive Jewish culture. It became particularly evident after Hesed was established. Old Jewish people found care and support. Hesed provides medication and food packages for old people. Volunteers from Hesed visit old people and help them about the house. There's a number of clubs for elderly people including a choir and dancing club. We celebrate Sabbath and Jewish holidays together. There's a Jewish school and a monthly TV program in Yiddish, broadcasted from Chernovtsy to several regions in Ukraine. My husband and I didn't return to observing Jewish traditions, simply because we had never given them up. We just do openly now, what we used to do secretly before. We celebrate all Jewish holidays at home. On Chanukkah we have candles burning in the chanukkiyah. I cook all traditional food that I have been used to since my childhood. We observe traditions to honor the memory of our parents, who had observed Jewish traditions through whatever hardships. My husband is the chief editor of the newspaper published by Hesed. It has issues about our life and activities. We publish articles about the war and the Holocaust. Those that survived will never forget this part of their life and their successors will remember. We write memoirs about the days we spent in the ghetto. These are hard memories, but we have no right to forget them. We need to remember in order to never let it happen again.