

Pesia Speranskaya With Her Husband Alexandr Speranskiy



This photo was taken near the building of the Jewish community of Estonia in Tallinn. My friend Tsyliya Laud took this picture of my husband and me. This photo was taken in 1999.

The Jewish community of Estonia was established in 1985. It's not only the food packages that our community provides. My husband is a pensioner, but he's still full of energy and doesn't feel like just staying home. Our community invited Alexandr to work as a janitor. They don't pay much for this work, and his salary does not add much to our family budget. However, while he is still strong, why not work? He talks to people. Besides, he is used to physical work, and there's not much to do at home. I believe, this job helps Alexandr to remain fit, and we are grateful to the community for giving us this chance.

We've always celebrated Jewish holidays. I invite my friends. They are alone now. I cook meals, and we celebrate together with my friends. My husband is always with us. He knows about Jewish holidays and traditions. We also visit the community. The community members and the rabbi make all arrangements. At times I feel down and don't feel like going out, but then I pull myself together and go visit the community. They always lift up my spirits and make me forget about depression. I watch what's going in the Jewish life in the world. The community is so much involved in our life that I cannot imagine life without it.

The public authorities try to support us as much as they can. We live on two pensions and can manage more or less. Last summer those who were in the evacuation received the same benefits as those, who were subject to resettlement. This resulted in some rise in our pensions and getting some benefits. Perhaps, when we switch to Euros, this will be more challenging, but I believe the state will take care of it then.

We have no living relatives left in Tallinn. There are only graves. There are many graves, and there's only my husband and me to look after them. We often visit my mother and daughter's graves, and all other graves as well. We clean them up. The janitor of the Jewish cemetery once

said to me: whoever gets what in heritage, but you've got graves. This is true. We are responsible for these graves. If we ever decided to leave Estonia, they would be abandoned.