

## Judita Haikis



This is me photographed for my passport. This photo was taken in Kiev in 2004.

My husband wanted move to Kiev, his hometown from Uzhgorod. We did it in 1974. We received a 2-bedroom apartment in a new house near a lake in the Sviatoshino district in Kiev. My husband had a confirmation of his transfer of the parents' apartment to the state and this helped a lot. My husband worked a neuropathologist in the polyclinic for scientists of the Academy of Scientists. I worked as a German and French teacher at school till I retired. I got along with my colleagues and my pupils liked me. My former pupils visit and call me. I am very glad that they do not forget me.

My granddaughter Yekaterina after finishing school entered the Historical Faculty of Uzhgorod University. Mikhail studied at the Medical Faculty in the university. My granddaughter also taught history in the Jewish Sunday school and my grandson worked as a medical brother during studies. When she was a senior student in the university, my granddaughter. After finishing the 4th year of the university my granddaughter took an academic leave and went to work in Germany for a year, to Stuttgart. She met her future husband Michael Hertzog, a German man, there. They got married. A year later Yekaterina returned to Uzhgorod, finished her studies in the university and moved in with her husband in Germany. Now she studies at the Faculty of Economics in Osnabruck. My grandson Mikhail also moved to Germany after finishing his studies.

When after the breakup of the USSR Ukraine gained independence, we were building up hopes for a better life, but many of us still live in the humiliating poverty. Ukraine is rich in natural resources, fruitful soils and hardworking people. I believe, we have such poor life due to our leaders who guided the country in the Soviet times. However, there has been some improvement. The Jewish life is reviving. There are many Jewish organizations and associations, and the most popular with old people is the Hesed, of course. The Hesed in Kiev provides food packages to us, delivers meals to elderly people and bring medications. This is significant assistance. We are in a better position

than non-Jewish residents. Hesed is just great! It conducts a great job to recover Jewry in Ukraine, from nursery schools to old people helping them to study the Jewish history, history of religion, and learn more about Jewish traditions. There are various studios and clubs. I like our Sunday daytime center where we talk with other people - this is very important. Sometimes talking to others is more important than food. I have new friends in the daytime center and we enjoy spending time together. I read Hesed-delivered Jewish newspapers and magazines regularly. Soon I am moving to my grandchildren in Germany, my family. It's hard to live alone in my age. Of course, it's hard to leave everything here, it's been a big part of my life, hard to leave the graves of my dear ones and get adjusted to a different way of life, but I hope to be able to visit Uzhgorod and Kiev, my two hometowns.