

Chasia Spanerflig



This is me, Chasia Spanerflig. The picture was taken in Vilnius in the modern building of the Jewish community of Lithuania. Previously the premises were used by the Jewish lyceum, where I studied. The year is 2005.

Now I live with my sick son. I don't want to move to my daughter in the USA as I am independent. I want to live in my country. I could have lived in Israel and I even dreamt of it in my childhood, but nobody invites me there. My husband and I were truly Soviet people, but still I understood all the negative things brought by the Soviet regime to Lithuania. That is why I gladly accepted all those events, which lead to the independence of Lithuania, as I remembered the prewar life in independent Lithuania. I hope our country would grow stronger and become a flourishing state, where everybody would feel themselves as a personality.

When the Jewish community was founded in 1990s, Fanya and I were some of the first who went there. We suggested working there as volunteers. I wanted to work for the department of the veterans of war, and Fanya for the department of ghetto prisoners. Both of us are former ghetto prisoners and veterans of war. I have a medal for participation in the partisan squad. Fanya and I worked a lot, went from house to house, arranged get-togethers for veterans, published their stories for everybody to find out that Jews had struggled as well as other people of other nationalities.

And now the community means a lot to me. I go to work every other day and I feel an incentive. I take care of my looks and try not to give in to illnesses. I also brought my son to the community: he takes lunches to those old people who can't come and get lunch. Fanya and I are very much respected. We are honored members of the community. We are often invited to take the floor on the occasion of holidays and anniversary events. Fanya and I are bosom friends. We had a lot in common when we were young: ghetto, partisan squad and also the post-war life. Now we see our calling in the Jewish community. I am not a religious person and I am not going to change, but I am happy to go back to Jewish traditions: celebrate Sabbath and Jewish holidays in the community, fast on Yom Kippur. It brings me closer to my Jewish roots.