

Ferdinand Chernovich With His Front-Line Comrades



This is me (to the right) with my front-line comrades. The picture was taken during our traditional get-together on the Victory Day.

The picture was taken in Moscow in 1997, May 9.

At the end of the 1960s I began to work for the design bureau by the ministry of chemical industry. They treated me very well and I got a promotion. Shortly before retirement I was the chief project engineer. I had worked there until retirement. I retired in 1983.

I got married in 1958. Our family life was very happy. The only thing that made us sad was not having children. At home we marked birthdays of our family members and such soviet holidays as May 1, November 7, Soviet Army Day, Victory Day, New Years Day.

New Year's day and Victory Day were our favourite holidays. On the 9th of May my wife and I went to the tomb of Unknown Soldier, to the monument of eternal flame. We brought flowers to the tomb, met front-line soldiers.

In the evenings we went to see some of my front-line friends or invited them to our house. We had drinks to commemorate those who perished, sang war songs. There are very few front-line soldiers Moscovites left. One of two of them is bedridden, another one cannot talk as a result of apoplectic stroke.

I do not know anything about front-line soldiers from other cities. The rest of the holidays were taken by us an extra day off. We had the opportunity to invite friends and have fun. Mariam's parents were atheists like my mother.

They did not mark Jewish holidays at home. My wife and I often went to the cinema, and to the theater. We liked to go to the seaside on vacation. I was often given vouchers to the sea resorts for being disabled.

In 2001 my lovely wife passed away. I live by myself after her death. From financial standpoint I live better than any Russian pensioners. I have pension in the amount of 6000 rubles the equivalent of 200 USD. It is enough to get by and for medicine.

I have a good command of three foreign languages- German, English and French. I am able to work at home. I am given work by the institute of scientific and technical information. I am handed materials in German, English and French and I am supposed to make a short annotation in Russian within certain time frame.

So, I am not poor. Social worker from the municipal organization, which supports veterans of war, helps me about the house. Twice a week a lady from the social service comes to cook and clean the house.

After breakup of the USSR there appeared a lot of Jewish societies in Russia. Jewish life revived. I cannot say that I am taking an active part in the Jewish life. I am not interested in religion. I must have taken way too strong "inoculations" of atheism when I was a child.

I am a member of Moscow Council of the Jewish War Veterans, headed by the Hero of the Soviet Union Moses Iaryanovskiy. We get together and meet interesting people, attend lectures, watch movies. I have new friends and they help me to get over my loneliness.