

Arkadiy Redko With His Comrades



These are veterans of the war, members of the Kiev Association of Jewish War Veterans at the Jewish Council of Ukraine. We were photographed for the memory and each of us has a copy of this picture. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1999. I am in the first row, 2nd from the right, wearing a dark-blue shirt. I retired in 1992, but I've still been working since. In 1993 I became deputy chairman of the organization of Kiev Jewish veterans of the war. I was elected secretary of the all-Ukrainian organization of veterans of the war in the Jewish Council of Ukraine. I am a member of the military commission in the Jewish Council of Ukraine. For eight years I've been a member of the council of the Kiev Jewish community, a representative of the Jewish Council of Ukraine in the Sohnut and Joint, and a member of the Association of Jewish War Veterans in Kiev. As for the Jewish life in Ukraine after the breakup of the USSR, I think there are more Jewish leaders in Kiev and Ukraine than there is a Jewish life. There are many Jewish centers: 10-15 make a Jewish center, but they don't want to unite for the sake of the common goal, but want to take command. Over ten Jewish newspapers are published in Kiev and more than 47 in Ukraine. And they compete with one another. I think there will never be a Jewish life in Ukraine because people live very different lives. Ukraine will never get out of this state: it's necessary to replace the political elite. The only Jewish organization really beneficial for the people is Hesed. Hesed helps old people by providing food and medications; they also celebrate birthdays in Hesed. It's very important for old people to know that they are remembered. There are often meetings with delegations. And of course, Kiev's Hesed supports Jewish organizations. We need to render justice to them - they accomplish a lot.