

Mesko Nikolai In Front Of The Town Council In Mukachevo



This photo was taken in 2004, in Mukachevo, in the Veterans' Club, in front of the town council. I'm more or less in the middle of the first row. At that time I was the chairman of the Veterans' Club.

I could have retired when I turned 60. Despite this I've only been retired since last year (2004). At the age of 82 I was still working in various positions. They were making use of my experiences and knowledge. For example, they wanted to start up a second-hand shop in Mukachevo, where they would sell rags [the interviewee means clothing - Editor's note] and similar things. They called me from the town council, I hadn't been retired even a day, that I should become director. We also have a dormitory for students here. The director of the dormitory called me up: 'Please do something with it, help me out. Be my deputy.' I didn't feel like doing it. So the director said: 'Listen, you've got two granddaughters, and I know that you'd like for them to go teacher's high school.

We won't accept them unless you start working for us. They we'll accept them at school!' So I worked there as well. My job was to bring about some order in the dormitories, where there were about 500 students. Boys were crawling into girls' rooms through windows and so on. I was supposed to put it right. But what's more important, when I was already working on it, they elected me chairman of the Mukachevo association of retirees. Thirty-seven retired army officers and many noncommissioned officers were members of this organization, and despite this, they elected me, an ordinary soldier, as chairman. I'm still a member of this organization, but I stepped down from the post of chairman. I resigned a half year ago. Even now they're calling me back, making all sorts of offers and promises. But no, it's been enough. And one more thing, the town council recognized what I've done for the town, the huge amount of work, what I had accomplished and I received a significant honor. I was elected, as the only Jew, to be an honorary citizen of Mukachevo.