

THE IVANSK PROJECT e-NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 35

March – April 2009

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- **The Ivansk Project Survey I, 2009**

The survey acquired information and opinion from members of The Ivansk Project. Respondents up-dated contact information and outlined their familial connections to Ivansk. They evaluated whether the e-Newsletter was achieving its primary objective of documenting the history of Jewish life in the shtetl and recommended ways to expand the scope of The Project. The results of the survey are summarized in this issue and give promise for continued growth and relevance of the endeavor. Thanks are extended to David Lederman, Shelly Kesten, Gary Lipton, Laurie Naiman and Arthur Zimmerman for their help in setting up and assessing the results of the survey.

- **Announcement: The Ivansk Project Member's Directory**

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they would be interested in learning the names of other Ivanskers (and "Non-Ivanskers") who subscribe to the e-Newsletter. If you filled out the survey you will be contacted by e-mail with more information and for your permission to list your name in the directory.

If You Did Not Respond to the On-Line Survey your name will be listed in the directory when you have completed the survey, which can be accessed on our web site:

<<http://www.ivanskproject.org/>>.

Please copy the document, fill in the information and then mail it to Norton Taichman. Complete instructions are provided in the survey.

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The Ivansk Project Survey I, 2009

In 2001 ten Ivanskers began documenting the history of Jewish Life in Ivansk. Soon the group had expanded to about 50 individuals. The e-Newsletter was inaugurated in 2003 to facilitate communication and to report our findings. By 2008 membership had grown to approximately 400 subscribers, and the e-News was now accessed and archived on the web.

But other than their names and e-mail addresses, most of the 400 e-News subscribers remained “anonymous”. How many were descended from Jews who once lived in Ivansk? Where do they live? Did they read the e-Newsletter and did they think it served a useful purpose? Could we learn more about ourselves if we knew more about each other and our cyber community?

The answers to these and other questions served as the basis for organizing The Ivansk Project Survey. The survey was set up using “SurveyMonkey”, a cutting edge web service that supported collection and analysis of data in real-time. SurveyMonkey was an efficient and powerful way to document peoples’ opinions. However, we had no prior experience with this type of research, and a few of our questions did not fully accomplish what they were intended to do. But we’re no longer at the bottom of the learning curve. We’ll do better next time.

In early March subscribers were invited to access/respond to the survey. In an attempt to recruit as many respondents as possible, two reminders were e-mailed to everyone in mid March and early April. The on-line survey was closed on 15 April; those who did not complete the survey can do so by following the link on our web site and mailing their responses to Norton Taichman.

The survey consisted of 23 questions: respondents were required to answer the first 7 questions; the remaining questions were voluntary. We specified that anyone who did not respond would be deleted from the subscriber’s list. However, we reconsidered this decision and will continue corresponding by e-mail with everyone on record in the hope that they can be coaxed into taking the survey. Only those who respond will be invited to have their names appear in the forthcoming Ivansk Project Member’s Directory. Individuals who are unable to access and navigate the web will also be included as members. More on this below.

What follows is a question-by-question analysis of the results of the survey. The results provided interesting insights into our far-flung community and suggested directions for enhancing the continued development of The Ivansk Project.

Question 1* & 2* (* Required questions. Images of questions are from SurveyMonkey web site.)

1. Enter your First Name

2. Enter your Last Name

	Response Count
 view	164
<i>answered question</i>	164
<i>skipped question</i>	0

A total of 164 persons responded to the survey. All of them answered the first 7 required questions. We would have been happier with a larger number of respondents but are satisfied that the survey was meaningful and relevant to future development.

There are several possible reasons why we failed to attract more than 50% of those who were notified of the survey: For instance:

- Many of us have been overwhelmed by the amount of e-mail we receive on a daily basis. One respondent told me he was swamped with 1,000 incoming messages every day. Too many missives are “junk mail”, uninvited, mindless intrusions. Even after discarding the rubbish, the sheer volume of retained mail is enough to induce cerebral constipation. In the 21st century it’s getting harder and harder to manage the never-ending flood of information arriving from all directions. Alas, there’s no escape. I can sympathize with those who dread receiving yet another batch of incoming e-mail.
- Some people may not open, let alone read the e-Newsletter. Why don’t they just tell us to take them off the mailing list?
- A few “Non-Ivanskers” indicated that they were not certain whether we wanted them to participate. We could have done a better job in defining why their input was important.
- Others can’t be bothered answering questionnaires because they don’t see the point of the exercise. Some may view the survey as an invasion of privacy and out of principle refuse to respond.

The bottom line is that no matter how hard we try we just won’t reach everyone.

But there are groups of Ivanskers that we will not ignore, including all who were born in the shtetl. In addition there are subscribers with health issues and older individuals who are not connected to the web. Most of them receive copies of the e-Newsletter from relatives and friends. While they are not included in the current survey’s data base, they will be listed in the Member’s Directory.

Questions 3*, 4*, 5* and 6*

3. Enter city or town where you live

4. Enter Province/State where you live

5. Enter country where you live

6. Enter your e-mail address		Response Count
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> view </div>	164	
<i>answered question</i>	164	
<i>skipped question</i>	0	

We wanted to know where our readers lived. The results are shown below:

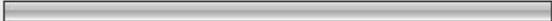
Country	Number Respondents
Canada	90 (55%)
USA	45 (27%)
Israel	17 (10%)
Colombia	2
Poland	2
United Kingdom	2
Venezuela	2
Australia	1
Brazil	1
Belgium	1
France	1

It's no surprise that 55% of respondents live in Canada followed by the USA and Israel.

It would be interesting to document when and why our families left Ivansk. What arrangements were required for the trip and what factors governed their choice of destination? What route was taken and the modes of transport? How long was the journey? How did the family adapt to their new surroundings?

Metropolitan Toronto became home to most Ivaskers. The Ivasker Mutual Benefit Society has served as the community's "home base" since 1932. The landsmanschaft provided social, economic and spiritual support for its membership and also carried out charitable works in Canada and Israel. The Society will be featured in the next of the e-Newsletter. Did Ivasker communities establish analogous organizations in other countries?

Question 7*

7. Were you or any of your ancestors (parents, grandparents or great grandparents) born in or live in Ivansk?			Response Percent	Response Count
YES			82.9%	136
NO			17.1%	28
			<i>answered question</i>	164
			<i>skipped question</i>	0

As anticipated, over 80% of our readers traced their roots to Ivansk as defined by whether they or their parent(s), grandparent(s) or great grandparent(s) were born or lived in the shtetl.

Using these criteria almost 20% of the readership were not Ivaskers. Of these, more than half were married to Ivaskers or had other relatives (uncles, aunts, cousins) who were born or lived in Ivansk (see Question No. 12).

Question 8

8. From the following indicate which members of your family were born or lived in Ivansk. (Check all that apply)			Response Percent	Response Count
ME	<input type="checkbox"/>		3.1%	4
Brother(s) and/or Sister(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		5.4%	7
FATHER	<input type="checkbox"/>		36.4%	47
Paternal grandfather	<input type="checkbox"/>		56.6%	73
Paternal grandmother	<input type="checkbox"/>		38.0%	49
Paternal great grandfather	<input type="checkbox"/>		43.4%	56
Paternal great grandmother	<input type="checkbox"/>		34.9%	45
MOTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>		21.7%	28
Maternal grandfather	<input type="checkbox"/>		25.6%	33
Maternal grandmother	<input type="checkbox"/>		28.7%	37
Maternal great grandfather	<input type="checkbox"/>		18.6%	24
Maternal great grandmother	<input type="checkbox"/>		17.8%	23
Generations before any of my great grandparents	<input type="checkbox"/>		14.7%	19
I am not certain which of my ancestors were born/lived in Ivansk	<input type="checkbox"/>		7.8%	10
			<i>answered question</i>	129
			<i>skipped question</i>	35

These data define the generations of Ivanskers who were related to our readers. The figures must be interpreted with caution. While almost everyone could be expected to know whether their parents were born or lived in Ivansk, this was not necessarily the case with grandparents and great grandparents.

Only 4 readers were “original” Ivanskers who were born/lived in the shtetl.

Seven individuals had siblings who were born in Ivansk. In this group 3 respondents were “originals” and 4 were born in the “post-Ivansk diaspora” (the latter included 3 brothers of one of the 4 “originals”).

Ten respondents were not certain which of their ancestors originated in Ivansk.

Most respondent’s connection to Ivansk derived through their father’s rather than their mother’s side of the family. For example, 47 specified that their fathers and 23 said that their mothers had been born or lived in Ivansk. A similar pattern was observed with paternal versus maternal grandparents.

Assuming that the birth/survival rates of both sexes were comparable, this suggests that men were more likely to emigrate from Ivansk as compared to women. Thus, Ivansk-born fathers rather than mothers would account for most children born in the “Ivansk diaspora”. If anyone can offer alternative explanations, please let me know.

Question 9

9. For the relatives you checked in Question #7 tell us the surnames they used when they lived in Ivansk. (Enter your responses in spaces provided; leave blank if you do not know.)			Response Percent	Response Count
<input type="button" value="view"/>	FATHER	<input type="text"/>	41.3%	50
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Paternal grandfather	<input type="text"/>	60.3%	73
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Paternal grandmother's maiden name	<input type="text"/>	32.2%	39
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Paternal great grandparents	<input type="text"/>	30.6%	37
<input type="button" value="view"/>	MOTHER (maiden name)	<input type="text"/>	24.8%	30
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Maternal grandfather	<input type="text"/>	32.2%	39
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Maternal grandmother's maiden name	<input type="text"/>	28.1%	34
<input type="button" value="view"/>	Maternal great grandparents	<input type="text"/>	19.8%	24
<i>answered question</i>				121
<i>skipped question</i>				43

SURNAMES OF RESPONDENTS' PARENTS WHO WERE BORN/LIVED IN IVANSK (Names listed alphabetically. Spelling as in Poland)

Father's Surname ¹	Mother's (Maiden) Surname ²	Husband-Wife Surnames ³
Appelbaum (1)	Bernstein (2)	Goldhar – Rosenthal (1)
Ajzenberg (5)	Bloomenfeld (1)	Kestenbaum – Broner (Bronner) (4)
Blumenfeld (2)	Blumenfeld (1)	Langer – Nieman (1)
Cheresnia (1)	Broner (Brauner, Bronner) (4)	Lederman – Nussbaum (1)
Citron (1)	Goldhar (1)	Lederman – Szteinman (1)
Frimerman (1)	Gula (1)	Lederman – Zalzman (1)
Frimmerman (1)	Kestenbaum (3)	Rotman – Kestenbaum (1)
Goldhar (2)	Kimerman (Kaman)	Rotman - Maiden Name Unknown (1)
Kestenbaum (4)	Laufer (4)	Shumacker – Laufer (3)
Kopersztych (1)	Lederman (1)	Teperman – Proverman (1)
Langer (1)	Lipovitch (1)	Warshafsky – Kaman (Kimerman) (1)
Lederman (8)	Neiman (2)	Zylberberg – Gula (1)
Meyerchik (1)	Nissenbaum (1)	Zylberberg – Tator (1)
Naiman (1)	Nussbaum (1)	
Rotenberg (1)	Proverman (1)	
Rappaport (1)	Rosenthal (1)	
Rotman (1)	Szteinman (1)	
Shumacher (3)	Tator (1)	

Table continued on next page

Szuchmacher (1)	Teperman (1)	
Tajchman (2)	Tepperman (1)	
Tator (1)	Zalcman (or Saltman) (1)	
Teperman (1)	Maiden Name Unknown (1)	
Titlebaum (1)		
Warshafsky (1)		
Zalzman (2)		
Zylberberg (2)		
Zylberstein (1)		

1, 2: Numbers in parentheses = number of respondents who indicated that their father or mother were born or lived in Ivansk.
3: Numbers in parentheses = number of respondents who indicated that both parents were born or lived in Ivansk. Husband and wife surnames derived from columns 1 and 2.

When analyzing these data we realized that we should have asked for the given the names as well as the surnames of both parents. Without this information it was not possible to ascertain whether respondents sharing the same surname had the same or different parents. This became even more problematic when we considered information provided for grandparents.

This uncertainty was further aggravated by variations in the “Polish” spelling of similar sounding surnames. Were these respondents part of a single family unit or descended from related families? Some examples included: Bloomenfeld-Blumenfeld, Frimerman-Frimmerman; Shumacher-Shuchmacher-Szuchmacher, Teperman-Tepperman and Zalcman-Zalzman. If we had required both the given and familial names of their parents, we could have mitigated this problem.

Based on these and other deficiencies in the design of the Question No. 9, we have not tabulated the names of readers’ grandparents and will consider preparing an improved questionnaire to capture this information in the future.

Question 10

10. If your family's surname was changed after leaving Poland, what was the new name that they adopted? (Enter the name in the textbox.)		Response Count
 view		64
<i>answered question</i>		64
<i>skipped question</i>		100

Some families changed their surnames after leaving Ivansk. Variations in the spelling of adopted names were not uncommon even within the same family. Examples include the the three Kestenbaum brothers who became Kastens and Kestens; three Tajchman brothers branched out as Teachmans, Teichmans and Tishmans and the next generation of Teichman brothers decided they would be Taichmans and Teichmans. And so it goes, on and on. This may explain why genalogists tend to compulsively grind their teeth in their sleep.

ADOPTED SURNAMES AFTER LEAVING POLAND
(Surnames that were not altered after leaving Poland are not included in the data)

Family Surnames in Ivansk	Adopted Names Post-Ivansk
Ajzenberg	Eisenberg
Applebaum	Apel
Baran, Baranski, Brauner	Braun, Brown
Cheresnia	Cheresnick, Cherri, Cherry, Sherry
Frimerman, Frimmerman	Freedman
Cukierman, Zuckerman	Sugarman
Kaplansky	Conn, Conway, Kappy
Kestenbaum	Kasten, Kesten
Kopersztych	Kopstick
Kuperberg	Cooper
Lipovitch, Lipowicz	Lipton
Meyerchik	Meyers
Neiman	Naiman
Rappaport	Rapoport
Rottenberg	Rotenberg
Rubenstein	Richmond
Shumacher, Shuchmacher, Szuchmacher	Shumak, Shuman
Tajchman	Taichman, Teachman, Teichman, Tishman
Teitlebaum	Title
Warshafsky	Warsh
Zalcman, Zaltsman, Zalzman	Saltman, Zalzman-Miodownik
Zemilman	Simmerman, Zimmerman
Zylberberg	Silver, Silverberg
Zylberstein	Silberstein, Silverstein

Question 11

11. In the first column indicate which members of your family were alive and living in Ivansk when World War II began in 1939. (Check all that apply) In the second column indicate whether any of them survived the war. (Check all that apply) Leave blank if none of the following lived in Ivansk at that time.

	Lived in Ivansk at start of WWII	Survived WWII	Response Count
ME	100.0% (1)	100.0% (1)	1
Brother(s) or sister(s)	100.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	1
FATHER	85.7% (6)	71.4% (5)	7
Paternal grandfather	85.7% (18)	19.0% (4)	21
Paternal grandmother	90.5% (19)	14.3% (3)	21
Paternal great grandparents	100.0% (9)	0.0% (0)	9
MOTHER	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	3
Maternal grandfather	91.7% (11)	16.7% (2)	12
Maternal grandmother	93.8% (15)	18.8% (3)	16
Maternal great grandparents	87.5% (7)	12.5% (1)	8
		<i>answered question</i>	43
		<i>skipped question</i>	121

Most Ivanskers who left Europe before WWII still had family in the shtetl when it fell under the Nazi occupation. Question 11 was intended to serve as a window into the tragic dimensions of the Shoah in Ivansk. Respondents were asked whether their relatives were living in the town when the war began and whether the family somehow survived the carnage.

It seems that some readers had difficulty interpreting the question. The actual number of responses just doesn't "add up". And I find it hard to believe that several readers declared that their grandparents and great grandparents survived the war even though they were living in Ivansk when the Germans marched into Poland.

Perhaps some readers are reporting on families that got out of Ivansk (and Poland) *BEFORE* the war (say in the mid-late 1930s) and survived *BECAUSE* they had left in time.

It is not my intent to "marginalize" the data recorded in this question, but I think the issue needs to be researched more fully.

We will never know the true loss of Jewish life in Ivansk during The Shoah.

Nor will any normal person ever be able to understand why it happened.

Question 12

12. ANSWER THIS QUESTION ONLY IF YOUR ANCESTORS DID NOT ORIGINATE FROM IVANSK. What is your interest in the Ivansk Project? (Check all the options that apply. Then continue answering the remaining questions to complete the survey.)			Response Percent	Response Count
My spouse's family is from Ivansk			30.8%	8
I had uncles, aunts or cousins living in Ivansk			19.2%	5
My family comes from Poland			65.4%	17
My family comes from a neighboring shtetl(s)			42.3%	11
I have friends who are Ivanskers			46.2%	12
I am interested in Polish-Jewish history			65.4%	17
Other (please specify)				4
			<i>answered question</i>	26
			<i>skipped question</i>	138

Twenty-eight respondents declared that they were not Ivanskers as their parents, grandparents or great grandparents were not born/lived in the town (see Question 7). Of these, 26 individuals responded to Question 12. When asked why they were interested in The Ivansk Project, 50% said they were related to Ivanskers. Other reasons for joining The Project are shown above

Additional comments were entered by 4 individuals:

- My mother, grandparents and siblings lived in Klimintov. Left before the war.
- Actually my mother comes from Galicia in a district which now Poland; my wife's mother - Checkanov, Poland
- I am not sure if my family originated from the area. I know that my grandfather was born in Kovno.
[Ed: Name withheld. I have confirmed that the respondent's spouse was an Ivansker.]
- I am Polish, born in Poland in a family of Jewish origins

“Non-Ivanskers” are vital members of our cyber community. Those with familial connections to Ivansk have invested time and effort to The Ivansk Project. Three members of our Action Committee fit this category.

Another member of the Action Committee, Grzegorz (Greg) Gregorczyk, is Polish and without his help we would have never undertaken the Ivansk Cemetery Restoration Project or identified a long-lost Ivansker, Henriette Kretz (see her story, “A Child of the Holocaust”, e-Newsletter No. 31, 2008). He has contributed several features to the e-Newsletter and has undertaken other activities on our behalf. Grzegorz recently returned from a whirlwind trip to Israel where he was hosted by David Blumenfeld, Kobi Silberstein and other Ivanskers.

Margaret (*Malgosia*) Daniel, another non-Ivansker, grew up in Warsaw and now lives in Philadelphia. Her father and brother were honored as *Righteous Among the Nations*. Malgosia translated The YIVO Postcards (see e-Newsletter No. 27, 2007) and helps research Polish archival material. She is studying Hebrew (standing at the top of her class) and within the past year she has twice visited Israel where she participated in archeological digs in the Galilee and met with several Ivanskers, including Kobi Silberstein and Lazer Naiman. Lazer enjoyed speaking with Malgosia in Polish, his native tongue (see his story, “Never Give In To Despair”, e-News No.32, 2008). In Jerusalem Malgosia stayed with Charlotte and Morry Blumenfeld and participated in their family’s Seder and even read from the Haggadah (in Hebrew!).

And finally there is a diverse contingent of non-Ivanskers who enrich our community by their interest and support. They include descendents of Jews who lived in neighboring shtetlach. Others share our interest in Polish-Jewish history. Finally, several non-Ivanskers distribute our e-Newsletters to others, including libraries and genealogical societies.

We are indeed fortunate to have these friends and colleagues as part of our cyber family.

Question 13

More than 50% of respondents examine every issue of the newsletter and 40% read the e-News on a regular basis. You can’t do much better than that.

13. Do you read The Ivansk Project e-Newsletter? (Select only 1 option.)			Response Percent	Response Count
I always read each issue			57.6%	87
I often, but not always, read the e-News			40.4%	61
I rarely read the e-News			2.0%	3
			<i>answered question</i>	151
			<i>skipped question</i>	13

Question 14

Approximately 37% of readers share copies of the e-News with other people or organizations. This speaks well of the general value of what we are doing beyond our own community.

14. Do you share or provide copies of the e-Newsletters to other people (such as family, friends, library, other)? (Select only 1 option.)			Response Percent	Response Count
Always			8.8%	13
Often			29.3%	43
Rarely			40.8%	60
Never			21.1%	31
			answered question	147
			skipped question	17

Question 15

Most readers found something of interest in the e-News; 36% indicated that every issue had something worth reading.

15. In general, do you find one or more articles that interest you in each issue of the e-Newsletter? (Select only 1 option.)			Response Percent	Response Count
Always			36.2%	54
Often			55.7%	83
Rarely			3.4%	5
No opinion			4.7%	7
			answered question	149
			skipped question	15

Question 16

It was gratifying to learn that 80% of readers felt that the e-News was a valuable source of information about Jewish life in Ivansk. More work still remains to be done

16. In your opinion has the e-Newsletter provided you with significant information about the history of the Jews living in Ivansk? (Select only 1 option.)			Response Percent	Response Count
Almost Always			80.5%	120
Occasionally			16.8%	25
Rarely			0.7%	1
Never			0.0%	0
No Opinion			2.0%	3
			answered question	149
			skipped question	15

Question 17

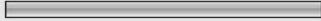
Fifty-two individuals had living relatives and friends who were born in Ivansk. These readers will be contacted to determine if they will assist in acquiring testimony from “original” Ivanskers who have not yet been interviewed for The Project.

17. Do you have any living relatives or friends who were born in Ivansk?			Response Percent	Response Count
YES			34.4%	52
NO			65.6%	99
			answered question	151
			skipped question	13

Question 18

18. Do you have documents, photographs, or other items that relate to your family's or anyone else's history in Ivansk?			Response Percent	Response Count
YES			28.3%	41
NO			71.7%	104
			answered question	145
			skipped question	19

Question 19

19. Would you be interested in contributing material for publication in The Ivansk Project e-Newsletter, such as testimony, photos of people or structures in Ivansk (eg, the shul, the market square, etc), documents, maps, drawings, research article, commentary, recent travel to Poland, other?			Response Percent	Response Count
YES			23.0%	29
NO			57.1%	72
UNCERTAIN, PLEASE CONTACT ME			19.8%	25
			answered question	126
			skipped question	38

Forty-one readers revealed that they had objects that relate to Ivansk. We are anxious to learn what they are.

Twenty-nine people were prepared to contribute material to the e-Newsletter and another 25 were willing to consider the possibility. All will be contacted as soon as possible.

Question 20

20. To determine the age distribution of our readers, please enter the decade when you were born.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
1900-1909		0.0%	0
1910-1919		0.0%	0
1920-1929		7.6%	12
1930-1939		24.7%	39
1940-1949		18.4%	29
1950-1959		27.2%	43
1960-1969		13.9%	22
1970-1979		4.4%	7
1980-1989		3.8%	6
1990-1999		0.0%	0
			answered question
			158
			skipped question
			6

No Ivansker who was born in the first and second decades of the 20th century responded to the survey.

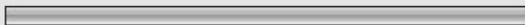
Twelve Ivanskers born in the 1920s answered the survey. Hopefully, our eldest landmen and landwomen will continue be with us and enjoy good health for many years to come.

Readers born in 1930s, '40s and '50s constitute the bulk of our subscribers. Together with those from the 1920s, they represent an incredible resource about the “post-Ivansk experience”, when they or their families emigrated from Ivansk. Many grew up in the company of parents and grandparents who left Poland before the war or who miraculously survived The Shoah. Several made *Aliyah* and built a strong, new nation that inspires and makes us proud to be Jewish. They’ve seen and accomplished a lot; their stories are worth telling and sharing.

Born in the 1970s and 1980s, the 30 and 20 year old groups are represented only by 7 and by 6 individuals. Yes, they are fully occupied climbing career ladders, raising their families, making ends meet and so on. We need them, but perhaps they need us even more. One day they’ll have time to think about the past and want to know where they came from. We must make certain that the saga of their ancestors is available when the time comes.

The same is true for the youngest generation of Ivanskers who were born in the '90s; none took part in the survey. My own grandchildren are aware of The Project. My eldest grandson went with me to Ivansk and the others keep asking when it’s their turn. It’s too early for them to dig deeply into their past...they’re preoccupied in the present. But the seed has been planted. And it will grow. They and their successors will be grateful for the legacy we leave for them.

Question 21

21. Would you be interested in seeing a directory of the people who subscribe to The Ivansk Project e-Newsletter? If we develop a directory we will contact you for permission to include your name on the list.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES		89.9%	133
NO		10.1%	15
<i>answered question</i>			148
<i>skipped question</i>			16

An overwhelming majority of respondents are interested in learning more about other Ivanskers. An e-mail will be sent to all responders seeking permission to publish their names in The Ivansk Project Member’s Directory

Question 22

No comment is necessary.

22. Do you want to remain on The Ivansk Project mailing list?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
YES		100.0%	156
NO		0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>			156
<i>skipped question</i>			8

Question 23

23. You can add additional information or comments about any of the questions. Also suggest ways to improve The Ivansk Project e-Newsletter.		Response Count
	 view	57
	<i>answered question</i>	57
	<i>skipped question</i>	107

Comments submitted by several survey respondents are presented bellow. A few were omitted because they were more personally directed to the editor. It is important to remember that the e-Newsletter is not the work of one person; nothing could have or will happen without the dedicated cooperation of many, many Ivanskers and non-Ivanskers.

I apologize for taking so long to acknowledge your comments but assure you that I will follow through. For now, I have appended a few thoughts to many of your ideas and suggestions (*in script font*).

To protect your privacy you are not identified by name. But sometimes it became necessary to include family names so readers could understand the context of your message. I trust you will not be disturbed by this decision.

1.	Just want to say hello and best wishes. Sorry that I have not been in touch. <i>Thanks, I missed yau!</i>
2	Regarding my interest in Polish Jewish history: I have taken courses on Eastern European history. I am very interested in learning about Shtetl life, even though my father once said when I suggested I might want to visit his and my mother's Shtetls, "I don't know why you want to visit; I was there and it's no big deal--I wanted to get out, and I did." But this was a common comment from many of my relatives. <i>A sentiment shared by most Ivanskers...better here than there. But we are who we are because we were there.</i>
3	It's a wonderful thing. I hope the zeal for its production is not flagging. Either way - it's been a wonderful thing. If production DOES stop - it would be very nice for these records to remain available on the website. I would also like to see a map of where Ivansk is in Poland - I haven't seen that yet - and also a county or country map showing other settlements the size or bigger or smaller than ivansk - to get some perspective on its representative nature in the polish / Jewish world at that time. Thanks for all your wonderful works on this. I am curious too if the Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society in Toronto - was one of MANY mutual benefit societies. .or if there was something unique about Ivansk that it got greater "representativeness" in Toronto, etc. Also - any information about where Llintsy was - the town of my grandfather - that would be nice. Ivansk in a regional context.. Nearby towns, similar towns in the area - it's relationship to the larger government, etc. All easier said than done, for sure. Thanks again. <i>We're not stopping; there's still too much to do. The Ivansker Mutual Benefit Society will soon be featured in forthcoming e-Newsletter. Also, we'll provide more info about the geography of Ivansk and surrounding shtetls in future issues.</i>
4	I would like to recognize and send a thousand congratulations for maintaining alive the memory of Ivanskers and their families. I'm one that has received the impact of life stories, memories and life details of Ivanskers as my father and my uncle. Some of those I didn't know; some were deeply hidden in my subconscious and suddenly reappeared in front of me. It has been a very important life recovery. The role of the Newsletter is vital to link our people and our memories.

5	I've suggested to a number of my family members to interview our Great Auntie Sadie as she turns 100 this weekend, but no one has had the time (myself either), but I hope to before the summer. <i>We're all counting on you to do it! And be sure to wish Aunt Sadie a very happy birthday...with many more to come.</i>
6	Thanks for the hard work....doing a great service!!!!
7	Thank you for the newsletter. My husband's father was from Ivansk while my family is from Kracow. I write historical mysteries with themes related to the Holocaust. My 2nd book," Find Me Again", features a Polish-Jewish character who recounts some of her experiences of the war. I based these events on stories from my mother's past. I am always interested in reading about Jewish/Polish history. <i>Another literary Ivansker. Co-incidentally we plan on profiling Ivanskers who are doing such interesting things. I'll be in touch.</i>
8	I've never met an Ivansker I didn't like. <i>Same here.</i>
9	Look forward to receiving the newsletter and any old photos. Thank you Jeffrey Rubenstein, Treasurer of Ivansker, Toronto, Ontario
10	The newsletter is very interesting. I'm not sure how I could make a contribution. <i>You'll find a way. Just keep digging. Tell me about your ideas and we'll work together.</i>
11	This project is fantastic. I continue to look for stories that will somehow contain my families' stories. We have very few. I hope you continue to help us all make these connections. Thanks
12	I hope the project will continue for years to come. It has been a source of information and inspiration for me.
13	Just a big thank you
14	If a trip to Ivansk were to be developed, I might be interested. <i>Oy vay. My wife will kill me if I even think of going back. But I like the idea. We'll see.</i>
15	I think it would be interesting to look into the archives of the Ivansk Organization in Toronto and list the names of the early members. Thank you for all your efforts put into the Ivansk Project. <i>As stated earlier (see Reader No. 3)...we're on to it...we will have a feature article in a forthcoming e-Newsletter.</i>
16	My relatives who have connections to Ivansk do not use the Internet and I don't see them very often. They are basically out of the loop on this project. Do you do any mailings? <i>Sadly, duplicating and mailing the e-News is just too expensive; at least \$5.00 per issue. To date, about 20 people have asked for this service. Suggest you and others copy/mail to family/friends who do not use computer. It's a mitzvah.</i>
17	I don't have anything to submit other than a photo of my great-great grandfather, but it does not show any background of Ivansk. It is also in a frame which cannot be removed. Thank you for doing this! <i>Do you have a scanner?? If not, find someone who has or go to photocopy center. Send us a copy, please.</i>
18	More about Stashav & Lipsk, my relatives home towns. <i>Good idea. But how about getting us started. Provide some ideas/ material about what you'd like to know.</i>
19	I could contribute, I think, in providing sometimes, if you would be interested, in some sources concerning the history of Polish Jews. Unfortunately my English is not good enough to provide translations. My suggestion that I made already to Norton would be to organize another memory trip to Iwaniska. I fully understand why it is impossible at the moment. But I think that it would be a way to awake the interest of those Ivanskers who does not have an idea of how the birth place of their ancestors was/is, their history and the history of Polish Jews. This would be in common interest: the Ivanskers and your e-Newsletter. My interest in it would be to help to organize the trip, but even more to accompany it, meet new Iwanskers and, maybe, some of those whom I already met and liked. With all my best wishes <i>Your English is fine. Just start writing and we'll take care of dotting "i"s and crossing "t"s. A trip to Ivansk? Like I said earlier, my wife will kill me. But if I get up enough courage, I'll try to "baite ehr a bisaleh" [plead with her a little].</i>

20	Thank you for all your efforts made on behalf of this project. My family and I have enjoyed the Newsletter for several years.
21	I appreciate these newsletters very much.
22	Am most interested in genealogies and metrical records from Ivansk and surrounding communities to help build family tree. <i>Good idea. Some members are serious genealogists. I'll ask if they can put something together for you and our readers.</i>
23	Interested in participating. I don't have direct first hand information. <i>Don't let that stop you. Build a story on "second-hand" leads by doing research on the subject. While you may not discover specific info about your own family, you'll learn a great deal about Polish-Jewish civilization. We need to talk.</i>
24	I APPRECIATE WHAT YOU ARE DOING!
25	I hope this survey doesn't mean you are thinking of suspending it! Even if the response isn't so great with this generation, it is something I would like my Grandchildren, etc. to know...If WE don't do this, they won't know...Also, you should mention in the actual email that need to respond to the first questions, like you said in the survey...but if they don't open the survey, they won't know that... <i>Agree 100%!</i>
26	The only items I have specifically relating to Ivansk are LDS documents: the birth record of Wigdor Weisdorf, my maternal great-grandfather and the marriage record of his parents (my great grandparents) Wolf (known as Velvel) Weisdorf and Sura Etta Rozenzweig. I believe that my grandmother, Wigdor's daughter was born in Opatow. My grandmother's mother's maiden name is unknown to us, as we believe the one (social security application) document we have lists the same name as that on a post card sent to her by whom we believe to be her half brother. Her mother's first name was Gizella (sp?) (We do have a photo of a lady we believe may be Gizella, as she bears a resemblance to my mother and my mother's sisters.) Hopefully this helps fill in something. <i>Your expertise in building your family tree is needed by other Ivanskers. How about it? And please send photos...perhaps someone will recognize Gizella.</i>
27	My wife is a Holocaust survivor. She was born in Warsaw and survived with her parents hidden by Polish peasants in the countryside. When the war ended she was 6 years old.
28	My great grandmother owned a candy store ; we think it was in Ivansk. <i>There was a candy store in Ivansk. What was your grandmother's name and when did she live in Ivansk? The store is not on the K-B map of Ivansk (see link on our web site). I will ask some "real" Ivanskers if they can help locate it on the map.</i>
29	THE PICTURES AND PERSONAL STORIES ARE INTERESTING.
30	I think it is great. When you first began, there was little information about Jews in Ivansk. You are stockpiling data for future generations of historians. While you may not get much applause today, I promise you that your newsletters will be well used in the future. Be patient. <i>The hardest thing in this life is to be patient.</i>
31	My paternal grandfather was born in Chmielnik, not too far Ivansk. He had two first cousins who married together. The male was born in Ivansk and the female was from Staszow, even closer to Iwaniska. Therefore my interest. Doing a great job.
32	I appreciate the work on this project. I have learned much about the town my father is from.
33	DOING A GREAT JOB!! PLEASE CONTINUE.
34	Thank you so much for the hard work and tremendous dedication.
35	I enjoy the Newsletter very much and have found it very interesting and informative. I commend all those who have worked so diligently in collecting and distributing the Newsletter, and can only thank all of you for your efforts. I hope it can continue to keep us connected. Thanks a million.

36	<p>I'm interested in stories about why people left to go to other countries. Also, how they met their spouses from other parts of Poland and when, how they eventually found themselves in a new land and set about to establish themselves there.</p> <p><i>Excellent ideas. The e-News will push for more stories that include this type of information.</i></p>
37	<p>This is a wonderful project. My father Joseph Rotman passed away at a very young age and I never had the opportunity to discuss his life or my roots with him. The newsletter including the article on my uncle Manny Rotman gave me some insight into my father's background and shed some light on his early life. My mother Matel never wanted to talk about her past and I am ashamed to say I do not even know her maiden name or if she was actually born and raised in Ivansk or lived in a nearby town or shtetl. No documentation covering my mother and father is available covering dates of arrival in Canada, port of entry, ship name etc. There is also no living relative or friend that can provide any assistance. I would be very interested if anyone could help in finding out more of my mother's background. My reason for giving you this information is to suggest a central registry that is formatted for requesting help in locating backgrounds of family where no documented or other sources of information are available. Hope you can help. Keep up the excellent work. It is very much appreciated.</p> <p><i>Here again is where readers with expertise in genealogical research could be of assistance. I will try to get some of them interested in addressing the needs of you and other members.</i></p>
38	<p>Isn't it the time to think about the Yizkor Book of Ivansk?</p> <p><i>It's something to think about and certainly worth doing. But it will take a great deal of time and effort. For now, let the e-Newsletter serve as at least one way to honor and preserve the history of our people.</i></p>
39	<p>I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO THANK YOU FOR ALL THE WORK YOU HAVE DONE RE IWANISK. MY MOTHER AND HER FAMILY WERE BORN THERE AND CAME IN THE 20'S. MY FATHER 'S MOTHER WAS FROM IWANISK. MY FATHER WAS BORN 8 KILOMETERS FROM IWANISK AND WAS IN THE POLISH ARMY. HE KNEW MY MOTHER AND WROTE TO PROPOSE TO HER. SHE ACCEPTED AND WORKED FOR ALMOST 2 YEARS TO BRING DAD OVER. THEY MARRIED HERE AND SETTLED IN TORONTO FROM PONTYPOOL AS DAD WAS ALLOWED IN AS A FARMER. MY DAD BROUGHT ONE SISTER OVER BEFORE THE WAR, AND FOUND ONE OF 7(?) SIBLINGS AFTER THE WAR, AND BROUGHT HER OVER. ONE PATERNAL GREAT UNCLE OF MINE CAME AND SETTLED IN ALBANY NY. HE Sired A COUPLE OF DOCTORS AND A DENTIST, AND ONE DAUGHTER . THEY HAVE A LARGE FAMILY AS MY MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER DID. THEY CAME FROM PURTKOV (SP?), 8Ks AWAY AND KNEW AND MIXED WITH THE IVANSKERS. TO BE CONT'D.</p> <p><i>Thanks for your comment. It sounds like you could build a great story about your family. Please do it and share it with the rest of us.</i></p>
40	<p>I don't always get to the newsletter, but when I do, I am always impressed and glad for having taken the time. Thanks so much for all of your efforts!</p>
41	<p>Hard for me as I'm not sure if my family were in Ivansk. Their surname was Tishman with a variety of spellings could point to it but there is no proof. I can only be sure that my grandfather. was born in Kovno and my great uncle married a lady from Sulwaki. My interest in Ivansk has been built up by liasing with Norton.</p> <p><i>"Tishman" was one variation of the names adopted by the "Tajchman" clan after leaving Ivansk (see Survey Question No. 10). If you send me the given names of your Tishman relatives it may help determine if they are from Ivansk.</i></p>
42	<p>Soro Leah Kohn my great grandmother was born in Ivansk 1863;she died in Staszow 1936. Her father Shmuel Izaak Kohn was born in Ivansk approx. 1830 His wife was Esther Rochel Feigenbaum B. Staszow 1832. Soro Leah had 3 brothers living in Ivansk with their families; all perished in the Shoah. They were Moshe, Velvel and Meyer Kohen, The family owned a leather tannery and made children's shoes, they were fairly well to do in Ivansk standards. I never saw any mention of them on your house map, Does anyone have any extra information on this family? Most Yiskor Books have a chapter "In Memory "of those martyred in the Holocaust. Maybe you can ask everyone for their names, and have a tribute to those lost to us. Thank You.</p> <p><i>The tannery can be found on the K-B map of Ivansk (access the link on our web site). Zvi Weissdorf (e-News No. 13, 2005) tells of the stench that emanated from it and states that the business was owned by Avrohom Weinberg. Yechiel Eisenberg (e-News No. 16, 2006) also mentions the strong smell. Neither identified the Kohen family as the owners. Similarly, "A. Wajanberg" (Weinberg), but not Kohen, is listed as a tanner in the 1929 Polish Business Directory of Ivansk (e-News No. 11, 2005) Pinchas Zalzman (e-News No. 33, 2008) lists 4 Kohen families in his 1937 census of the shtetl, but none share the first names you listed. So we have a problem. Can you provide more info? Maybe we can resolve this issue.</i></p>

43	<p>You are to be commended for your work in this project. You and others may wish to share this material with synagogue libraries and Jewish community centres. If the Holocaust is part of history courses in high schools, perhaps you may wish to share this project with schools.</p> <p><i>The e-News is shared by many readers (see Survey Question No. 14). I know that it is archived in genealogical societies in Chicago (Reader No. 26) and in Willamette Valley, Oregon (Reader No. 44). But I am not aware of it being used in the context of Holocaust studies in the public schools.</i></p>
44	<p>I am very impressed with the activities of the Ivansk group. I am involved with a group of people interested in the town of Mir Belarus. Mir Belarus web site: http://uoregon.edu/~rkimble/Mirweb/Mir1.html I hope some of what I learn from the Ivansk newsletter will be of use to the Mir group. Members of the local Jewish genealogy society appreciate access to my copies of your newsletter. Thank you for keeping me on your mailing list.</p> <p>R.J., President JGSWVO: Jewish Genealogical Society, Willamette Valley, Oregon. Web site: http://www.nwfam.com/jgswwvo.html</p> <p><i>Thanks for compliments and your good work. It is a privilege to share our research with you and your colleagues.</i></p>
45	<p>Thanks.</p>
46	<p>The only Ivansk-related document that I have is my paternal grandfather's Russian passport, which he used to enter the U.S. at Ellis Island in the summer of 1905, and I found the ship's manifest, which includes the names of two other Ivanskers traveling with him.</p> <p><i>Send us a copy of the manifest accompanied by a narrative that expands on your grandfather. In 1920 my grandmother, together with 3 of her children (including my father) also entered the US at Ellis Island and took the train to Toronto. I always assumed that the family disembarked in Canada. Suggest other Ivanskers look into this possibility by accessing immigration records at Ellis Island web site: www.ellisland.org/</i></p>

Closing Thoughts and Future Perspectives

It was terrific to read so many good things about what The Project has/is trying to accomplish. Thanks to all who answered the survey and to everyone who contributed time and material to the e-Newsletter. Nothing would have happened without you. Congratulations to all!

But more of you are needed to get actively involved to assure that The Project moves ahead.

Gathering the history of our remaining “original” (first-generation post shtetl) Ivanskers remains the highest priority. When the last one is gone, we will have lost our direct connection to the past, forever. Several readers indicated that they have family and friends who still remember life in that tiny, far away, almost forgotten place. We are depending on you to help secure their testimony.

Conducting oral interviews requires patience and practice, and unless it is done properly the opportunity may be wasted. Watch a few of the TV talk shows and you’ll see examples of good and bad interviewers. The skillful reporter is a good listener; the amateur does most of the talking (and learns very little). The accomplished host allows the subject to tell his story in his own way, even though it may be taking longer than anticipated and is not going in a straight line. Almost always the most informative interviews are conducted by one person, not a gaggle of people. And it is important to remember not to exhaust elderly subjects and to be prepared to meet with them on two or more occasions...once is rarely sufficient.

I am available to discuss these and other strategies and can provide printed guidelines. If you don’t feel that you’re up to the assignment it may be possible to find someone who is. Either way, only you can make it happen. Please contact me; I want to help.

It's also time to pay more attention to the lives of second generation Ivanskers, the first cohort born outside the shtetl. Their parents and grandparents gave them the chance they never had. The second generation moved beyond the shackles of poverty, prejudice and hopelessness that limited their parents' horizons in Poland. They entered every conceivable niche of industry, commerce, education, the arts, science, medicine, law, government...you name it. Yes, they encountered many barriers but in the end nothing could stop them. How do we explain this phenomenal surge of energy and creativity? What role did their parents play in achieving these enormous gains? We must document their family stories as models for future generations.

A few years ago I spent several hours with my uncle Ben Teichman recording his memories of what it was like to grow up in Toronto in the 1920s and 1930s. His parents, my grandparents, were typical Polish-Jews from Ivansk who immigrated to Canada with little else but the clothes on their backs. But they had the determination to succeed and never looked back. Those hours spent with my uncle Ben were priceless. I am writing an account of what he told me for a future e-Newsletter. I wish I had done this with my parents and other relatives who are now gone. Do it for yourself and your family before it's too late.

The e-Newsletter also invites essays relating to Polish-Jewish history.

To appreciate the world of our ancestors we need to reinforce their stories with additional information about the socioeconomic, political and cultural atmosphere that affected their lives. It would be a mistake to think that the shtetl was an island on-to-itself, its people insulated and ignorant of developments in the rest of Poland and the world at large. The study conducted by Pinchas Zalzman, "The Economic Status of the Jews of Iwaniska in the Late 1930s" (see e-Newsletter No. 33, 2008) proves the point. Pinchas had little in the way of formal education and yet he systematically researched the deteriorating economy of the town's Jews, offering possible causes and solutions. It's the "causes" and the "solutions" that require more study. This was undertaken in a subsequent e-Newsletter (No. 34, 2009) where the condition of Poland's Jews during the interwar period was considered by two authorities. And an essay on the role of the Catholic Church in Poland's economy is scheduled for publication in the future.

This type of extended analysis should be a regular feature in the e-News. Additional topics that could be considered include: the politics of Polish Jewry; Polish-Jewish youth organizations; social welfare in the shtetl; Jews in Poland's armed forces; Jewish workers' movements in pre-war Poland; Jewish religious movements; health care in rural Poland; the Jewish press; Jewish self defense during the Nazi occupation. Many more subjects are open for exploration. My own interests are centered in the 20th century, but our people lived in Poland for over 1000 years...those earlier times also beg for attention.

Those of us with the time and the curiosity are invited to put something together for the e-News. I would be happy to discuss your ideas and help you in every possible way.

Several Ivanskers are encountering problems building their family trees. We need volunteers who know how to search for genealogical connections to assist them. Please let me know if you are willing to help and we'll put something together.

In closing, The Ivansk Project is a community-based undertaking. Our membership includes people with a wide range of interests and talents. You are needed to set down and preserve the history of our common heritage. I am hopeful that you will step forward and do your part.