

Numb To The Need?

As Russian resettlement continues, so do challenges facing Detroit's Jewish community.

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Afaded doormat in Northgate Apartments depicts a log cabin surrounded by flowers and shrubbery. Smoke swirls up from a brick chimney to the words: Home Sweet Home.

But for Russian refugees living at Northgate and elsewhere in Detroit — is it?

The Jewish community's Resettlement Service reports that 620 Russian Jews immigrated to Detroit last year. Though few regret leaving their homeland, many new Americans say the United States poses unanticipated challenges: finding jobs during economic hard times, treating medical problems that went undiagnosed in the former Soviet Union and making a niche for themselves in the Jewish community.

In a scantily furnished Northgate apartment, Yevgeniy and Maya Pavlov sit with their 25-year-old son, Pavel. The Pavlovs moved here from Ukraine seven months ago. In broken English, Pavel translates for his parents.

Mr. Pavlov has severe heart problems, but the family wasn't willing to entrust

his care to Ukrainian doctors. In Detroit, the elder Mr. Pavlov underwent triple bypass surgery at Sinai Hospital. Now, doctors forbid him to work. In fact, none of the Pavlovs has found steady employment here. They have been living off a federal refugee assistance program. Still, they say they do not regret immigrating.

"I like the life here," Pavel said.

Mr. Pavlov is recuperating, albeit slowly, and Pavel is determined to find a full-time job.

As the Pavlovs struggle to find their place in a new society, American Jews in Detroit are preparing for another wave of immigrants. More than 300 Jews from the former Soviet Union are expected to arrive before 1994. But community leaders fear that interest in the emigres has dwindled.

"For years, we were so anxious to see our Russian families come here. We twinned bar and bat mitz-

vahs and wrote letters," said Leslee Magidson, the Russian acculturation program coordinator at the Jewish Community Center in Oak Park. "I hate to say it, but after two or three years, we've almost become passe."

Others say the issue is not apathy. They say straight out that it's unfair that new immigrants receive so much support and have access to programs that Jews born in this country cannot afford.

Rosalind Smith, an administrative secretary, is angry. She assumed guardianship

for her 5-year-old grandson after his mother abandoned him earlier this year. In June, Mrs. Smith went to Jewish Family Service seeking money for her grandson's day camp. She said she was referred to the Jewish Community Center, but was not able to obtain a scholarship for extended day-care hours.

"I earn a decent living, but I can't afford to raise another child," she said. "I think the Jewish community needs to reassess the needs of the Jewish (American) commu-



Four generations of Russian Jews continue life in America.