

Steven D. Reece

From: Steven D. Reece <sdreece@matzevah.org>
Sent: Monday, October 8, 2018 07:08
To: 'Jo Ann Siegienski'
Subject: Third Quarter Report 2018

Here is my report for the third quarter of 2018 (July-September).

Relationships, Meetings and Speaking

1. Participated in IAJGS on Sunday, August 5 and Monday, August 6. Presented on our work in preserving Jewish cemeteries as a part of a panel presentation on the topic, "Can Jewish Cemeteries Be Saved?" Dan Oren was the moderator. Monika Krawczyk and Rabbi Michael Schudrich were also on the panel. I spoke to several people following the presentation. One of note is Sally Mizroch, who presented me a project for us to consider in Rzeszow. Good project opportunity as it ticks all the boxes.
2. On Tuesday, August 7, Bruce and I traveled by train Przysucha to meeting with Radek Ptaszynski and his fiancée, Magda. Radek is a university professor of history in Szczecin. We toured the Przysucha Jewish cemetery, which is a FODZ property. The idea we discussed centered on bringing students from Israel, Poland, and the US to clean and clear part of the Jewish cemetery along with collecting broken matzevot fragments to be used in building a lapidarium in the future. Project timing would be during the school year, possibly September 2019.
3. On Wednesday, August 8, I met with David Chernobilsky, who is cooperating with Radek Ptaszynski in Przysucha. David is a high school teacher in Israel and is from Przysucha. He really likes our work and what we are doing. He focuses on incorporating Chassidic philosophy in his work. Maybe we can mirror his teaching philosophy with some Christian philosophy?
4. Wednesday evening, August 8, I had dinner with Glen, Dana (his sister), and Andy Weinstein. It was the best four hours that I spent debriefing and fellowshiping with a group following a project.
5. Friday, August 10, Bruce and I met with Piotr Daczyniski, his wife, Lukasz Szymanski, David and Basia for a meal. I learned more about their views concerning the lay of the land in Oswiecim regarding the educational initiative of Chaim's House.
6. On Tuesday, August 14 we met with Tomek Kuncewicz about Chaim's House. Approached issue from perspective: "We have an idea and we need your advice." Tomek sees the need for us to be involved in the educational landscape of Oswiecim.
7. On Thursday, August 16, I met with Chaim Horowitz and discussed Chaim's House. Later, TMF/BBC team met with Haim at Spadista 2 the address of his family's home.
8. Friday, August 17, Meet with Patricja Molko about Malogoszcz Jewish Cemetery.
9. Monday, August 20, met with and interviewed Asia Swiederska about her work. She assisted us in the commemoration projects.
10. Tuesday, August 21, met with Vanessa Gera of the Associated Press for an interview about our work.
11. Tuesday, August 21, met with Aleks, Ola, and Darek Popiela (Polish Olympic medalist) about the next round of the 30 Matzevot project. Tentative plans called for a November date. May possibly move to the spring.
12. Thursday, August 23, Bruce and I met with Aleks and Ola to discuss Chaim's House, education/training options for future work.

Update on Projects

1. I picked up Kevin on Friday, June 29 at the airport. Kevin, Przemek, and I went to Warsaw and had dinner with Hatte Blejer and her group. Kevin and I departed for Przerosl on Sunday, July 1. Work was to begin in the cemetery on Monday, July 2, but it was rained out. Hatte organized a seminar on reading the Hebrew inscriptions. Work began Tuesday morning, July 3 following a meeting with the mayor of Przerosl. July 4th was

uneventful. The weather improved greatly on Thursday, July 5th and much was accomplished in the clearing work. On Friday, July 6, we worked until Noon, with Kevin and I departing for Warsaw about 1:30 PM. We returned the van on Saturday, July 7th and grilled hamburgers at Andrzej's and Monika's. We checked into the hotel Saturday evening and departed, Sunday morning, July 8 for home. See project report here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aVIMel2baqVUdI3nWmP0N7KR_Tniyv49cEIShbCvtAQ/edit?usp=sharing

2. For round two of our summer project schedule, I traveled to Poland on Friday, July 29 and arrived Saturday, July 30. I spent the afternoon at the Warsaw airport waiting for Bruce, whose flight ultimately was canceled. He arrived on Sunday, July 31 and we traveled to Nasielsk. The Nasielsk Jewish cemetery project began on Sunday, August 1 and ran through Friday, August 3. Bruce and I worked with Glenn Kurtz, his sister, and her husband along with several descendants from Nasielsk. Focus on project was to clear and clean the remaining undergrowth; however this cemetery experienced a massive return of undergrowth from last year. We managed to clear more than half. We met with the mayor several times and he attended the unveiling of the sign placed on the cemetery. See Nasielsk Report for further details
here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1B2akLSi1X7LAAwbDI7CFSTbCpktyKN-HRIgWPhAGE14/edit?usp=sharing>
3. On August 9, Bruce and I traveled to Oswiecim and unloaded the tools. On Friday, August 10 we met the BBC at Krakow airport. Saturday morning, the team visited Auschwitz and in spent the afternoon with David and Basia. Sunday we spent the afternoon with Piotr Daczynski's family. The project began on Monday, August 13 and we completed the work on Thursday, August 16th. Once more we were joined by several Boy Scouts organized by Piotr. Lukasz Szymanski joined us for two days. On Thursday evening, August 16, we hosted the Polish volunteers to a meal at "Mama Mia's." See project report here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LVOiwlk6tc4v4Td_1fjsUL170DmZfLH1Diz9JMXdtx8/edit?usp=sharing
4. Bruce and I met Rachel McRae, Rachael Romero, and Przemek Panasuk at the Warsaw airport. We flew to Rohatyn to begin our work with Jay and Marla in the Rohatyn Jewish cemetery. See Rachel's project report here:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b3_H0N7WWOcJ-8N34ydZQNRODQUFI0evyiqFAed4qHo/edit?usp=sharing

PhD

1. In late July, Deborah, Clara, and I drove to Michigan, where I attended HOPEFULLY my last on campus cohort gathering.
2. Began to slowly return to the revisions on my dissertation in early September and spent the month working through a major revision on proselytism. I spent roughly a week on reading articles/books on proselytism and spent the last two weeks writing additional material on proselytism for my dissertation. I submitted my revision of this section to the chair of my committee on October 6. Hopefully what I submitted will satisfy the committee's wishes for their recommended revision to this section. We will need to revisit the matter of proselytism in our spring meeting or next October. I need to publish my dissertation first!
3. I hope to complete remaining revisions by the end of October and defend my dissertation in mid-November or early January 2019.
4. I feel much pressure to complete my PhD. I think that completing it is critical to my and our work with TMF.
5. Expected graduation is May 2019.

Outcome of AP Article:

1. Several donors and potential donors have contacted TMF about making donations. I do not know how many actually gave. I know that we received a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia (I think Philadelphia).
2. I have been invited to speak at the 7th Annual Genocide Awareness Conference at Scottsdale Community College (See last year's line-up here: <https://www.scottsdalecc.edu/genocide>)
3. I have been invited to speak to a local Jewish men's group in Atlanta sometime before the end of the year.

Thank you,

Steven



Steven D. Reece

Founder and CEO, The Matzevah Foundation, Inc.

(+1) 404.663.2383

www.matzevah.org

