



# מה חדש Ma Chadash?

A newsletter from Talmud Torah to the parents & students

November 9  
22 Cheshvan

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## Talmud Torah Celebrates Jewish Book Month

written by Cathi Orkin Oskow, Talmud Torah Librarian

Talmud Torah of Minneapolis kicked off its annual celebration of National Jewish Book Month at assemblies for *Mekhina-Dalet* classes on November 3 and 4. The activities run through December 10. The theme this year is “Jews in the Arts and Athletics.” Two of the writers and artists being celebrated are husband and wife H.A. and Margret Rey, co-authors and illustrators of *Curious George*. Students were surprised to come into the assembly and see Librarian Cathi Orkin Oskow holding a Curious George stuffed animal. The librarian explained that George’s creators were Jewish. She shared part of a book with them: *The Journey That Saved Curious George: The Wartime Escape of Margret and H.A. Rey*, in which they learned that the animal-loving artistic couple escaped the Nazis on bicycles, carrying five manuscripts, one of which was the original version of *Curious George*.

Students are encouraged to read any books with Jewish content or authors during Book Month, but there are extra incentives this year for reading books or articles about the featured Jews in the arts and athletics, such as: Sholom Aleichem, Anne Frank, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Judy Blume, Maurice Sendak, Patricia Polacco, Elie Wiesel, Emma Lazarus, Ruth Brin, Marc Chagall, Art Spiegelman, George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, Isaac Stern, Bob Dylan, Harry Houdini, Barbra Streisand, Steven Spielberg, Hank Greenberg, Sandy Koufax, Mark Spitz, and Kerri Strug.

The students were given reading logs to bring home in which all the rules for the Jewish Book Month are included.

The Jewish Book Month activities at Talmud Torah were started years ago by longtime Talmud Torah librarian, Marilyn Burstein, z’l. This is the second year the celebration honors her memory. Anyone who would like to make a donation in Burstein’s honor will have special plaque placed in a new book purchased for the library with the funds. For more information contact Cathi Oskow at: 952-381-3300.

## Bet Families Come Alive

Our families came alive in the *Bet* classes. The students in *Bet* classes created beautiful photo family albums with captions written in Hebrew. They also talked about their families in Hebrew. The photo albums will be displayed in our hallways for you all to enjoy.

## Gimel Classes Begin their Study of Torah

After an introduction to the study of Torah and a summary of the first eleven chapters of Genesis, the *Gimel* classes have begun their study of Genesis with *Parshat Lech Lecha*. In this Torah portion we meet *Avram*, the patriarch of our



people.

One of the first questions the students asked was: "Why did God choose *Avram*?" This is the very same questions that our sages have asked. How astute of our students!

We spoke about monotheism and the fact that *Avram* was the very first person to believe in one God. The children have many questions about the text and we often try to answer these by providing our own *midrashim* (commentaries). One of the ways we create our *midrashim* is through role playing. This is an activity which our students enjoy very much.

Ask your children about the scene we role played where *Avram* is telling his wife, *Sarai*, that they are moving. Our students provided many interesting versions of this scene.



### **Jewish Humor: Bible to Borat**

Students in the high school elective, *Jewish Humor: Bible to Borat*, have discussed what makes humor, Jewish humor. Recently, they read the well-known parody about the binding of Isaac by Woody Allen. They divided into small groups, read Biblical stories, such as the Creation Story, The Tower of Babel, Noah's Ark and others. After reading the original text, they discussed and wrote their own Biblical parodies. Although humor is funny, it can also be a serious matter.



### **Great Ways To Help Support Talmud Torah This Month**

#### [Help Make Oodles at Noodles](#)

Wednesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 – 8:00 P.M.

**Talmud Torah will receive 50% of dine-in, take-out and gift card purchases.**

Be sure to invite your family, friends and neighbors to join us at the new West End, St. Louis Park location.

#### [Celebrate Jewish Book Month & Shop for Hanukah at Barnes & Noble](#)

Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 A.M. – 10:00 P.M.

Barnes & Noble is helping Talmud Torah raise funds by contributing 10% of purchases made by anyone who makes a purchase and mentions Talmud Torah or presents a coupon from Talmud Torah. We are organizing book readings, entertainment, gift wrapping and a visit from Curious George.

Thank you to all families who purchased and sold Happenings Books in support of Talmud Torah. We raised nearly \$1400.00.

A special thank you to the Kuretsky Family for selling 22 books.

*"To participate in the Amazon School Rewards program, please go to Talmud Torah's homepage at [www.talmudtorahmpls.org](http://www.talmudtorahmpls.org) and click on the Amazon link. Thank you for your support!"*

Questions or comments regarding the **Ma Chadash**? Email them to [schalom@talmudtorahmpls.org](mailto:schalom@talmudtorahmpls.org)

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