

Start the year with Torah!

As the new year begins, and we read Bereishit anew, writing Torahs is the theme.

Maimonides Hebrew Day School will dedicate a new Torah on Sunday, Oct. 25, with final letters inscribed at 1 p.m. at the school, 404 Partridge St., Albany.

And Rabbi Linda Motzkin of Saratoga Springs will give a demonstration of the scribal art, at B'nai Sholom in Albany—see story at right.

The celebration at Maimonides, with music by Kleztory Ensemble, and a buffet, will coincide with the anniversary of the death of Rav Meir Shapiro, who initiated Daf Yomi Talmud study.

Bruce Lorence of Albany will dedicate the Torah in memory of his grandparents.

*In the following, Albany attorney Jack Kaplowitz, who studies with the Albany Daf Yomi group, describes how New York State came to amend a law in 2008 to accord with Talmudic thinking. He explains **chazakah**, or “adverse possession,” which is being discussed currently in daily Talmud sessions.*

New York catches up to the Talmud

By JACK KAPLOWITZ

Special to The Jewish World

The current Daf Yomi Talmudic *Bava Basra* tractate teaches us the concept of *chazakah*. The introduction to Chapter 3 of the *Schottenstein* edition explains that

while *chazakah* definitions may vary, the common thread is *legal presumption*.

What's a legal presumption? We see Reuven wearing an expensive watch. Reuven's possession

chazakah that Reuven owns the watch.

What About Land and Homes?

What about real property? Can a *chazakah* arise from the mere possession of real property? The Talmud's answer is yes. There are certain exceptions beyond the scope of this article, but as a general rule, if (1) a person occupies real property for three years; (2) he uses the property the same way that an owner would; and (3) the previous owner doesn't protest, then a *chazakah* arises that the occupant is the legal owner of that parcel of real property.

There is an important caveat, however, that we will discuss later: a *chazakah* can



SACRED TRADITION: Rabbi Linda Motzkin as she works on a Megilat Esther for Temple Sinai in Saratoga Springs.

Rabbi Motzkin to show Torah craft

ALBANY—As we begin another year of reading the Torah, B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation will host a program dedicated to demonstrating how the sacred scrolls are created. Rabbi Linda Motzkin will present “Making a Torah,” Sunday, Nov. 1, at 2 p.m., at the synagogue, 420 Whitehall Rd.

Motzkin, a scribe and co-spiritual leader of Temple Sinai in Saratoga Springs, will explain the craft, methods and materials of traditional Jewish scribal arts. Those in attendance will be able to participate in the Community Torah Proj-

ect by proofreading completed panels.

Motzkin completed a Megilat Esther for Temple Sinai in 2007 and is working on a Torah. She founded the Community Torah Project, a group that allows volunteers to participate in the creation of a scroll. She is the author of the four-volume Union for Reform Judaism adult Hebrew curriculum and is Jewish chaplain at Skidmore College.

The program is free for the community.

Information may be obtained by calling the B'nai Sholom office, 482-5283.