

Statue of Liberty inspires young poet

By Shirlee Rose Iden
staff writer

IF YOU ASK the teacher, the student is very creative and artistic and likes school. If you ask the student, she says she likes art and writing then adds: "I'm famous at my school."

The student, about to enter fourth grade at Hillel Day School, is Talya Drissman, 8, of Farmington Hills.

Her teacher is Beverly Friedman of Southfield, whose energetic teaching helped Talya's third grade class learn about Independence, freedom and the Statue of Liberty.

And who had a hand in Talya Drissman becoming famous.

Friedman, who taught English in the Southfield public schools and was a teacher and graphic artist in Israel, went back to the classroom last year at Hillel Day School in Farmington Hills.

Talya, daughter of Harriet and Michael Drissman, is the middle child of five.

HER MOMENT in the spotlight came when a poem she wrote for Friedman's class was published in a book called "Dear Miss Liberty: Letters to the Statue of Liberty," edited by Lynn Dundesen.

"It was a homework assignment," Talya said. "Mrs. Friedman asked all of us in the class to write a poem for the Statue of Liberty."

"She sent the poems from the whole class to the Statue of Liberty Committee."

"A lady I don't know, Lynn Dundesen, sent me a letter and it said I should sign the letter (release) and return it to her. If I did she would publish my poem in a book and send me two free copies. So I did."

Talya wrote her poem last October when she was still 7 years old. In mid-May she got the "Dear Miss Drissman" letter with the release in it, and then no word for days and days.

ONE MONTH later, on a Saturday, a package arrived in the mail. "I had to wait until 10 p.m. that night when Shabbos was over before I could open the package," says Talya, part of an observant Jewish family.

"My poem is on page 68." Also included was a book order form so Talya and her family could send for additional copies.

Talya's poem was not the first one she has written. But her studies on the Statue of Liberty were a special project of Friedman from which the 7-year-old poet learned about Emma Lazarus, another Jewish poet who lived in an earlier day.

Friedman required her students to recite the famous closing verses of "The Colossus" inscribed on Miss Liberty and also to earn money to



At age 8 Talya Drissman, a Farmington Hills resident who will be in fourth grade next September in Hillel Day School, is a published poet.

DAN DEAN/staff photographer

contribute to the Statue Restoration Fund.

With her contributions, they sent stories and poems. Talya's was one of those," said Friedman.

"EACH ONE got back some kind of certificate and thank you letter."

In addition, Talya got a large poster from Scholastic Magazine

which she has mounted over her bed.

With her brothers and sister, Talya contributes to a newsletter they put out called "Cousins and Friends Around the World" which helps her keep her hand in with writing.

Introducing herself to readers, she wrote about her three brothers, Avi, 9; Ezra, 5, and Ariel, 3 months; and

her sister, Shira, 11, then asked that readers write back about what they learn and where they go to school.

After her first taste of fame, Talya contends she will write more poems: "a lot."

And next year she and her family are going to see the real Statue of Liberty.

October, 1975

Statue of Liberty

On an island in the sea,
Stands a lady tall and free.
Her face is way up in the sky.
She say welcome, she says hi.

She is there almost 100 years,
All who see her shed their tears,
She is being fixed today,
She is going to stay, stay, stay.

Talya
Drissman
Age 8

around Farmington

All announcements for this column must be mailed to Around Farmington, Farmington Observer, 32203 Grand River, Farmington 48024. Deadline is noon Monday for the Thursday publication and noon Thursday for the Monday publication. Requests for announcements will not be taken by telephone. Middlebelt. No charge.

CHICKEN AND FISH

Thursday, July 31: "Chicken and Fish, Chicken and Fish, Come and Get Some Chicken and Fish," with Judy Antishin, who demonstrates, lectures and serves the light and tasty entrees at 7 p.m. in Farmington Community Center. Reservations are \$10 taken by calling the center, 477-8404.

POWER PARENTING

Sunday, July 27: "Power in Parenting: The Adolescent" contin-

ues film series at 7 p.m. in Forest Park Baptist Church, 26805 Farmington Road. No charge.

BIBLE SCHOOL

Monday through Friday, July 28 to Aug. 1: Vacation Bible School for children from 4 years through fifth grade from 9 a.m. to noon each day in Hope Lutheran Church, 39200 12 Mile. No charge. Registration is requested by calling the church office, 553-7170.

MASK

Tuesday, July 29: "Mask" is the movie for Customer Appreciation Day, shown at 10 a.m. in Livonia Cinema, Livonia Mall, Seven Mile and Middlebelt. No charge.

FAMILY UNDER FIRE

Sunday, Aug. 3: "Family Under Fire" continues film series at 7 p.m. in Forest Park Baptist Church, 26805 Farmington Road. No charge.

Samaritan Center doors open Aug. 1

After almost two years of preparation by the 10 sponsoring churches, the Samaritan Counseling Center of Southwest Oakland County will open Monday, Aug. 4.

The board of directors has named Dr. Wesley Brun as its first director. Brun is currently the assistant director of Pastoral Psychotherapy Insti-

tute in Park Ridge, Ill., a post he has held since 1982. He holds degrees from Central Methodist College in Fayette, Mo., Yale Divinity School, and Eden Theological Seminary.

This is the fourth Samaritan Center to open in Michigan. Other centers are located in Battle Creek, Saginaw and East Lansing and all are

affiliated with the Samaritan Institute of Denver, Colo.

The Samaritan Counseling Center of Southwest Oakland County will offer individual and group counseling, pastoral counseling and educational programs. It is at 26165 Farmington Road in the Knox House of the First Presbyterian Church. Anyone want-

ing an appointment may call 474-4701.

The sponsoring churches are Covenant Baptist Church, Church of Our Saviour, Faith Covenant Church, First Presbyterian, Nardin Park United Methodist, North Farmington Baptist, Orchard United Methodist, St. Colman Roman Catholic, Trinity Episcopal and West Bloomfield United Methodist. Dr. Wesley

Botsford launches new attack on breast cancer

One of the most effective weapons against breast cancer is Breast Self-Examination, but millions of women are not familiar with proper BSE techniques. Beginning this month Botsford General Hospital will implement a new BSE-in-Hospital teaching program.

Developed in conjunction with the National Cancer Institute, the program will offer complete BSE instruction to all non-critically ill female patients over the age of 18. National Cancer Institute research indicates that women taught BSE by a health professional are more confident in their ability to perform the procedure correctly,

and are more likely to practice it monthly than women without professional instruction.

Botsford General Hospital's program will be taught by its nursing staff, at no charge to the patients, and will include a follow-up evaluation of the training program at three-, six- and 12-month intervals. In the future, the BSE-in-Hospital program will be extended to some area physicians' offices, Northwest General Hospital, and Farmington Nursing Home.

Botsford also is researching the need for a community-based teaching program for BSE.

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