ELUL STORIES
Sharing our stories, sharing lives, creating community

Elul is the month leading up to Rosh HaShanah. Each day during the month, a different Temple Beth Torah congregant will respond to the prompt:

This Inspired Me...

☐ The Inspiration of Dr. Seuss
Dr. Marge Goldin

To say the least, I had a conflictual relationship with my mother. She was a flawed parent in many ways but not without her good qualities. As a young girl I was always impressed that she was a regular visitor to the local library and never without a book in her hand. Growing up in the 1930's and 1940's her priority had been to find a husband and get married. But she was self taught on a variety of subjects and, although she left college after her freshman year to become a bride, she never stopped learning. (To her credit, she completed a degree many years later.)

So from the time I was a very little kid I was ingrained with the idea that books were important. I clearly remember the whole experience of learning to read in first grade with Miss Scott via the "Dick and Jane" series which I proudly read aloud to my parents as I mastered them. By that time I had become aware that my mother was a big fan of Dr. Seuss and she especially like the books about Horton the elephant.

These days I consume most of my books in the car on audiobook. I take advantage of the library’s reserve system to get the ones recommended to me and I usually hear about a book a week that way. I participate in a book group that meets every six weeks. Many books have inspired me, moved me, or made me laugh or cry. Yet after all these years of reading I still have to say that my all time favorite book is still Horton Hatches The Egg. The notion that giving your word is tantamount to making a sacred pledge speaks to me on the
deepest levels. I have read this book countless times to my grandsons and discussed the lessons we learn from Horton about how keeping a promise isn't always easy. When I was working counseling elementary school children I often referenced Horton's commitment to staying on the egg even when he felt like giving up and how this kind of effort is its own reward in the end. I would point out to them that an elephant was sitting on a nest in a tree subjected Horton to teasing but that he was able to ignore it by remaining focused on the job he had agreed to do.

Horton's lament is one of my abiding personal values: "I meant what I said, and I said what I meant. An elephant's faithful, one hundred percent!

Marge and Steve Goldin have been married for 46 years because on September 5, 1971 they meant what they said and said what they meant and they have been faithful one hundred percent.

Would you like to share your Elul Story for our This Inspired Me series? Please share a book, or a movie, or a song, or a TV show that left a lasting impression on you. Send your This Inspired Me to: ravsusie@gmail.com. (This theme is inspired by the fact that this month we are holding a Book Drive for the Brooke Jackman Literacy Foundation. We are collecting new children and teen books which will be delivered to children all over the NY area. Come hear the Jackman's story on Friday, Sept 8th after services.)

If you missed any of the previous Elul Stories you can go to www.tbtny.org (media galleries/elul stories).