




## Congratulations to the CAS Adult Bar Mitzvah/ Bat Mitzvah class of 2019



*CAS Bar-Mitzvah/ Bat Mitzvah class 2019*

**L**ast week, March 16, 2019, we celebrated the adult Bar-mitzvah/ Bat-mitzvah class of 2019. While each congregant had their own personal reason for participating, all were rewarded with a heartfelt, fulfilling and joyous day. CAS had a full house last week, with fellow congregants, family, friends and well-wishers; all attending to help us celebrate by embracing the moment, Torah, and God. Shabbat is always a glorious day, and this one was especially great. The students led various portions of the service including, The Shema, Haftorah, and the Musaf

Amidah. Many family members were honored by being given an Aliyah, as their relative read from the Torah. Not speaking Hebrew, Debra Lee, didn't understand everything; but said, "I found the service energetic and exciting and the people warm and inviting; this, was a truly fantastic day." As we celebrated, voices raised, hands clapped walls shook, and candy flew. The celebration continued at Kiddush in the social hall as people hugged, laughed, and congratulated the class' participants. Even the food was stellar. Once again I would like to thank Joan Podnos, for the concept, Eric Freedman for his support in making this happen; but, mostly, I would like Rabbi Simon Rosenbach for helping our dreams, become a reality. 

# Understanding The Many Voices God uses to Call to Us

**A**s Hashem called out to Moses he calls out to all of us in, some manner; but, what we hear depends on who we are and whether we're ready to listen. As we are drawn to Torah for different reasons, the participants of the CAS Bar-Mitzvah / Bat-Mitzvah class pursued their studies for different reasons; some for personal reasons, some for fulfilment, some for knowledge, some out of respect for their heritage and culture. Everyone who completed this class had a story to tell and were kind (or brave) enough to share it.

## **Linda Bloom:**

I started to attend services after my mother died back in 1997. I felt my Jewish connection then. I was told by the Rabbi as long as I attend services I will pick up the tunes and prayers. I never learned Hebrew but have a strong Jewish connection.

## **Daviyd Hawkins:**

Why bar mitzvah for me now at my age? Lol. Better late than never. And after more than a half of century of being Jewish, I'm way overdue.

## **Wanda Rubinstein Gohler:**

I decided to join the Bat Mitzvah group to become a student of Judaism. For most of my life I described myself as being merely culturally Jewish. The passing of my parents, Louis and Paula Rubinstein, brought me to attend synagogues in Brooklyn where I said Kaddish for them. Now as I light the Shabbos candles on Friday night I truly feel the presence of my mother; her sleight of hand as she once lit them when I was a child. I believe it is the Neshemas of my loving parents that lead me to follow and learn to be a better Jew.

## **Marianne Moy:**

All my life I have loved the Lord with my whole heart and with my whole soul. I majored in World Religions in College and never stopped striving to become closer to God. I always found Judaism to be so compelling for its concentration on learning and reasoning. I have studied Hebrew for many years at JCC's as well as Torah with Rabbis.

At Ahavas Sholom, my love of Torah and Judaism have been nurtured and enhanced which culminated in my conversion and Bat Mitzvah.

### **Flora Sonners:**

Today I am celebrating all that I have learned and have been blessed with here at Ahavas Sholom. In the Musaf Amidah one line of the prayer is interpreted as asking God for the gates of learning to be open to me along with peace, harmony, love and companionship. This prayer continues to be answered. I have begun to unravel, what was to me, the mystery of the Shabbat Service and discovered I enjoy being part of it. The blessings of love and companionship of this congregation have seen me through a rough time in my life and continue to up lift and inspire me.

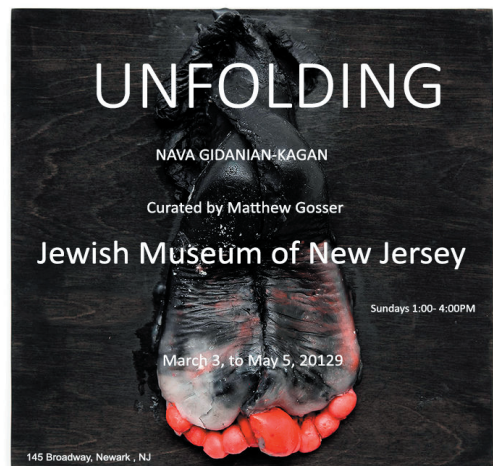
*This occasion is made complete with my family here celebrating with me.*

### **Joan Podnos:**

I grew up in Elizabeth, a member of the baby boomer generation. My father was born in Latvia but emigrated to the US as a baby. My mother was 2nd generation American and very proud of her American heritage. Assimilation was the family philosophy. We lived in a religiously mixed neighborhood, not practicing any form of Jewish life. We eventually joined a reform synagogue so that my younger brother could have a Bar Mitzvah. I attended Sunday School but was not offered a Bat Mitzvah, although I'm sure I would have turned it down given the choice. After my brother had his Bar Mitzvah, which culminated in a very large black tie party at the Short Hills Caterers, my parents dropped our synagogue membership and so ended whatever small connection we had to our Jewish roots.

I have always felt that something was missing from my life and vowed to offer my own children a more Jewish life. We joined a conservative synagogue, sent them to Hebrew School, practice home rituals, celebrated holidays and made Judaism an integral part of our lives,

Now I am in my 60's, retired and able to fulfill the "missing" part of my life. I'm not sure a Bat Mitzvah is the actual link, but my years as a member of Ahavas Sholom have offered me the sense of peace and spirituality I craved. The building has become a second home and the congregants a second family. The timing is perfect for a celebration of the love and pride I have for my own family, my temple family and my Judaism. ★





## Kiddush Sponsorship

**L**ast week Kiddush was sponsored by the entire CAS Adult Bar-mitzvah/ Bat-Mitzvah class of 2019. This week's Kiddush is being sponsored by Amy, in honor of her mother's Yahrzeit. The cost of sponsoring Kiddush is \$150, which barely covers the cost of the lunch. Our goal is to have every Kiddush sponsored. To sponsor a Kiddush, email Rabbi Rosenbach or contact Alla Eicheldinger at [Alla7815@yahoo.com](mailto:Alla7815@yahoo.com). You can also help us by shopping, which doesn't cost any money, just a little time. We'll give you a list of items, you shop and we'll reimburse you.

*Tzedakah  
(charity) is  
equal to all the  
other  
commandments  
combined,"*

## Shabbat Services

**J**oin us this Saturday for Shabbat services. Strangers, visitors, friends, old and new; our doors are open to you. Looking for a new home? New members are always welcome at Congregation Ahavas Sholom services starts at 9:00AM. Our congregation is open and welcoming, so feel free to pay us a visit.



## PARENTS' NIGHT

PARENTS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE LONE SOLDIERS

Taking place at

**the Home of Aline & Jonathan Friedman,**  
41 Cobblewood Road, Livingston, NJ 07039

**Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup> 2019 | 7:30pm**

Hear from LSP Director Noya Govrin,  
Lt. Colonel (Reserves) Avi Ziv  
and Lone Soldier Advisor Leo Loeffler  
about life as a Lone Soldier.

Mingle with other Lone Soldiers Parents and learn all about  
IDF / Rights and Benefits / Enlistment /  
IDF Programs / Tips for Parents

For more information contact Leo: [lloeffler@nbn.org.il](mailto:lloeffler@nbn.org.il)

Please RSVP to Aline: [aline.g@verizon.net](mailto:aline.g@verizon.net)

The role of Nefesh B'Nefesh and its partners is to assist new immigrants to Israel who are drafted to the IDF. It is not the objective, or part of the scope of operational activities of the organization or its partners to help recruit soldiers for the Israel Defense Forces.

# Simon Says

*Weekly insights from Rabbi Simon Rosebach*



*Rabbi Simon Rosenbach*

**T**he Torah last week and this week mandates the fat around the kidneys and the fat around the liver not be eaten; they are burned on the altar for God. I couldn't find anything about the fat surrounding the liver, but the fat surrounding the kidneys is called suet.

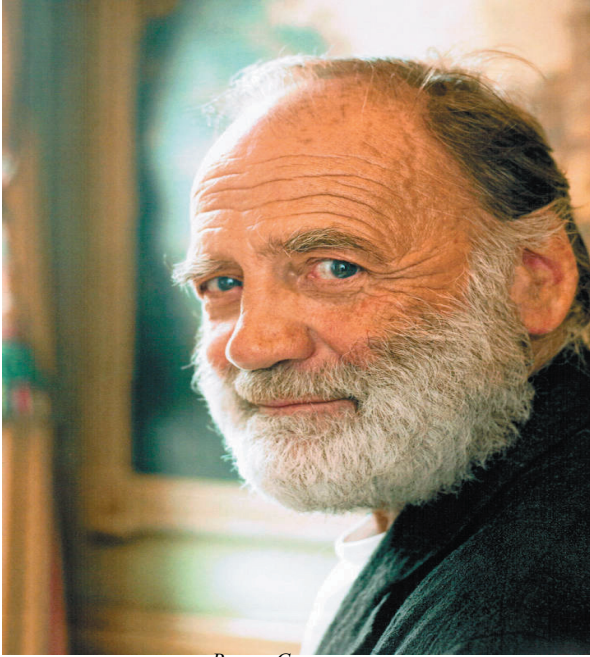
Suet is primarily used to make tallow today, but if it is derived from kosher animals, it is analogous to lard. That is, it is an ingredient of pastry shells. Moreover, suet has a very high caloric count, and is added to rations for cold-weather explorers. (I could not discern whether it was added to the human rations or the sled-dog rations.)

I could not determine whether suet was a delicacy or a staple of the ancient, middle-eastern diet or ordinarily inedible, so I am of two views about the proscription of eating suet. If suet was delicacy, burning suet on the altar for God to enjoy meant the Israelites were giving something up, and the Israelites meant for God the delicacy. If suet was generally inedible, nothing was lost by burning suet on the altar. That is, burning suet

was an empty gesture. It is possible, however, that, even if suet was inedible, burning suet yields a pleasant odor, and the Book of Vayikra emphasizes that God enjoys the pleasant odor.

Our ancestors generally gave to the Levites the choicest animals and the choicest fruits, so I am not convinced that they burned suet for God because it was a waste product of the animal: nobody could eat it. I will continue to research why our ancestors burned the suet for God, and I will report my findings. Anybody who is out there, you are free to weigh in. ✡

# Swiss actor Bruno Ganz (77) Who Portrayed Hitler in WW2 movie, 'Downfall' has died



*Bruno Ganz*

Bruno Ganz, the talented Swiss actor who portrayed Adolf Hitler in the Movie 'Downfall' and Daniel, an angel who falls in love with human life and a mortal woman in 'Wings of Desire' has died,. Ganz, 77, passed at his home in Zurich Switzerland. The multi-talented actor graced both film and stage for over five decades. Most notable for his career in German language films, Ganz was a marvelous actor; recognized as someone who didn't portray a character; but, someone who *became* the character. To American audiences Ganz is best known for his portrayal of Adolf Hitler in the 2004 film, 'Der Untergang' or by its English title, 'Downfall'. Downfall chronicled the last days of Hitler's life as he and his generals, caught in a tightening ally-led vise, searched for a way to stave off ultimate defeat. Downfall earned an Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Language Film of the Year (2005) and his performance garnered Ganz widespread acclaim, even in Israel.

Despite the subject matter, Der Untergang, aka Downfall won great praise and critical acclaim in Israel, with Holocaust survivors riveted by Ganz's portrayal of the monstrous German leader. While Ganz originally had reservations about playing such a despicable character; he was also intrigued. With the assistance of a smuggled tape, Ganz spent months studying Hitler's movements, gestures, body language and speech pattern. Convinced he (Hitler) suffered from Parkinson's disease, Ganz visited a local hospital and observed patients suffering from the disease and noted their movements, struggles, and limitations. Despite his personal feelings, Ganz wanted to portray him honestly; not as a one-dimensional madman; but as a man who could be charming and persuasive, a man who could show affection to animals and children, and yet, represent the very epitome of evil; a man who could not only send millions of innocent people to their deaths; but, sacrifice his own troops and supporters without hesitation or compunction. Ganz was diagnosed with colon cancer last year. He married in 1965; they had one son Daniel Ganz. Though separated from his wife, they never divorced. Bruno Ganz is survived by his partner, photographer Ruth Walz, and his son, Daniel. ★

# Hanna Arendt: The Intellectual Who Rejected the Term



*Hanna Arendt*

**H**anna Arendt was a truly independent thinker, and from time to time had to endure the heat inherent in holding true to her opinions; despite the controversy those opinions might engender. As a truly independent thinker, she could not be pigeonholed into any one sociopolitical category. If you naturally relied on Arendt to

lean right, or left, on one topic, because of an earlier opinion , she expressed on another; you could find yourself disappointed, and sorely so.

She was hard to categorize because she tended to look at each situation based on its own merits. She didn't support forced school integration, yet she supported a couple's right to interracial marriage and supported civil disobedience as a valid weapon in the fight for civil rights. Arendt was the antithesis of political writers like Ayn Rand. Rand, another Jewish philosopher/ writer, who had escaped a repressive government and immigrated to America; fervently embraced hard right politics, she was extremely pro-business, rejected many social safety net programs, and derided governmental interference; and all of her opinions, essays speeches, and novels reflected that philosophy. Hanna Arendt's' thoughts were more expansive; they were not rigid or inexplicably tied to any political, cultural, or religious movement or belief system, and the reverence today's thinkers have for her is tied to her refusal to be beholden to any one position.

Born October 14, 1906, in Hanover Germany to socially progressive German Democrats Paul and Martha (Cohn) Arendt, Hanna Arendt did not have an easy childhood. As her father died when she was only seven years old, she was raised by her mother and grandfather. Her mother remarried in 1920. In 1924 she entered the University of Marburg to study theology. Eventually, she moved on to the University of Heidelberg to study philosophy under Karl Jaspers, who would become her mentor. She earned her



doctorate in philosophy in 1929. That same year she married Gunther Stern, aka, Gunther Anders, a Jewish philosopher, journalist. Their happiness was short lived as instances of anti-Semitism increased as Nazism spread throughout Germany. Hitler came to power in 1933, and Arendt, who was researching the frightening wave of anti-Semitic propaganda being propagated in the country, was arrested by the Gestapo. Upon her release she escaped to Paris. She worked with Youth Aliyah; a group that helped thousands of Jewish children escape Nazi persecution and relocate to Palestine. She divorced Stern in 1937 and married Heinrich Blucher, poet and philosopher, three years later (1940.)

Though the Nazi government had stripped Hannah Arendt of her German citizenship in 1937; French authorities still arrested her as an alien when German forces invaded France in the spring of 1940. Again, Arendt managed to escape, eventually making her way to the United States. Settling in New York City, Arendt began writing for the Jewish Cultural Reconstructionist. She became a U.S. citizen nine years later. Always an accomplished writer and agile thinker, Arendt entered her most prolific writing period. She published *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) *The Human Condition* (1958) *On Revolution* (1963.) in 1961, Arendt convinced *New Yorker* magazine to let her cover the trial of Adolf Eichmann, in Israel. Karl Adolf Eichmann, who joined the Nazi party in 1932, was accused of being a high ranking SS officer who masterminded the deaths of millions of people during the Holocaust. Eichmann was arrested by U. S. forces at the end of WWII; but successfully escaped, eventually settling in Argentina in 1958. Eichmann was captured by Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency personnel in 1960 and returned to Israel to stand trial.

Arendt wrote a series of articles for the *New Yorker* that became a book under the title *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* Her coverage and book would spark controversy, outrage, and passionate debate for decades to come. Many accused Arendt of anti-Semitism and self-loathing; citing her comments blamed victimized Jews for their plight. Arendt disavowed their arguments stating she had never tried to defend Eichmann or minimize his deeds; she had only asked uncomfortable questions. Arendt continued to write teach and lecture, until she died suddenly of a heart attack in 1975. ✡



## Help Us Remodel Our Kitchen

A benefactor has pledged matching funds to help us remodel our Kitchen.

What Congregation Ahavas Sholom can raise they will match.

**Your tax deducable donation will be appreciated**

**For more information contact Eric Freedman.**