



The Star:

Jewish Voices of Central Massachusetts

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Include your idea, relevant experience and any other information that may help explain your story.

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of *The Star*! Hopefully, you are enjoying the quickly warming weather!

In our April issue, you will read about....

- The dedication (with photos) of a wonderful new gazebo in Israel built in tribute to Danny Jacob Baker, the son of Liz and Joel Baker, who tragically lost his life in 2022

- Supporting Rachel's Table's team in Project Hunger's Walk for Hunger on May 3

- Steven Schimmel's examination of a one-state/two-state solution in the Middle East and suggestions of a third option to explore

- Bernie Rotman's discussion about the important mission of the Hillel Advisory Committee he founded forty years ago and which continues on in 2026 as strongly as ever.

- A review by Karen Rothman of Laney Katz Becker's 2025 historical novel, *In the Family Way*

- Carol Goodman-Kaufman's inter-

view with Rabbi Aviva Fellman of Congregation Beth Israel, ahead of her upcoming "Bat Mitzvah" celebration year as BI's Rabbi. Carol also turns her culinary eye to the history of cheese in "It's Shavuot. Got Milk?" where, ahead of Shavuot, she provides us with another typically tasty recipe!

And no issue of *The Star* would be complete without David Scholder's crossword puzzles!

Until next time...happy reading, cooking and puzzling!

Carol Goodman Kaufman
 Karen Rothman
 Mike Smith

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Correction: Rabbi Richard Rudnick entered rabbinical school in 2005, not 1985, and was ordained in 2011.

We regret the error.

History Can be Our Guide

By: Steven Schimmel, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts

I fully acknowledge that in the midst of a multifront war, coming on the heels of an incredibly difficult period dating back to October 7th, this is not a time when one would normally be thinking of prospects for peace. With that said, I wanted to put forward some thoughts while they're on my mind.

One of the major talking points coming from the anti-Zionist movement today is the call for a one-state solution. It has become a popular position in academic circles and protest movements. Setting aside that many critics argue that the one-state proposal is a thinly disguised attempt to destroy Israel by other means, those who have embraced this idea overlook that we have already seen how life functioned under a single political entity. It did not produce peaceful coexistence. Under both the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate for Palestine, there was a single governing authority, and instead of coexistence and harmony, the reality was repeated and often deadly communal violence, nearly always directed at Jews.

Even before formal modern Zionism, there were episodes of violence under "one-state" Ottoman rule, including attacks on Jewish communities in Safed and Hebron during the Peasants' Revolt in the 19th century. Under British rule, the Nebi Musa riots in 1920; the Jaffa riots in 1921; the Hebron massacre in 1929; and the Safed massacre in 1929 are among the most well-known examples. Additional waves of violence, including the Arab Revolt from 1936 to 1939, further underscored the instability. These events all occurred during periods of unified governance. The Jewish community, the Yishuv, recognized the need for protection, scaling Hashomer's localized guard model founded in 1909 into the more organized Haganah by 1920. Yet violence

escalated over the decades, leading up to the end of the Mandate, with attacks and reprisals evolving into a sustained inter-communal conflict. The notion that a single state once existed peacefully is not supported by the historical record.

That violence was what pushed the British to seek a political division of the land. The territory was divided administratively with the creation of Transjordan in the early 1920s. The Peel Commission then recommended partition in 1937, followed by the United Nations Partition Plan in 1947. The concept of two states emerged out of necessity in response to sustained conflict. Yet proposed arrangements in 1947, along with later efforts in 2000 and 2008, failed to produce agreement. Recent polling by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research shows that support for a two-state solution has declined and remains limited, especially when the proposal specifically calls for recognizing Israel as a Jewish state.

After repeated rejections of proposals over decades, and in the aftermath of the Oct. 7th attack, Israelis are also skeptical about the prospects of a two-state framework.

Under a single governing structure, violence erupted, yet efforts to divide the land into two parts have repeatedly stalled.

So where does that leave us?

There is another option that has been overlooked. Traditional Arab societal structures have often been rooted less in centralized national authority and more in family, clan, and tribal relationships. Historically under Ottoman rule, loyalties were often local or regional rather than directed toward distant capitals.

That reality matters today. The Palestinian

political system lacks a widely legitimate, unified leadership. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, now in his late 80s and in power since 2005, has seen his standing decline significantly. He does not have the political capital to move his people to enter into an unpopular agreement. Hamas is completely unacceptable as a governing partner for Israel, and no alternative leadership has emerged that can credibly represent the entirety of the Arab population.

Instead of waiting for a single leader to convince his people of a solution, and then sign an accord on behalf of millions, a different approach may be more realistic. Grounded in existing social structures, Israel could pursue agreements at the level at which legitimacy actually exists: with clans, tribes, extended families, and local communities. This approach echoes, in a modernized way, the strategy associated both with T. E. Lawrence, and one that was discussed during the Gaza war.

In practical terms, this would mean encouraging individuals, families, or larger kinship groups to opt into arrangements directly. In exchange, they could receive legal protections, economic opportunities, and pathways to deeper integration, potentially within a future confederal framework. The number willing to participate may initially be small and would not represent the entirety of the Arab population. Yet even a limited bloc could be meaningful. Rather than waiting for a comprehensive national consensus that may not emerge, progress could begin where trust and authority actually reside. It would also show us just how popular reconciliation and coexistence actually are.

Community Conversations

Rabbi Aviva Fellman, Congregation Beth Israel, Worcester



In honor of Rabbi Aviva Fellman's upcoming bat mitzvah year at Congregation Beth Israel, the synagogue will be celebrating the milestone with a week-end of events. The Star was fortunate to get a few minutes of this busy woman's time to talk with her about this momentous event her life.

Rabbi, you're about to celebrate your bat mitzvah year. How does that feel? Has the time flown?

It's hard to believe it's only been 12 years, and also that it's already been 12 years.

Did you always want to be a rabbi, or did you start off life wanting to be an astronaut or an architect?

I went through stages of firefighter and children's singer, but since I was eight years old it's been pretty consistently rabbi.

What motivated you to become a rabbi?

When I was in fourth grade, the synagogue hired a new rabbi and the environment in the *shul* changed. With the first rabbi at temple, if we made a noise above a whisper, we received the death stare from the rabbi. When a new rabbi came with kids, those barriers came down. When I was in fourth grade, he offered a Shabbat nusach course for kids. When most kids were hiding under their pillows with flashlights and reading *Babysitters's Club* or *Nancy Drew* books, I had a little *siddur*. I always knew I was capable and this gave me an access point. When I was fourteen, the cantor of the *shul* invited me to lead High Holiday *psukei d'zimra*.

So, I had encouragement from the very

beginning, but in general it was also a place where I had ownership. I knew which teachers had candy in their drawers in the classrooms. We played tabletop football and I had a cohort of friends.

What's the best part about being a rabbi?

I think the best part of being a rabbi is getting to build deep relationships with people and to keep learning myself, not only in terms of how to be a better rabbi. There's so much richness in our tradition, but even as a rabbi I can recognize I've only scratched the surface.

Can you name a few highlights of your 12+ years?

Highlights have been multiple life-cycle events for families. I'm sort of reaching the point where the babies I've named are now reaching bar mitzvah age. And the bar mitzvah students are starting to get engaged. You really become part of a person's family.

Another highlight is getting to accompany individuals to the *mikveh* and call them up for their first *aliyah*. Or seeing people access what they never thought they'd be able to access. I think it's the sort of intimate moments that most people don't see that are really the best and the most meaningful.

You have a résumé of highly unusual things for rabbi, such as baking rainbow *challot*. Where do you find the energy?

I like to say that my schedule as a rabbi is highly flexible, and I'm not the one who sets the flexibility. My Shabbat afternoon nap is sacred. I do have a designated day off, but it is rare that it is a true day off either because of life

cycle events

or things that need my attention, or side conversations.

I think I need those creative outlets to be able to balance the day-to-day pieces.

So, aside from baking *challah*, what creative outlet do you have?

Besides making sourdough bread, we make our own jam, especially in the fruit picking seasons here in Massachusetts. I can do jigsaw puzzles pretty quickly but I'm very picky in which designs I want to do. I've been quilting for the last year-and-a-half, so I try to do that on my day off. I don't do well at gardening. I'm very good at killing orchids.

Anything I haven't asked you about what it's like being rabbi?

I think one of the most challenging piece is that everyone has a different idea of what they need or want their rabbi to be. You try to give everyone a piece of what they need to feel seen and validated. Sometimes it's hard if it's not clearly communicated, or if comparisons are made to others. In essence, the members of the *shul* are your bosses—plus everyone else who has an opinion.

But I think if you're able to be true to yourself, people can appreciate not only that you're trying, but also that there's a level of wisdom and access that comes with a position and the person. Every congregant is different. Every rabbi is different. I am most fortunate to have found this community.

And we are most fortunate to have found you.

Our Shaliah, Guy!

By: Carol Goodman Kaufman

Central Mass was so fortunate to welcome a *shaliah* from Israel, Guy G, for three months this Spring. While he was a new *shaliah*, this was not his first time serving as a representative of his country. Four years ago, before entering the IDF, he was a *shinshin* (an emissary) in Baltimore. He says, "It was before the army, so I was 18 years old. You do not live alone, you live in a house with families, so it's very different, but it was a great experience. And it made my being here easier because I had already worked with Jewish communities in the States."

It may have been easier in some respects, but one look at his calendar showed me that he was one very busy Guy. Virtually every hour of his schedule was packed with programs and activities, bringing him around the county, from Hebrew schools to Clark Hillel.

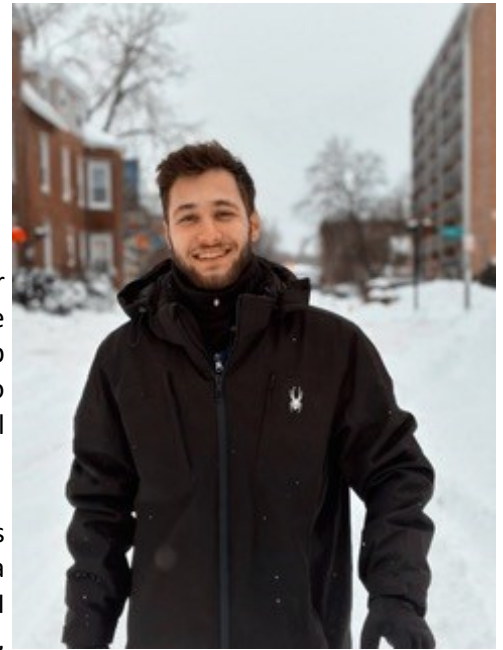
In the years between his time in Baltimore and Central Mass, Guy, now 22 years old, served as a paramedic in the IDF, embedded with the special operations engineering unit. That service followed naturally from a high school volunteer stint at a local hospital.

"As a volunteer, when you're under 18, you can't do a lot of things, like you cannot start an IV. You just help the medics and the paramedics do what they need to do. But it was still an amazing program."

The experience planted a seed in his mind about pursuing medicine as a career. "I thought to myself that I might want to go to medical school, but I wasn't really sure." So, when it came time to enter the army, he says, "I thought I should try and do something medical in the army that would help me understand if I wanted to do it or not. But I really wanted to do something that would help the country in the army in the biggest way possible. I'd heard from a few people that paramedics are everywhere in the army, from ambulances in the West Bank to special forces units."

Serving as a paramedic did the trick. Guy is now applying to medical school. He says, "After you've saved a life it's hard to go back, so it kind of locked me into that profession in my mind."

But there's so much more to this young man. Guy, whose parents made *aliyah*



from Russia and Moldova, also plays the piano and the guitar. He jokes, "If you're a child in a Russian family, you have to play the piano or the violin or do ice skating. If not by the age of three, you're probably not really a Russian."

He also loves to cook, a hobby he took up after serving in Gaza and Lebanon, where he says he ate "the same food all the time for a few weeks straight,"

As if all that's not enough, Guy is a mentalist, and has performed in Israel, Europe, and the United States—including here in Central Mass.

"It gets people happy, he says. "There are a lot of fun interactions with the crowd, and I like to crack a lot of jokes." A true showman, Guy is now adding music to his show.

Since Guy left Central Mass after Passover, we hope you had a chance to meet this dynamic young man. We thank him for coming and wish him only the best!

The Star
Jewish Voices of Central MA

Share your event with us!

**HAVE A COMMUNITY
EVENT YOU WOULD LIKE
FEATURED?**

Contact us at Star@jfcmm.org

They Are All “Our Kids.”

By: Bernie Rotman, Contributing Writer

It was about 40 years ago. I had recently returned to my hometown of Worcester and I was targeted by the Jewish Federation to begin some leadership responsibility. I was asked to join a special Federation committee called Chazon (vision). Believe it or not, this was a committee to decide how to allocate a surplus (yes, a surplus) of campaign dollars which came into the Federation after the annual allocations committee had done its work.

I sat in a room of strangers and listened to all the instructions about which synagogue or Jewish organization could and should receive the additional funds. At the end of the meeting the Chair asked for any comments and I finally raised my hand. “Just curious” I asked. “Is there a Hillel in town that somehow missed the list?” The Chair replied, “They’re all set. They don’t need much. They have a part-time advisor sitting in the Hillel office and she’s doing just fine.” Another member of the committee added, “Yeah, and they’re not our kids, anyway.” I assumed he meant that these students, for the most part, came from outside the Worcester area.

The following month I gathered together a few like-minded members of the Jewish community and formed a new committee of the Federation called The Hillel Advisory Council.

Today, some 40 years later, many Jewish students and Hillel directors have come and gone. Federation presidents and university presidents have come and gone. But I’m still here, as are some of those original members of the HAC. Why? Because of the undeniable truth that when it comes to our local



Jewish college students, the first thing we have to appreciate is that **they are all our kids.**

Some might remember, many years ago, when Hillels were under the umbrella of B’nai Brith and were supported by that organization along with dues paid by the students (or their parents). That model was changed in 1994 and every Hillel, while receiving some grant support from the newly formed Hillel International organization was, for the most part, on its own. It became the responsibility of each individual Hillel to support itself through all local means available.

This means that when our children and grandchildren attend UMass, or Syracuse, or GW, or UCLA or any school, anywhere, it’s up to that community to do the heavy lifting in order to make its Hillel viable. They provide the salaries for professional leadership and the funds for free Shabbat and holiday meals, along with a wide array of programs and opportunities to make sure that “our kids” who are in “their community” are comfortable and happy, safe and secure.

So now, when these students from elsewhere are in our community for college, we don’t differentiate between them as “ours” or “theirs.” These student are “guests in our community home”; they are now “our kids” and deserving of our attention and our sup-

port. As a bonus, how lovely is it to see our local Jewish college students taking part in our synagogue services, serving as teachers in our Hebrew schools, and as youth leaders to our teenagers. They attend our Federation community events and volunteer every week to help the homeless and underprivileged in our community.

Year after year, our college students contribute to the strength and vibrancy of our local Jewish and secular communities. And looking beyond, how can we ever measure the contributions they will make to the communities of their choice, where they will live and raise their children, becoming the leaders of tomorrow in their Jewish communities and beyond?

For many, it all might have begun in their college years back in Worcester. Indeed, these Jewish college students are “all our kids,” and as with our own children we should be pleased and proud to support them.

A Worcester native, Bernie graduated from the Jewish Theological Seminary and served as a congregational rabbi in Rhode Island before moving back home to join the family business in 1980. Past - and current - Federation Board member, his primary local interests are Congregation Shaarai Torah West, Clark Hillel, and the Worcester Hebrew Cemetery Association.

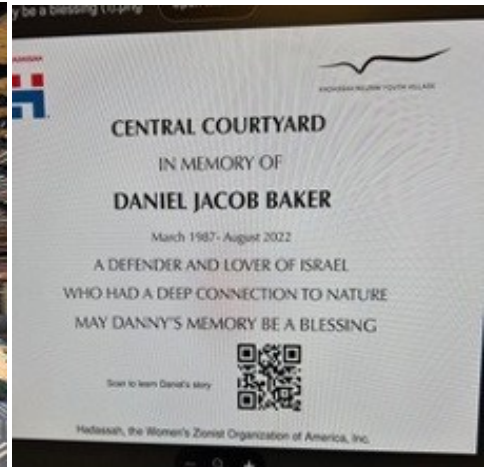
Baker Dedication in Israel

Liz and Joel Baker, along with their family, dedicated the central gazebo at the Precision Agriculture Complex at the Hadasah Neurim Youth Village at Beit Yanai, Israel. The gazebo was established in memory of Daniel Jacob Baker z"l, who died tragically in 2022.

The Baker family, attended by dozens of friends, was both festive and deeply moving.

The Baker family shared touching moments and memories of their beloved son, known to us here in Worcester as Danny, and Israeli dignitaries representing both the village and Hadassah spoke to the assembled audience. The Hadassah Neurim Ensemble provided musical accompaniment.

The ceremony concluded with a shared luncheon.



Greater Worcester Hadassah invites you for a private tour of

The American Antiquarian Society

Led by its President, Scott Casper

11 a.m. Wednesday, May 6

185 Salisbury Street, Worcester

Join us as we explore the remarkable treasures of this historic, world-renowned institution in the heart of Worcester.

Space is very limited, so we recommend early registration.

Contact ckaufman@hadassah.org

It's Shavuot. Got Milk?

By: Carol Goodman Kaufman

Shavuot is just around the corner, and I'm already thinking of ways to milk it for maximum deliciousness. (I know, cheesy line.) Shavuot is the holiday on which we traditionally eat lots of dairy. But why? The rabbis give a plethora of explanations for the custom. Herein are just a few I have chosen to rationalize my indulging in cheese blintzes, cheese-cake, ice cream, and...

First, of course, is the most obvious explanation for those of us not heavily versed in scripture. The Torah tells us in Exodus 3:8 that the Promised Land was "flowing with milk and honey," and in Song of Songs 4:11 that "milk and honey are under your tongue."

Those looking for signs in the words of the Torah may find their rationale for eating dairy. After all, the initials of the four Hebrew words in Numbers 28:26 that describe the sacrificial meal offering on Shavuot (*minha hadasha laShem bi'shavuotaychem*) spell *mei halav* (from milk). These words practically command us to place cheese blintzes on the spring festival's menu.

If you happen to like *gematria* (numerology), you will be thrilled to see that the numerical equivalent of the word *halav* (milk) is 40 (*het*=8, *lamed*=30, *vet*=2). This correlates to the number of days Moses spent on Mount Sinai while awaiting receipt of the Ten Commandments, as well as to the number of years the Israelites wandered in the desert before arriving at the Promised Land.

Many Hebrew scholars like to have a bit of fun with wordplay. In the Book of Psalms (68:16), for example, Mount Sinai is also called *har gavnunim*, or mount of majestic peaks. *Gavnunim*

sounds like *g'vinah*, or cheese. Hence, another reason for dairy on Shavuot.

The most serious interpretation for me is one that explains that the Israelites, once having accepted the Torah and its commandments, could no longer eat meat that wasn't kosher. So, until they could *kasher* some meat and get new utensils (there was no Crate and Barrel nearby), dairy was all they had.

The irony of all this is that Jews and dairy tend not to get along, intestinally speaking. We of the Tribe are disproportionately missing the enzyme that digests lactose. So, perhaps we should pursue a sponsorship from the Lactaid people to help finance our dairy-laden groaning boards at Shavuot?

Bourekas

Bourekas, baked and filled pastries, are a cross between the Turkish borek and the empanada that Sephardic immigrants brought with them to Turkey when they fled the Spanish Inquisition. Now one of Israel's quintessential street foods, bourekas can be eaten out-of-hand while strolling down Ben Yehuda or Dizengoff, or as a meal served with salad, olives, and sour cream or plain yogurt.

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 1 c. mashed potatoes
- 1 c. cheese, like provolone or smoked gouda, shredded or diced into tiny pieces
- 1 t. dried parsley
- 1 pinch garlic powder
- 1 pinch onion powder

- 1 pinch salt
- 1 pinch black pepper
- 1 (17.5 ounce) package frozen puff pastry, thawed to room temperature
- 2 t. water
- 2 T. sesame seeds (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Line cookie sheet with parchment paper.
3. Beat 1 egg in a bowl and mix in the mashed potato and cheese. Season with parsley, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, and pepper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, cut each sheet of puff pastry into 9 equal squares to give 18 squares in total.
5. Beat the remaining egg with water in small bowl. Brush edges of each square lightly with egg wash.
6. Place a heaping tablespoon of the potato/cheese mixture in the center of each square.
7. Fold pastry over the filling and seal edges with a fork.
8. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet, brush with remaining egg wash and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
9. Bake in the oven 30-35 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve immediately.

**Your Values
and Traditions
Can Live Forever**

**Your legacy
gift can make
it happen!**



**Be remembered forever with a gift to Jewish Federation of Central
Massachusetts in your will, trust, retirement account, or life insurance
policy.**

To learn more about leaving a legacy, contact
Lisa Thurlow, Legacy Coordinator, LThurlow@jfcma.org; 580.756.1543.

Dear Readers:

You probably already know the difference Rachel's Table makes in our community. Now we're asking you to take another step— literally!

We're proud to be walking in Project Bread's Walk for Hunger on Sunday, May 3rd, and we'd love for you to join our team.


Every step we take helps us raise funds to rescue and deliver fresh food to families and children across Worcester County. This is a chance to walk alongside people who share your passion for ending hunger and to show our community what Rachel's Table is all about.

Sign up or donate here: <https://give.projectbread.org/team/813787>

We hope you'll join us for this special day. Every step counts and we'd love to celebrate it together!

Thank you for everything you do. See you on May 3rd!

With gratitude,
Michael Schiumo
Marketing & Outreach, Rachel's Table




JOIN TEAM

DONATE

Upcoming Events

- Apr 16 - JCC Seminar
- Apr 16 - JCC Babka Bake
- Apr 17 -The Susan and William Granoff Jewish Heritage Program
- Apr 17 - CAA Potluck & Service
- Apr 18 - CAA Sabba
- Apr 19 - Yom Hashoah Community Program
- Apr 19 - Film Festival: Resistance
- Apr 20 - CBS Silver Sages
- Apr 22 - JHC Auxiliary Donor Event
- Apr 23 - JCC Trip to MFA
- Apr 26 - CAA Israeli Dancing
- Apr 26 - Krav Maga Keshet Event
- Apr 26 - Film Festival: The Ring
- Apr 27 - CBS Silver Sages
- May 1-2 - TES - B'Mitzvah
- May 2 - Hadassah Greater Boroughs Donor Event
- May 2 - JCC Disco Night
- May 3 - JCC Wellness Fair
- May 13 - Community Yom Haatzmaut Program
- May 17 - Shir Joy Concert

To view more events, please check out www.jewishcentralmass.org/calendar



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Book Review: *In the Family Way*

By Laney Katz Becker

Review By: Karen Rothman

“In the family way” is a phrase that originated in Britain in the 1700’s as a euphemism to describe an unmarried pregnant woman, often with derogatory undertones. The phrase continued to be widely used in the United States and elsewhere until the mid 1970s-1980s, when it became socially more acceptable to say the word “pregnancy” in public.

Until the early to mid 1970s, it was common practice for unwed pregnant teenagers in the United States to leave their homes, go to a maternity house (usually far enough away so no one would know them) to finish their pregnancy, and then relinquish their babies at birth so they could be adopted. They were expected to return to their hometowns and their families and finish high school without ever mentioning they had borne a child. They were also told that they could not have any contact with their babies after their birth. It is estimated that about 1.5 million young women gave up their babies in the U.S. between the 1940s and 1970s.

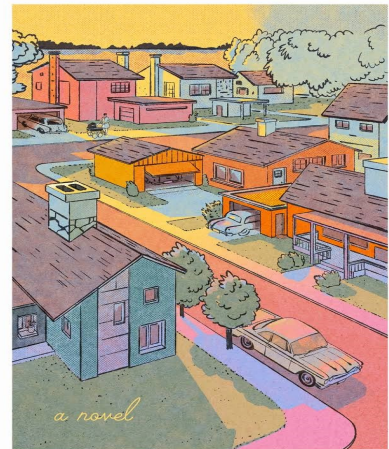
In the Family Way, by Laney Katz Becker (Harper, 2025) is a work of historical fiction about Betsy, a 15-year-old pregnant teen who comes to live with suburban housewife Lily and her family in a small town in suburban Ohio in 1965. The housewives get together weekly to play canasta and share their lives. The main story begins shortly after Betsy arrives at Lily’s house and ends after she delivers her baby, although there are some surprises that occur several years later that we read about in the last chapter. The book is told from the perspectives of two of the housewives (both Jewish) and Betsy. We learn the secret traumas, fears, and disappointments that each character faces as they try to fit the stereotype of what a good and proper girl/woman should be.

Until the mid-1970s in the United States women couldn’t get credit cards in their own name or get a mortgage or loan without a man’s co-signature. Divorce was scandalous and difficult to obtain without the husband’s consent, and a woman could not get a prescription for birth control unless they were married and had their husband’s approval. Abortion was illegal, extremely dangerous, difficult to obtain, and very expensive.

The writing style used by Becker is extremely effective, allowing the reader to see life through the minds of different people living different lives in the same place at the same time. Extremely difficult issues including unwanted pregnancies, infertility, miscarriages, spousal abuse, cancer and fiscal instability were all discussed in what felt like to me to be a typical perspective of individual women living in suburbia in those times. Although not stated as such anywhere in the book, the ethical issues that the book raises are completely consistent with Jewish theology.

So much of this book resonated with me. As a teenager in the early 1970s I remember two girls leaving school only to return after several months to whispers about them having given birth. Although we did have a very rudimentary class in sex ed in seventh grade, I really didn’t understand the mechanics of how one got pregnant until later in my teens. I also remember needing to return home to New Jersey from college in Boston to open a credit card because my father had to co-sign for me. Also, I was repeatedly told that I had no right to take the spot of a man as a medical student because my education would be wasted when I got married and had babies. By the time I was in medical school abortion was legal, but during my obstetrics training I participated in the care of several women dealing with near fatal consequences of a botched back-

IN THE FAMILY WAY



LANEY KATZ BECKER

street abortion.

One cannot help but see parallels between the decades prior to the women’s liberation movement and recent years. Although its subject matter is mature, I think it is especially important for teens and parents of teens and teenagers to read this novel to understand more fully the impact of abortion restrictions. It is also very important for those of us who lived through those times to continue to tell our stories. I highly recommend reading it.

I had the pleasure of speaking with author Laney Katz Becker this past fall on Zoom as part of a book discussion of *In the Family Way*. She said that the inspiration for this book came to her in June of 2022 when she learned that the Supreme Court had handed down the Dobbs decision, which gutted the Roe v. Wade case decided 50 years earlier. That decision returned laws governing abortion to the states.

Laney was born in Ohio and currently lives in Florida. She is a graduate of Northwestern University. She is also the author of Dear Stranger, Dearest Friend and Three Times Chai. In addition to writing, drawing, sewing, reading, and taking long walks, Laney has been an outspoken advocate for the rights of women and other marginalized people in our country for many years. To learn more about Becker’s other publications or to contact her, go to her website:

<https://www.laneykatzbecker.net>.

PASSOVER PUZZLE

April 2026

ACROSS

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- 4 Passover ceremonial meal
- 9 A core shared belief, as of a religion
- 14 "McCarthy" or "Common", say
- 15 Make fun of
- 16 Evade
- 17 You might received one on Valentine's Day
- 19 Consumer protection advocate Ralph
- 20 Regarding
- 21 Second work day of the week, abbr.
- 23 Spanish term meaning "little girl"
- 24 Oppressor in the Passover story
- 27 Female name of Hebrew origin meaning "judged"
- 28 Tech school in Mass.
- 29 Feel ill
- 30 Noted Dadaist artist Hans
- 33 Female hero in the Passover story (Sister of Moses)
- 36 They hang out in caves
- 38 Prefix for politics
- 39 Unknown Jane?
- 40 Abbr. on a TV remote
- 41 Moses' agent and brother in the Passover story
- 43 English dictionary abbr.
- 44 Jai _____
- 46 Phrase uttered by a yenta maybe?
- 47 Passover story sacrifices
- 50 Saintry headdress
- 51 Essential ingredient for a nori roll
- 55 Preceder of "fine" or "lovely" maybe?
- 58 Opera solo
- 60 Montreal baseballer
- 61 1960s USAF navigational satellite group (acronym)
- 63 Why one might end an affair?
- 66 Clear the blackboard
- 67 Sordid
- 68 Biped have two of them
- 69 Like the US Capitol building
- 70 Muppet partner of Bert
- 71 Opp. of WNW

DOWN

- 1 Summary
- 2 What poison ivy will give you
- 3 Soda that rhymes with "Santa"
- 4 Porcine confine
- 5 Electroencephalogram (Abbr)
- 6 Vader of Star Wars
- 7 Biblical son of Isaac
- 8 Intended as a cure
- 9 Number of plagues in the Passover story

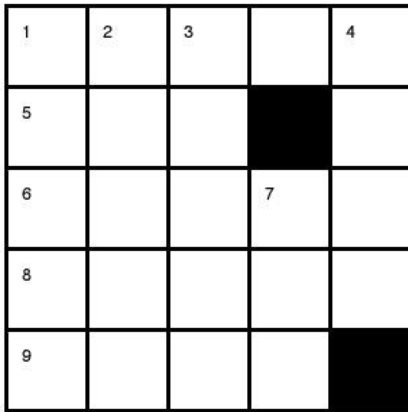
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- 10 _____ Meyers Taylor, female Bobsledder
- 11 In one's birthday suit
- 12 Biblical paradise
- 13 Prefix meaning "trillions"
- 18 Slangy term for one who lives on campus?)
- 22 It builds up in riverbeds
- 25 Famous locale on the Greek island of Santorini
- 26 Cash dispenser (acronym)
- 29 Water that is over 212 degrees Fahrenheit, or something to lance?
- 30 Farm prefix
- 31 Cars produced by Ransom Eli Olds
- 32 Small horse
- 34 One might be bright?
- 35 Cones partners in the human eye
- 37 Brazilian dance
- 40 Ascribe value to (British spelling)
- 42 Respond
- 43 Went against
- 44 Moment of discovery?
- 45 _____ Land, 2016 musical movie
- 46 Texter's alternative to IMO, maybe?
- 48 Opted for
- 49 How Barbra Streisand passed in the movie Yentl
- 52 Banish
- 53 Fencing weapons
- 54 Avoid
- 56 Courageous figure
- 57 Bad thing to fall for
- 59 Maker of construction machinery
- 62 Name of the sea parted in the Passover story
- 64 Possible response to "you're the one"?
- 65 Pastrami go-with at a deli, maybe?

David Scholder is a crossword puzzle enthusiast, traveler and lover of a good pun. He is a long-serving Board member of the Maine Jewish Film Festival. He currently lives with his wife and two cats in the small town of Denmark, Maine.

Answer Keys can be found here: [Jewish Crossword Answer Key - April 2026](#)

TEN PLAGUES MINI PUZZLE SERIES

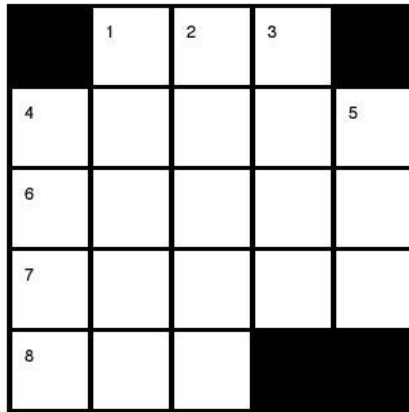


ACROSS

- 1 The first Passover story plague
- 5 Trim a branch, say
- 6 In the open
- 8 Eagle's home
- 9 Device to catch mice or lobsters

DOWN

- 1 Swell
- 2 Wife or husband, maybe
- 3 Tosca or Madame Butterfly, for example
- 4 "It's a _____"
- 7 Tear

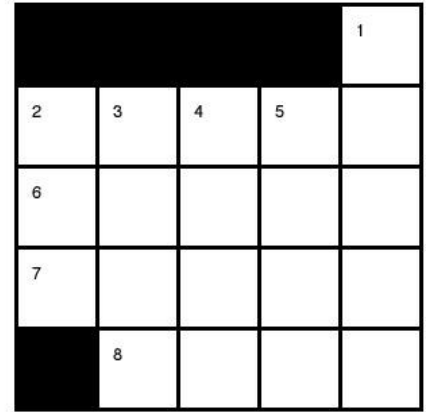


ACROSS

- 1 Lawyers org.
- 4 The second Passover story plague
- 6 Ipsum's partner in graphic design
- 7 It might be "hot" or "total"
- 8 Very expensive fluid at the moment

DOWN

- 1 Smell
- 2 Makes holes
- 3 They are commonly measured in years
- 4 Every country has one
- 5 Instant message (abbr)

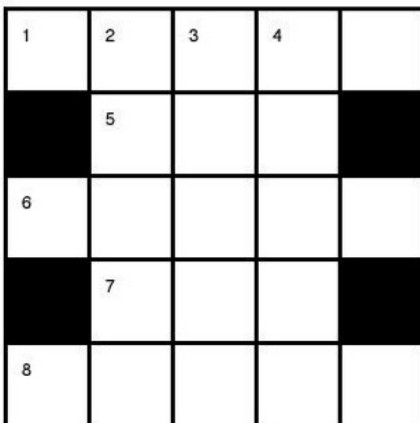


ACROSS

- 2 Back tooth
- 6 Cynthia of "Wicked"
- 7 Sporting events
- 8 Opposite of more

DOWN

- 1 Terry with an interview show on NPR
- 2 French for ocean
- 3 Word before exam or surgery
- 4 The third Passover story plague
- 5 They run perpendicular to sts. in NYC

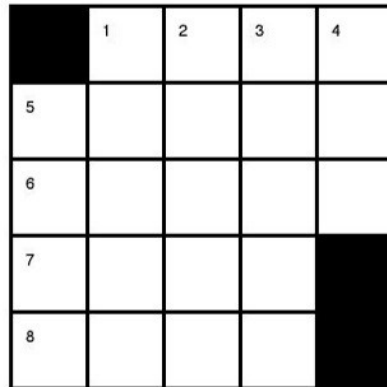


ACROSS

- 1 Frequently
- 5 Where experiments are conducted
- 6 Noted camera maker
- 7 Slinky swimmer
- 8 Part of a written exam, often

DOWN

- 2 The fourth Passover story plague
- 3 Some movies require a lot of them
- 4 Extremely deadly virus

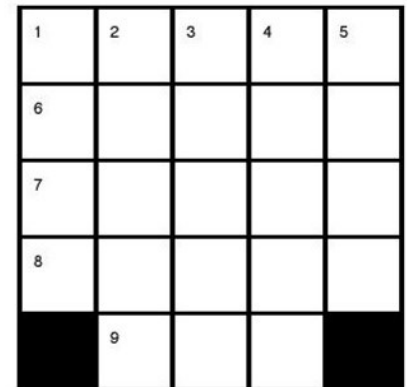


ACROSS

- 1 Zadora and others
- 5 See 1 Down
- 6 After "of", meaning "atypical"
- 7 _____ Reader, magazine
- 8 Loses energy, as a battery

DOWN

- 1 With 5 across, the fifth Passover story plague
- 2 Ideal golf score, with "Hole"
- 3 Measures of land
- 4 Collection
- 5 To praise



ACROSS

- 1 The sixth Passover story plague
- 6 Feature in an atlas, maybe
- 7 Former ruling family of Syria
- 8 Theodore Geisl, with "Dr."
- 9 Casual top

DOWN

- 1 Slant
- 2 Beginning
- 3 Topic
- 4 Rental agreement
- 5 Infections spread through intimate contact (abbr.)

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
	9			

ACROSS

- 1 Doesn't have
- 6 Really dislike
- 7 Very upset
- 8 Inland bodies of water
- 9 Name in a Thomas Hardy title

DOWN

- 1 Seventh Passover story plague
- 2 What you might call a spoiled child
- 3 Stir up
- 4 They make up musical scores
- 5 A lock of hair

	1	2	3	
4				
6				8
9				
10				

ACROSS

- 1 Fleeting trend
- 4 And
- 6 With 8 down, eighth Passover story plague
- 9 "Cheers" in Munich
- 10 Hall's partner in pop music

DOWN

- 1 Fauna go-with
- 2 Fancy neckwear for a man
- 3 Pour water over
- 4 Brand of dog food
- 8 See 6 across

		1	2	3
4				
5				
6				
7				

ACROSS

- 1 Nile menace
- 4 Like some beers
- 5 Fur trader John Jacob
- 6 John of farm machinery
- 7 With "-ness", ninth Passover story plague

DOWN

- 1 Change
- 2 Bringer of babies, maybe?
- 3 Funerary flames
- 4 Anti drunk driving org.

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
	8			
9				

ACROSS

- 1 Tenth Passover story plague
- 6 Event host
- 7 With "Gros", a national park of Canada
- 8 Look after
- 9 Affirmative answer

DOWN

- 1 Rep. on the left side of the aisle, sometimes?
- 2 Portray emotion in a theatrical manner
- 3 Plot measures
- 4 Home to Memphis, abbr.
- 5 Obey

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PASSOVER PUZZLE

by D. Scholder

April 2026 - Answer Key

1	R	2	A	3	F		4	S	5	E	6	D	7	E	8	R		9	T	10	E	11	N	12	E	13	T
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