

The Suburban

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Visit to DDO inspires Israeli author of Hilarious Hebrew book to promote

By Mike Cohen
The Suburban

When Yael Breuer visited family in Montreal and Toronto recently she did not intend for the trip to become a promotional vehicle for a unique new book she co-wrote. Yet everyone who took a glance at Hilarious Hebrew –The Fun and Fast Way To Learn The Language, could not put the publication down. It was her sister-in-law, Dollard des Ormeaux resident Danit Klein, who inspired her to launch a bit of a road show.

“So we brought the book to different notable Jewish locations in both cities and found people very happy to sell it for us,” Breuer says.

Breuer and co-author Eyal Shavit are both Israelis living in Brighton, England. They explain that the book is for anyone, whether they consider themselves good at learning a foreign language or not, and that no previous knowledge of Hebrew is necessary. “I have taught Modern Hebrew to English speakers for many years, and have used this method very successfully,” Breuer says. “It is lovely to have so much enthusiasm for the book in Canada too. I have been coming here to visit my family regularly over the years and, in fact, first came to Canada in 1986 when I was a councillor in a summer camp near Toronto. It is nice to know that I have some

involvement in teaching Hebrew to the local community.”

The book essentially teaches Hebrew words in an entertaining and original way, through sentences written in English and accompanying illustrations. It was published in the UK last November and has attracted so much attention over there.

The likes of Barack Obama, Ben Stiller, Mick Jagger and actor Tom Selleck make appearances in the book and “help” students of Hebrew enhance their vocabulary. The President of the United States may not be aware that his car is so fast that it “goes like lightning.” The Hebrew word for “lightning” is “Barack.” Another example shows two men with the caption: “They “shook” hands at the “market.” The Hebrew word for market is “shook.”

The book is 192 pages, with 16 chapters and 235 sentences. “It took about a year and a half to complete,” Breuer says. “This kind of started off like a joke. I already had a list of about 20 of these sentences. My friend thought it was so much fun she started texting me more. Before you knew it we realized we had hundreds. Suddenly a fun activity became an actual project.”



When it came time to find an illustrator, the authors were lucky as graphic artist Aubrey Smith also lived in Brighton. “Aubrey is not Jewish,” Breuer laughs. “As he made the illustrations he started to learn some Hebrew. I do not pretend to have invented this method. We all find ways to remember things. But I have never heard of such a collec-

tion in an actual book.”

The book is available online at www.hilarioushebrew.com and at www.amazon.com. It can also be picked in Montreal at Babar Books in Pointe Claire and Jack and Jill, The Kotel, Kidlinks, Fressers and Tabagie Sabah in the West End. The cost is \$14.99.