



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday, 21 February 2008

Email to the editors: elife@life.ku.dk

Final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

Editorial changes may occur in relation to the online newsletter.

As regards links in the newsletter, please refer to the Danish online version at the faculty's website http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, Communications, glb@life.ku.dk

Life at LIFE

Cycle to work – win a trip to Canada

This year the cycle-to-work campaign runs from 5-31 May, and it involves using our bicycles for all or part of our journeys to and/or from work – the ride down to the station, for example, also counts.

Each department or unit puts together a number of groups, and each group has a group captain. All the group captains from last year have been sent an email directly about what to do, but if you are in doubt about who the group captain is in your department or if you want to start a new group, you should contact Niels Wollesen, HR department, Nørregade, niw@adm.ku.dk

Prizes:

CU pays the registration fee, and the first prize is a trip to magnificent Canada for the entire winning team! Altogether there are prizes for 44 teams and 700 participants.

Read more at <http://www.vcta.dk/>

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 19 February 2008

LIFE role-play on the timetable

"I said, didn't I, that I came from the Danish Society for Nature Conservation," retorts a quick-witted representative, when asked whether he thinks it is OK to plant willow across large tracts of Poland. The comment probably has nothing to do with the Danish Society for Nature Conservation's general policy, but good arguments can slip out when under pressure – also during role-playing.

The role-play is taking place in a third-year class at the upper-secondary school Himmelev Gymnasium an early Wednesday morning. The class's chemistry teacher, Rikke Rasmussen, has said yes to an offer from a group of natural resources students who are travelling around Denmark with a 'sustainable road trip' in week 5.

This morning, the class is participating in a role-play about bioethanol. The fictional scenario is that four interest groups have been invited to a meeting where they need to agree on a joint recommendation to the government about how sensible it is to abolish the set-aside scheme and invest large sums in bioethanol production.

The class is divided into four groups representing the aforementioned Danish Society for Nature Conservation, Danish Agriculture, the research initiative Fuel for Life and the Institute of Food and Resource Economics. With a well-prepared natural resources student at the end of the table, the discussions are soon flowing. Concepts such as CO₂ accounts, second-generation bioethanol, "set-aside fields" and nature preservation fly through the air, and the individual groups become so involved that they can be seen shaking their heads as the other groups present their arguments – however, they are still magnanimous enough to applaud after each presentation.

An hour and a half later the meeting is over without the four groups managing to agree on a joint recommendation to the government. But in the real world, it probably takes more than a single meeting to do so...

However, everyone is a bit wiser about bioethanol and sustainability, which Rikke Rasmussen also confirms: "The gymnasium students were extremely positive when I asked what they thought about it. It was really well organised. Perhaps their eyes have also been opened up a bit more to the bioethanol problem, and they are now in a position to discuss it in a more qualified/nuanced way. Some of the students found some inspiration for their approaching AT exam (the main general preparation for further studies project which all year-3 students take, the subject this year being "The Future - Visions and Forecasts", ed), and some of them even asked the resources students about the study programme," she said.

Eskild H. Bennetzen, Chairman of the Union of Natural Resources Students and the man behind the road trip is also extremely satisfied with the visits - everywhere the resources students have been warmly and enthusiastically received by both the students and the teachers at the upper secondary schools.

In addition to Himmelev Gymnasium, the seven resources students have visited Dronninglund Gymnasium, Egå Gymnasium, Slagelse Gymnasium and Køge Gymnasium.

Lykke Thostrup

Captions:

Lively discussions in the "Danish Agriculture" group (photo 1)

Four satisfied natural resources students after a couple of hectic days on the road. From left: Jonas Morsing Thomassen, Mille Krambeck Hansen, Sarah Høyer Poulsen and Darran Andrew Thomsen (photo 2)



[Article in Køge Dagblad: Environmental dilemma challenges students, by toke, Tuesday 29 January 2008 \(in Danish\)](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 February 2008

The Silk Road throughout Danish history

Three thousand years are not up yet, so for the time being the location of the white mulberry in the Faculty Gardens remains a secret, but while you are waiting I can tell you a bit more about the role of the Silk Route in Danish history.

In the Viking Age, there were Vikings who served in the imperial life guards in Constantinople, and the Vikings helped to extend the Silk Road via the river systems from the Black Sea to Novgorod and further to the Swedish Viking town of Birka before ending in Denmark. The Vikings were therefore the first Danes to know about silk, and there have been finds of woven silk ribbon and patterned silk fabric in Viking graves.

The silk was highly valued by the Danish kings, both for their own garments and for gifts, such as in the case of Knud the Great, who gave a beautiful silk outfit with woven golden eagles to an influential English abbot.

The fact that silk is mentioned in the 13th century in the oldest Danish scored song might suggest that the silk was something that was really worth owning from a very early age, and many people will probably remember the interval signal in Danmarks Radio: "Drømte mig en drøm i nat om silke og skønne klæder" (I dreamed a dream last night about silk and fine clothes).

Like the Roman emperors, the Danish kings were also worried about the effect on the balance of payments of the expensive imported silk fabrics, and that they were costly can be seen from the fact that, in the 16th century, in Elsinore two pairs of white silk stockings cost the same as a prime ox.

To avoid the outrageous prices, Christian IV started to plant mulberry trees, and he established fourteen silk weaving mills in Silkegade in Copenhagen, and then summoned the Flemish silk craftsmen who could teach Danish spinners and weavers, who were often children from the nearby orphanages.

However, silk cultivation never really flourished in Denmark, at least not on a large scale, but some extremely

fine Danish seafaring and horse riding motifs were produced in silk which the king could present to the Russian tsar.

When Christian IV's daughter Leonora Christine was not writing "Memory of Woe" as a prisoner in the Blue Tower at the Castle of Copenhagen, she was a keen breeder of silk larvae, and she fed the larvae with leaves from what is now Denmark's oldest living mulberry tree which stands in the Proviantgården in Copenhagen. However, Leonora was allowed to keep the silk cocoons, as they were graciously handed over to Queen Sofie Amalie, who could not tolerate other people around her wearing silk.

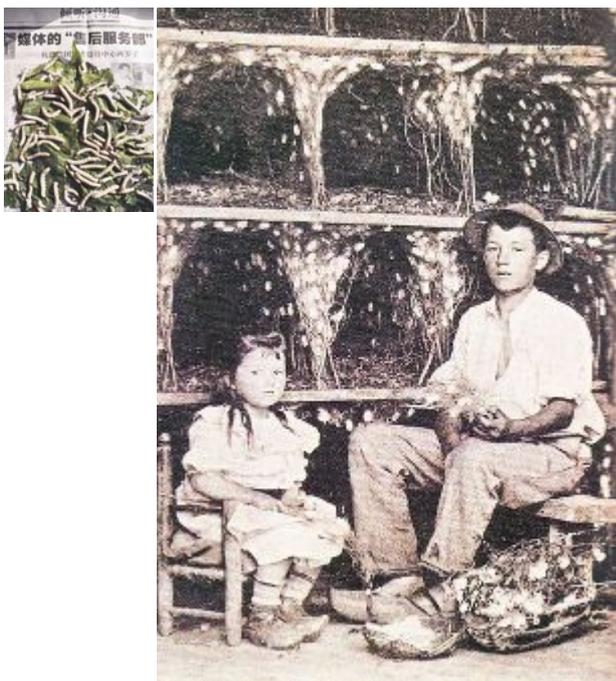
Silk production in Denmark ceased in the 17th century, and as the kingdom was in dire financial straits after the Dano-Swedish wars, the import of the expensive silk fabrics was prohibited.

Later, the Danish kings were forced to again impose the ban, which could suggest that it was never really upheld, because people were desperate for silk with which to adorn themselves. At the end of the 18th century, silk weaving was resumed in Copenhagen, but the silk was reserved for the nobility and the clergy, while farmers were banned from wearing silk and had to make do with flax and wool to ensure they didn't start getting ideas into their heads about being above their station.

As time passed, more and more silk ribbon factories sprung up around Denmark, and even though the ribbon could only be sold in the towns and cities, the peddlers smuggled silk ribbon into their wares when travelling around the country. When it again became legal to import silk goods, the Danish silk ribbon factories were forced to throw in the towel in the competition with the large foreign plants, and as far as we know, Skive Garn ApS is the only place in Denmark where silk items are still produced.

That was a roundabout ending to the tale I've spun about the Silk Road in Denmark, but it is not quite over, as there is still a chapter about the Zealand silk adventure in the 20th century. This last part of the story I will tell later – and perhaps disclose where the mulberry tree is in our gardens.

Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener



Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 February 2008

Announcements

Time for pay negotiations 2008!

Employees can submit proposals via their trade union representative or trade union (if there is no trade union representative). The proposal forms can be found on the employee portal under HR/ansættelsesforholdet/lønforhandling – where you can also find other useful tools.

The deadline for submitting suggestions to loenrunde2008@life.ku.dk is 2 April 2008. Please note that your trade union rep or trade union may have an earlier deadline.

The Institute of Food and Resource Economics (FØI) and Forest & Landscape have their own pay rounds.

LIFE has a number of pay agreements and pay policies which can be found at the staff portal under [HR/ansættelsesforholdet/lønftaler](#)

Kind regards,

Marianne Nielsen, HR

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 20 February 2008

Good offers from the staff association

As a member of the staff association you can participate in many exciting activities – for example a tour of DR-Byen on Friday 11 April. [See other activities here](#).

On Tuesday 25 March we are holding our general meeting at 3 pm, in R645 in Højhuset. Proposals must be submitted to the chairman Ulla Lindberg by 4 March at the latest.

Read more at the [Staff association website](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 20 February 2008

AEU course (administrative supplementary training course in university education) in PhD administration – application deadline Friday 7 March

The target group for the course is managers, administrators and administrative officers who are engaged in PhD administration centrally or decentrally and who need a basic introduction to the rules concerning the PhD programme.

[Information folder](#) can be found on the website under “kursus materiale”.

To register electronically, visit www.aeu.dk.

Application deadline is Friday 7 March.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 18 February 2008

Education

Study Techniques and Study Culture for international students at LIFE - Friday 7 March at 1 to 3 pm

The objective of the course is to address some of the problems arising from unwritten and unspoken rules and expectations that international students may encounter during their studies at LIFE.

Target group: International students at the Faculty of Life Sciences (both non-degree and full degree)

[Link for more information](#) or contact studentservice@life.ku.dk - tel.: 3533 3533

Søren Hedegaard Sørensen, Student Services, shs@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 21 February 2008

Open house about the seven BSc study programmes – Friday 29 February at 1 - 5 pm in the Marble Hall

See the programme and read more at http://www.life.ku.dk/moed_kv/informationsmoede.aspx

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 18 February 2008

Danish Development Research Network holding information meetings for thesis students wanting to work with development-related subjects

In March, the Danish Development Research Network is organising [inspiration meetings](#) at institutions of higher education for students who are about to decide on their choice of thesis subject and who are interested in working with development issues.

At the meetings, a number of relevant people will present academic knowledge and personal views which can shed light on the opportunities and challenges of working with development aid.

Between the individual presentations, time will also be allocated to questions and debate. Moreover, we will inform participants about the possibility of applying for grants via [Danida's Travel Grants](#).

We expect the meetings to provide specific and useful knowledge and inspiration to students considering working with development-related subjects connected with Danish aid to developing countries. At the same time, we hope that the possibility of applying for Danida's travel grants will make it possible for more students to carry out fieldwork in Africa, Asia or Latin America, not just to support the thesis's relevance in an aid context, but also to boost intercultural understanding and collaboration.

The meetings should not be seen as a substitute for the thesis seminars which are often arranged at the universities and which are primarily about methodical and theoretical approaches. The inspiration meetings, on the other hand, aim to focus on potential thesis subjects.

Dates:

University of Aalborg: Monday 3 March 2008, 3-5 pm

University of Southern Denmark: Tuesday 4 March 2008, 4-6 pm

Technical University of Denmark (DTU): Monday 10 March 2008, 3-5 pm - [Master's Thesis Inspiration Meeting](#)

Lone Frederiksen

Danish Development Research Network

Øster Voldgade 10, 1350 Copenhagen K

Tel.: 35 32 41 87

Email: lf@ddrn.dk

For further information about DDRN, please see <http://www.dddrn.dk> , where the final programme will also be announced.

Louise Dyhr Edjabou, Internationalisation and Developing Countries, louisedp@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 15.02.08

Danish-American Fulbright Commission: Three meetings about studying in the USA on 26, 27 and 28 February

26 February: meeting about undergraduate (bachelor) studies in the USA at Fiolstræde 24, 3rd floor, 3-4.30 pm

27 February: meeting about graduate (master's) studies in the USA at Fiolstræde 24, 3rd floor, 3-4.30 pm

28 February: meeting about the possibility of internships in the USA at Fiolstræde 24, 3rd floor, 3-4.30 pm

Read about the meetings for [undergraduates and graduates here](#)

Read about [internships here](#)

See also www.wemakeithappen.dk

Michael Guldager, Internationalisation and Developing Countries, mgu@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 15 February 2008

Staff news

Research

There is still time to Book a Scientist for the Festival of Research

Many exciting Book a Scientist talks have been posted for the Festival of Research 2008 scheme. However, more are still needed.

Thirty-two scientists have registered from the University of Copenhagen, of whom five come from LIFE.

The deadline for registering a talk has therefore been pushed to Wednesday 27 February.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 19 February 2008

Grants

Research funds etc.

See the online version at

http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev/forskningsmidler.aspx

Here you will find all calls with active links.