



eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 14 August 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

University of Copenhagen again ranks no. 8 in Europe

The University of Copenhagen has been ranked no. 45 worldwide and no. 8 in Europe on a list of the world's leading universities. This could be seen from the Academic Ranking of World Universities, otherwise known as the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking, which was published today.

In 2007, the University of Copenhagen was ranked no. 46 in the world and no. 8 in Europe in the same survey, so the placing is in effect unchanged. This, among other things, is because the criteria which are weighted in the survey have not changed relative to last year. The University of Copenhagen ranks particularly highly in the 'life sciences' category, which covers a wide range of scientific areas at the Faculty of Life Sciences, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Health Sciences.

There is growing focus on rating universities. The different lists of rankings represent an attempt to assess the quality of research and education at the various institutions. The ranking of the universities varies from survey to survey depending on the methods used. This ranking takes into account the publication of scientific articles and citations by researchers. However, publications published in Danish are not taken into account, which

means that research areas such as law, theology and much of the humanities and social sciences are not covered.

Over 1,000 universities worldwide have been assessed in connection with the ranking. Read more at: <http://www.arwu.org/>

Jasper Steen Winkel, Head of Communications

Guðrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 12 August 2008

An old green oasis in the metropolis

For 150 years, researchers and scientists at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen have used a garden which still lies between the faculty buildings like a green oasis in the heart of the city. Danmarks Radio's nature programme Natursyn visited the old gardens together with senior gardener Kim Bredahl Greiner.

[En gammel grøn by-oase](#)

[Natursyn 09. august 2008 kl. 09:07 på P1 En gammel grøn by-oase \(37:57\)](#)

Kim Greiner in the section with summer flowers, where many hundreds of species, sorts and varieties can be seen throughout each summer. He takes Natursyn's listeners on a guided tour of the old gardens, talking about how this green oasis in the heart of the metropolis came into being and how it is maintained and renewed.

The Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University is now part of the University of Copenhagen, and has been renamed the Faculty of Life Sciences. On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the gardens, the gardeners created a picture of the Faculty of Life Sciences' logo in this bed using houseleek and sweet alyssum.

Visitors to Kim Greiner's [personal website](#) (in Danish) will find a wealth of entertaining and informative stories relating to the anniversary and the old gardens and their history. To enter the site, [click here](#).

Written by: Jens Olesen, Danmarks Radio (DR)

Guðrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 11 August 2008

University newspaper goes online from New Year

The Rectorate has decided that Universitetsavisen, the university newspaper, will only be published online from 1 January 2009. The decision is based on environmental concerns, as the University of Copenhagen aims to be one of the greenest campuses in Europe. However, there are employees and students who feel that the real reason is financial cutbacks and a welcome opportunity to dispense with a critical publication. The Rector, on the other hand, is calling for level-headedness, assuring everybody that the publication will continue to enjoy a high level of editorial freedom.

Extract from the University of Copenhagen's press release.

Guðrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 13 August 2008

Aqua Lene's rhododendron

At the Faculty of Life Sciences we have our beautiful old gardens; a couple of years ago, a journalist from the fashion magazine "Costume" contacted us about them. He telephoned the garden office and asked whether the gardens could be used as a backdrop for a fashion shoot, and, given we are a pleasant and obliging bunch, I said yes. Several days later, the journalist called again and asked whether there was a room they could use for changing and styling, and as the rear of the then garden office was free that day, they were given permission to use it.

The day arrived, and a flock of unidentified ladies arrived and borrowed the key to the office and came and went. The women were both slim and not bad looking, just as I imagined models to be, but I couldn't really see who was making the decisions, and who was just helping out, although I did manage to identify the bearded man with the shaved head as the photographer. Therefore, I had to ask Charlotte, the journalist, who was who, and she said that "Costume" was going to publish an article about Aqua Lene, and it was she who was going to be photographed. So, she was the principal character, and the other five or six pretty women had roles such as stylist, assistant stylist, make-up lady, hairdresser and a couple of other functions which I couldn't really put my finger on.

I hadn't yet identified Lene because she was in the office, being styled behind a half-closed door, and I had a feeling they could do what was required of them without advice and guidance from the head gardener. However, I had been told by the photographer where the shoot would start and the approximate kick-off time, and I might as well mention that it took only two and a half hours to get Lene to look completely natural.

The idea was that a big, white rhododendron should serve as a background, and, after asking if it was okay, myself and a couple of colleagues positioned ourselves so we could watch the proceedings. Then she arrived, a slender as a wand, even though she had given birth to a boy, Billy, only a couple of months previously. If you can try and imagine a Barbie doll in the flesh, it could only be Aqua Lene, otherwise known as Lene Nystrøm.

It was a Norwegian newspaper that first coined the name 'Aqua Lene', since when it has stuck, but Lene doesn't mind, as very few people would probably recognise her real name. In 1997, Aqua Lene took the pop group Aqua to the top of the charts when they released their album Aquarium with, among others, the single "Barbie Girl", the best-selling Scandinavian single ever, even beside groups such as Abba. Subsequent songs such as "Doctor Jones", "My Oh My" and "Turn Back Time" also became international hits.

The money poured in, but it also had a downside with the media pursuing Lene continuously because she was the only girl in the band. And you can ask yourself whether happiness is being surrounded by crowds of screaming fans when you try and go out for dinner in Tivoli with your parents.

The band split up in 2001. With record sales of 28 million, it was the most successful Danish music group ever, and isn't there some talk of them reforming?

On the Internet, there are 274,000 hits on 'Aqua Lene', so it wasn't just any old girl posing and smiling sweetly in front of the rhododendron bush in the Faculty Gardens.

In the afternoon I managed to say hello properly to Lene with handshakes and everything, and we chatted a bit before she went in to change, and she promised to give me her autograph. I thought that an autograph was just a signature on a piece of paper, but I was thrilled to read: "Hi Kim – a big kiss from Lene" in front of the three Xs, kisses and hugs, followed by an imprint of her red lips on the paper. Thank you very much Lene –

your kiss now hangs in a glass frame at home. No, it's not that bad being senior gardener here, and isn't there an old saying that goes: "But the girl was the garden's loveliest flower", which was certainly true the afternoon Aqua Lene visited the Faculty Gardens.

A while later, "Costume" kindly sent several copies of the issue featuring Lene, as well as a large selection of garden photos showing backdrops used for the shoot. The article also mentioned Lene's favourite perfume, jewellery, designers and her favourite place in Copenhagen, the Botanical Gardens (because she loves flowers), which, I suppose, are much more beautiful than the Faculty Gardens with their flowering Japanese cherry trees, magnolias and tulips in the spring, and later the flowering roses and, in particular, the biggest collection of summer flowers in Denmark. But Lene, please remember, the next time you want to see any flowers, I'd be very happy to give you a guided tour of my garden.

Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 8 August 2008

Announcements

First Climate Lecture with Professor Mohan Munasinghe, Vice-president of the IPPCC

Invitation to students and employees to attend this autumn's first Climate Lecture Tuesday September 9. Come and listen to the vice-president of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Professor Mohan Munasinghe. He will speak about climate change, development and sustainability in the third world.

Professor Munasinghe will present some of the IPCC's main conclusions and in particular talk about the consequences that climate change has on developing countries.

Climate change climbed to the top of the international agenda, when scientists in IPCC's report last year made it clear, that the increasing global temperatures, most likely, are due to human activities. The same scientists also concluded that the climate is in a critical state, which is expressed through increasing temperatures, floods, more frequent hurricanes and droughts. Climate change has widespread consequences across countries, regions and continents. In particular, the changes in the climate have consequences for the developing countries, which already struggle with great challenges.

In his lecture, Professor Munasinghe will focus on the developing countries and possibilities for sustainable development. He will describe his innovative framework called 'sustainanomics'. The main principle of the framework seeks to make ongoing and future development efforts more sustainable in a practical way.

Professor Munasinghe was last year, together with the rest of the IPCC members and Al Gore, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his work.

Registration for this Climate Lecture is necessary.

[Sign up here](#)

Time: Tuesday 9 September at 10.00-11.30

Place: Ceremonial Hall, Frue Plads

Contact: Head of Section in the Climate Office, Charlotte Brix Andersen, chba@adm.ku.dk phone 2875 4104.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 13 August 2008

Green Lighthouse – NAT gets climate-friendly building

The University of Copenhagen's first climate-friendly building will be in use when the UN Climate Change Conference starts in December 2009. The building, which will be located on Tagensvej in Copenhagen, will balance the need for energy-efficient buildings with architectural quality, daylight and a healthy indoor climate.

Today, the Danish Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation announced the winner of a competition to design and construct the building: The firm of architects Christensen & Co Arkitekter A/S, which, together with COWI and Hellerup Byg, is responsible for the architecture, energy concept and the construction of the new landmark climate-friendly building.

"Innovation, public-private partnership and the desire to find energy and climate-friendly solutions are all embraced by the Green Lighthouse, the name of the winning project for the University of Copenhagen's new building for the Faculty of Life Sciences. The projects which made it to the final obviously entail innovation costs when the aim is CO₂-neutral, low-energy buildings for the universities. It is therefore our hope that the sustainable building solutions with beautiful and light architecture as well as a good indoor climate will also inspire others as well as contributing to the construction industry's knowledge bank in this area," said the minister.

Climate-friendly building for the natural sciences

Green Lighthouse will house, among other things, a faculty club, meeting facilities and student services for the Faculty of Life Sciences. This places considerable demands on functionality combined with climate-friendly aspects. The building is intended to be a source of inspiration at a time when the city and the university are in the spotlight thanks to the forthcoming Climate Conference in Copenhagen.

"With the Green Lighthouse project, we are taking the leap from the drawing board to the construction site. Sustainable building doesn't mean that we need to live in holes in the ground. Green Lighthouse combines climate concerns with a beautiful and functional building, and ties in completely with the aims of the University of Copenhagen. We are enabling the latest know-how about buildings, the climate and education to benefit employees, students and the global climate," said Lykke Friis, Pro-Rector at the University of Copenhagen and chairperson of the steering group behind the Green Lighthouse project.

Green Lighthouse is backed by a steering group made up of the University of Copenhagen, the Danish University and Property Agency, VELUX and Copenhagen City.

For more information about Green Lighthouse, visit www.greenlighthouse.ku.dk, where you can also download pictures and drawings of the winning project as well as pictures of the award event.

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 12 August 2008

New bus departure times to and from Taastrup

From Monday 25 August, the Monday-Friday bus timetable is as follows:

Departures from Frederiksberg:

7.30 am
8.00 am
11.50 am

Departures from Taastrup:

Rørrendegård:

12.40 pm
4.30 pm

Højbakkegård:

12.45 pm
4.35 pm

The timetable can also be found at <http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/services/transport.aspx>

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 11 August 2008

Education

Still free places on some LIFE study programmes

There has been considerable discussion in the media about the marked fall in the number of university applicants, including applicants to the University of Copenhagen's study programmes. Where 6,131 students enrolled at the university in 2007, the figure this year is 5,229. This corresponds to an approx. 15 per cent fall in the number of students.

The decline is obviously a cause for concern in certain places, but fortunately LIFE is the University of Copenhagen faculty which appears to have fared best under the unfavourable conditions for the universities as a whole. The faculty has seen a growth in the number of applicants to three out of seven study programmes, and a fourth, Biology-Biotechnology, is largely maintaining the record number of applicants seen last year. The decline in the number of applicants to LIFE is largely borne by the veterinarians, where markedly fewer Swedes have applied this year. However, there are still vacant places on Farming Economy, Landscape Architecture, Food Science and Natural Resources.

The final figures can still change considerably, and LIFE Study and Student Affairs will comment on this year's admission figures once the exact figures are available at the end of September.

Until then, you can see the provisional applicant statistics here: [for all the University of Copenhagen](#) and [for LIFE's Master's study programmes](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gib@life.ku.dk – latest update 13 August 2008

ESA Challenge Meeting

We, the association ESA Challenge (European Sustainable Adventure), are planning to organise a meeting of European students around the theme of sustainable development from 21-23 May 2009 in Angers.

Therefore, we would like to invite groups of foreign students to take part in the events. The students will be mixed with other nationalities present.

The programme will be divided between visits (research centres, water and waste management companies, carbon-neutral homes, stately homes), seminars to exchange ideas about sustainable development, and finally we will build rafts made of recycled materials in order to carry out a fun race between the different teams. For this competition all the inhabitants of the region of Angers will be invited to watch the race, and the visitors will be able to visit the stands of professionals and associations, always about sustainable development and environment. Of course each evening there will be parties, or films, or games with all the students together. On the last day there will be a concert.

The event will be organised with the support of the chancellor and the administration of our Grande Ecole who have already given us 20,000 euros for the event. The activities will take place in Angers in the west of France where the ESA university is located – a nice region well-known for its castles, wines, diversified agriculture, the home of one of the EU agencies (Community Plant Variety Office), and a UNESCO world heritage site (The Loire River Valley).

All practical arrangements and student accommodation in Angers will be organised by us. However, we are asking for each student to pay a participation fee of EUR 50 which will cover all the meals, accommodation and transport during the three days. (The students will, of course, have to pay their own round-trip transport to/from Angers.)

Kindly inform us of the names and the email addresses of the students who are interested so that we can contact them directly afterwards.

With our most grateful thanks.

Valentin Prades v.prades@groupe-esa.net [Pamflet side 1](#) [Pamflet side 2](#)

Ida Marie Krogager, Internationalisering og Uddannelse, imkr@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk - siden er sidst opdateret d. 7. august 2008

Staff news

Henning Klarlund special consultant at the University of Aarhus

Henning Klarlund, Research and Innovation, has been 'fetched' for a special consultant position at the University of Aarhus and has his last working day at LIFE on Friday 15 August.

In his new position, Henning Klarlund will, based in Copenhagen, build up and manage the research funding activities of the University of Aarhus in East Denmark. The customers will be the Danish School of Education (DPU), the National Environmental Research Institute (DMU) and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (DJF). His tasks will involve sparring with researchers on applications, strategy, development and ministerial meetings etc.

Henning Klarlund says: "I have had a really good time at LIFE with many delightful colleagues, and I look forward to continuing to work with them in future."

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 13 August 2008

Research

Arne Astrup the second-most important scientist in Denmark

Seiersen Science – a blog on the engineering magazine Ingeniøren's website – has published a list of Denmark's most important science intellectuals.

Professor Arne Astrup, IHE, features as number two on the list, where the top ten are all well-known and agenda-setting scientists.

1. Ella Maria Bisschop-Larsen, biologist and President of the Danish Society of Nature Conservation.
2. Arne Astrup, professor and obesity researcher.
3. Bente Klarlund Pedersen, Professor of Clinical nutrition.
4. Peter Lund Madsen, doctor and brain researcher.
5. Johan Olsen, molecular biologist and lead singer in the rock band Magtens Korridorer.
6. Tor Nørretranders, author and science communicator.
7. Peter Qvortrup Geisling, doctor and TV host.
8. Katherine Richardson, biologist and Pro-Dean at the University of Copenhagen.
9. Anja Philip, biologist, former TV host and project manager for the Danish Cancer Society.
10. Michael Linden-Vørnle, astrophysicist and science communicator at the Tycho Brahe Planetarium.

See [Seiersen Science](#) and read more about the survey and the full list of 58 candidates at [Ursuppen.dk](#)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, glb@life.ku.dk – latest update 13 August 2008

The plants of the future are coming: DKK 25 million for new research centre

VILLUM-KANN RASMUSSEN FONDEN has granted DKK 25m to the new VKR Centre of Excellence, which will be headed by Professor Birger Lindberg Møller, Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology, LIFE, University of Copenhagen. The overall goal for the new VKR Centre of Excellence is to understand the plasticity of plants – their ability to adapt to changes in the surrounding environment.

The research conducted at the new centre will contribute knowledge-based solutions to many of the problems we are facing in terms of food safety, food quality, biomass as an efficient energy source and environmentally friendly production systems. One of the main focus areas is the development of stress and drought-resistant

plants, plants with improved resistance to insect and fungal attacks and plants producing a high level of health-promoting bioactive natural substances. Participants: Faculties at the University of Copenhagen and the University of Aarhus, as well as research teams at Umeå, Versailles and Oxford.

[Invitation and programme for the opening seminar](#) on Friday 15 August at 12 noon in the main lecture hall, 1-01, Bülowsvej 17.

Read more about the centre at www.vkr-fondene.dk and www.proactiveplants.life.ku.dk.

[The plants of the future are coming: DKK 25 million for new research centre](#)

Anna Haldrup, Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology, anna@life.ku.dk

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, gjb@life.ku.dk – latest update 8 August 2008

News from Research and Innovation

See the updated information on the Research & Information website.