



## eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 22 January 2009

Email to the editors: [elife@life.ku.dk](mailto: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](http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, Communications, [glb@life.ku.dk](mailto:glb@life.ku.dk)

## Life at LIFE

### **You can still sign up to become a Green Ambassador at LIFE**

Since the publication of the latest issue of eLIFE, the seven people who had signed up as Green Ambassadors at LIFE have now become 22. We want to double that figure by next week.

[Please click here and sign up now!](#) (registration form in Danish)

In eLIFE back in December, we encouraged anyone who was interested to volunteer as a Green Ambassador. This resulted in seven people putting down their names, but there must be more of you! The campaign is about to start, and we ask again: Wouldn't you like to get involved?

From 23 February until 8 March we are all going to learn to switch off – the lights, our computer screens, coffee machines and all the other energy-eating machines that surround us at work. On 23 February, the 'Grøn Gerning' (Green Deed) campaign will be launched. The campaign is intended to encourage employees and students to think about their daily energy consumption – and to cut down on it.

To anchor the campaign locally, we need a network of Green Ambassadors to serve as departmental anchorpersons during the campaign period. Not a lot is expected of the Green Ambassadors. Their primary job

is to ensure that their colleagues are informed about the key aspects of the campaign, for example at a departmental meeting. As the departmental anchorperson, the Green Ambassador is also responsible for reporting the efforts of his or her department to the campaign secretariat so the department can join the competition for a gastronomic treat at Meyers Madhus or one of the other great prizes.

It doesn't take much – but has a considerable impact. We don't need to change our daily habits a great deal for the University of Copenhagen to save huge sums on its energy budget. Experts reckon that the University can cut its energy budget by 4-5 per cent if everyone adopts better energy habits. This corresponds to at least DKK 7-8 million a year, money which could certainly be better spent on research and education.

As a thank-you for the Green Deed – and for 'leading the way' – the Green Ambassadors will be given an eco-friendly shake torch.

Do a Green Deed and become a Green Ambassador. You can register at [www.groengerning.ku.dk/tilmelding](http://www.groengerning.ku.dk/tilmelding) (Danish only).

At the website you can read what being a Green Ambassador involves, and you can also see the names of those who have already signed up.

At LIFE, Henrik R.R. Boch, Buildings & Maintenance, is anchorman for the campaign.

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gjb@life.ku.dk](mailto:gjb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 14 January 2009*

### **Did you know that...**

... LIFE's first ladies' room was not built until 1919 – 61 years after the opening of the school – and that it was one of the LIFE students' association's first political issues? The issue branded the LIFE students' association as a modern students' organisation by gaining an important victory for equal rights for women at LIFE.

Source: Chapter on the LIFE students' association in the Memorial Volume celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Faculty.

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gjb@life.ku.dk](mailto:gjb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 20 January 2009*

### **Main Lecture Hall is the pride of the Faculty**

The Main Lecture Hall is the crowning glory of Professor Mogens Gottlieb Bindsbøll's beautiful main building built in 1856-58. The auditorium is the pride of us all, and guests of the Faculty, who are always respectfully shown the hall, invariably exclaim at its beauty. It fills you with pride to represent a place with such a beautiful auditorium.

The Main Lecture Hall is located in the main building – and the nearly as beautiful foyer, which is home to Saly's equestrian statue, leads into the large bright hall with the high iron windows. The room is octagonal and feels like an amphitheatre with slanting rows of seats so that everyone can see the podium with the rostrum. Originally, the rows of seats were wrapped around the podium even more than today, but the hall has been refurbished several times, first in 1882, then in 1913 and most extensively in 1972. During the third restoration, something went terribly wrong when two architects – and here I will refrain from naming names – replaced the amphitheatre structure of the seating with straight, black, machine-made wooden benches. The entire essence of the room was destroyed as were the otherwise fine acoustics. However, a positive

consequence of the restoration was that all the decorations in the room were photographed by the National Museum's conservation department, and this would later turn out to be extremely helpful.

In Bindesbøll's day, the romantic look was very popular, and the three-winged main building, with its great vine-covered stone columns, was intended to give associations of an Italian manner house. The illusion continued in the Main Lecture Hall as the room was designed to resemble an amphitheatre giving the impression that the lectures took place in the great outdoors. So a huge awning is stretched out over the audience, and the blue sky can be seen along the sides and in the middle of the awning where a lamp that could be hoisted up and down used to hang (from the sky).

The awning is decorated with different borders all the way around. On the outside, there is a selection of birds from the forest, field and coast, and further towards the middle there are 32 carefully executed Flora Danica bouquets of Danish wild plants. Some believe that the ceiling is domed, but that must be an optical illusion because it is as flat as a pancake.

Just under the ceiling towards the building, there are a series of recesses containing paintings of domestic animals by the artist A.P. Madsen which of course depict the common domestic animals of the day. If you take a closer look at the animal friezes, you can see that a kind of evolution has taken place over the years – an evolution that LIFE may share some responsibility for. The red dairy cow was originally portrayed as a black and white piebald race, but it was at about that time that the more productive red dairy cow gained popularity, and at such a modern establishment as the new agricultural college the cow had to be repainted – hence the red cow we see today. Since then, the red dairy cow has developed into a weaker race with long utters that produces a poorer quality of milk, so since the piebald Holstein is now the dominant dairy cow race, perhaps the cow should be repainted again.

In the two large recesses near the entrance doors, there are paintings of a profusion of garden flowers tumbling in vines down the curved wall, where talented painters created an illusion of a series of reliefs. The entire room is painted in bold colours with the bottom half in Persian mountain red and the top of the walls up to the ceiling in a pale ochre – both are colours that were used in Pompeii and that seemed to fascinate Bindesbøll.

The remaining decorations in the hall are by Georg Christian Hilker, who was one of the great scenic artists of the day with more than 50 major works throughout Denmark. He had previously worked with Bindesbøll on some of the ceilings in Thorvaldsen's Museum, so the two gentlemen knew each other well. Hilker had also travelled in Italy and visited, in particular, Rome and Naples, and he too was a lover of Italian art and, especially, of what he could learn from Pompeii about classical art. This explains how a bit of Pompeii made its way into the patterns of the borders as well as the room's colour scheme.

This unique hall was destroyed by an accidental explosion on 29 May in the year 2000. You can read more about that calamity and about the rebuilding of the hall in the next issue.

*Kim Greiner, Senior Gardener*

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 19 January 2009*

## Announcements

## **International Conference on Water Policy 2009 – Prague, 22-26 June**

[International Conference on Water Policy 2009 – read more here](#)

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 20 January 2009*

### **Participants wanted for pilot project to certify lecturers' English language skills**

The Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (CIP) is currently developing testing procedures for certifying the English language skills of university lecturers and for determining English language competency development needs.

In this connection, CIP is looking for lecturers who are interested in participating in a pilot project for the certification procedures.

The aim is to certify three lecturers at a time. Thus, CIP needs groups of three lecturers who work within the same subject area.

During the certification process, the lecturers are required to, among other things, give a brief lecture in English within their subject area.

The lecture should be prepared in advance, and use of PowerPoint is permitted.

In addition, the lecturers will be expected to participate in a dialogue with their colleagues about their own lecture and those of their colleagues.

The framework for the pilot project will be sent to the participants before beginning the course.

The entire course, which is expected to take two to three hours, will be videotaped, and the English oral proficiency of the lecturers will subsequently be assessed.

A copy of the videotape will be available, and CIP will offer the lecturers feedback on their performance.

The pilot project for the certification process will take place in CIP's offices at the University of Copenhagen South Campus (KUA) and will be conducted by researchers specialising in foreign language acquisition with special skills in English.

If you and your colleagues are interested in participating in the pilot project, please contact Associate Professor Lars Stenius Stæhr at CIP by email: [lars@hum.ku.dk](mailto:lars@hum.ku.dk) or at ext.: 28174.

**Karen Vestergaard Petersen, HR, [kvp@life.ku.dk](mailto:kvp@life.ku.dk)**

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 16 January 2009*

### **Staff Association: More new exercise programmes**

Until 1 March, everyone is welcome to participate in all exercise programmes and free training sessions at the exercise centre at Dyrslægevej 10.

Monday: Spinning, beginner 5.00-6.00 pm

Tuesday: Pilates (staff only) 3.00-4.00 pm

Wednesday: Yoga 4.00-4.55 pm

Spinning, advanced 5.00-6.00 pm  
Thursday: Vital movements (staff only) 3.00- 4.15 pm  
Step/Body toning 5.15-7.15 pm  
Step, advanced 6.50-8.15 pm  
Friday: Yoga 12.15-1.15 pm

Spinning, beginner, Instructor Jan Koefod: A class where anyone can participate:

- \* Introduction to the cycle and its functions
- \* Good advice and tips
- \* Short intervals

Spinning, advanced: For those who have spinned before:

- \* Marathon spinning with long intervals

Registration: Sign up on the notice board in the centre

Vital movements (body training), Instructor Helena Waldmann: A type of training that gently and effectively gives participants strength and flexibility.

Training that anyone can do, even if you are out of shape – or in pain.

Registration by email to [afp@life.ku.dk](mailto:afp@life.ku.dk) – max. 10 participants per class

Pilates, Instructor Malene Lafon: Training with balls in a way that effectively gives participants strength and flexibility without putting strain on the joints.

Registration by email to [afp@life.ku.dk](mailto:afp@life.ku.dk) – max. 10 participants per class

Yoga for everyone, Instructors Louise and Andreas: Wednesdays at 12.15 pm and Fridays at 4.00 pm

Registration: Sign up on the notice board in the centre – max. 10 participants per class

Step/Body toning, Instructor Pernille: In this class, you really work up a sweat! Training for fitness and muscles (fat burning)

Registration: Sign up on the notice board in the centre

See the [Staff Association's website](#)

**Ulla Dahl Lindberg, Staff Association, [udl@life.ku.dk](mailto:udl@life.ku.dk)**

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [glb@life.ku.dk](mailto:glb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 16 January 2009*

## Education

### **Minister for Education officially opens LIFE's School Service**

Both the Rector and the Danish Minister for Education appeared comfortable with their close encounter with science when they visited the School Service. They were there to officially open FARMA, SCIENCE and LIFE's joint School Service, which has become a huge success.

Students from Guldberg School in Nørrebro and Busses School in Gentofte were quiet as mice as the Rector and the Minister gave their opening speeches. When the talking was replaced by experiments with water and oil,

the eyes of the excited pupils were expectantly focused on Torben Rough's experiments. Mysteries about water and oil marked the opening instead of the more traditional ribbon-cutting. After the pupils watched Ralf Hemmingsen cause milk to separate and Bertel Haarder mix a sunscreen, they all went back to the labs. And then it was the Rector's and the Minister's turn to put on white lab coats and visit the pupils.

The School Service for biology, chemistry and physics for 7th-10th grades offers six different exercises. The aim is to increase pupils' interest in science and to give teachers new ideas for the classroom.

Read more about the exercises, the Minister's speech and the visit:

[Ministry of Education article](#) (in Danish)

[Minister for Education's opening speech](#) (in Danish)

[School Service – exercises for biology, physics and chemistry in 7th-10th grades](#) (in Danish)

Or pick up a folder on the exercises at School Service in Vandrehallen at Thorvaldsensvej. You can also write to [skoletjenesten@life.ku.dk](mailto:skoletjenesten@life.ku.dk).

**Dorthe Christensen, Communications**, [dc@life.ku.dk](mailto:dc@life.ku.dk)

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 22 January 2009*

## **Open house on BSc study programmes at LIFE**

On Friday 27 February 2009, the Faculty will be hosting an open house where prospective students can experience the study environment, talk with student counsellors and lecturers about the study programmes and tour the campus guided by LIFE students.

The event will take place in the Marble Hall from 1.00 to 4.30 pm. [Read the programme here](#) (in Danish)

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 21 January 2009*

## **Staff news**

### **Pro-rector Lykke Friis receives DR's Rosenkjær Prize for 2008**

The prize is awarded once a year to a prominent person who successfully communicates complex topics in a comprehensible form to a wide audience.

The prize comes with DKK 40,000, and the recipient traditionally gives six radio lectures on Danish Broadcasting Corporation's radio station P1.

Past recipients of the prize include Anja C. Andersen, astrophysicist, and Ole Hartling, former Chair of the Danish Council of Ethics and medical consultant.

### **A fantastic storyteller**

Anders Kinch-Jensen, editor-in-chief at P1, was on the selection committee and he views Lykke Friis as the perfect choice.

“Lykke Friis is a fantastic storyteller who really inspires her audience. She makes complex issues comprehensible and abstract problems concrete,” he says.

Lykke Friis is former head of the Confederation of Danish Industries and senior researcher at the Danish Institute of International Affairs. In October, she was appointed to the EU's new think-tank, where she will work over the next few years together with 11 other members from Europe to analyse key issues facing the European Union.

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gjb@life.ku.dk](mailto:gjb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 21 January 2009*

### **Master's degree for Professor Asger Lundorff Jensen**

Professor Asger Lundorff Jensen from the Department of Small Animal Science has just defended his Master's thesis for the Master's programme on learning processes at Aalborg University.

[Read more](#) (in Danish)

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gjb@life.ku.dk](mailto:gjb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 16 January 2009*

### **Anna Haldrup appointed to Danish Council for Strategic Research**

As of 1 January 2009, Anna Haldrup, Head of Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology, has been appointed to the Danish Council for Strategic Research Programme Commission on Health, Food and Welfare.

[Read more](#) (in Danish)

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gjb@life.ku.dk](mailto:gjb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 16 January 2009*

## **Research**

### **DKK 120 million for Synthetic Biology**

UNIK Synthetic Biology is the title of a new interdisciplinary research initiative with the participation of the Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology along with three other departments from the University of Copenhagen. The research initiative has received a grant of DKK 120 million for the five-year period of 2009-2013. Four UNIK research centres have been established in Denmark as part of the globalisation strategy of the Danish Government.

The grant awarded to UNIK Synthetic Biology enables the University of Copenhagen, as one of the first universities in Europe, to launch a new world-class research, technology and education programme in Synthetic Biology. This emerging research area combines science and engineering to design and build biological systems with novel functions.

The scientific objective of the proposal is to develop insights, tools and technologies for preparing and characterising bio-inspired systems with customised functions. In nature, biological molecules work together in teams that are spatially organised to make the entire system more effective. This programme focuses on understanding how such systems are organised and how they self-assemble in order to understand how new functionally active combinations of membrane proteins may be built. The focus of the UNIK Synthetic Biology research initiative is on membrane proteins because membrane proteins are essential to most basic processes such as photosynthesis, synthesis of complex biopolymers and bio-active natural products, cellular signalling and transport and maintenance of electrochemical gradients across cell membranes. This focus in Synthetic Biology will provide the scientific basis for applications such as personal medicine, sustainable energy production, plants for the future and molecular bioelectronics.

The ideas behind and description of Synthetic Biology have primarily been developed by Thomas Bjørnholm from the Nano-Science Center and Birger Lindberg Møller from the Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology, and the research initiative includes a number of strong and interdisciplinary research teams as required to launch a new and competitive field of research. The programme will foster collaboration between researchers within Chemistry & Nanoscience, Molecular Plant Biology, Molecular Neurobiology and Biophysics.

#### **Researchers holding leading positions in Synthetic Biology:**

[Thomas Bjørnholm](#), Professor of Nano & Materials Chemistry, Nano-Science Center

[Birger Lindberg Møller](#), Professor of Plant Biochemistry, Department of Plant Biology and Biotechnology/Plant Biochemistry Laboratory, Faculty of Life Sciences

Ulrik Gether, Professor of Neuropharmacology, [Department of Neuroscience and Pharmacology](#), Faculty of Health Sciences

[Kell Mortensen](#), Professor of Biophysics, Department of Basic Sciences and Environment/Biophysics, Faculty of Life Sciences

*Inga Christensen Bach, Communications Officer*

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 21 January 2009*

#### **Danish Fish Immunology Research Network**

The Danish Council for Strategic Research has granted significant funding for the establishment of the Danish Fish Immunology Research Network.

It is a five-year project during which researchers will describe how the immune system develops from the fertilised egg through yolk sac larva and young fry to fingerlings and adult fish that are ready to reproduce. To do this, a large variety of new molecular and immunohistochemical techniques will be developed.

Read more about the project and the participants at [www.dafinet.dk](http://www.dafinet.dk).

**Kurt Buchmann, Department of Disease Biology, [kub@life.ku.dk](mailto:kub@life.ku.dk)**

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 21 January 2009*

#### **Grundfos Prize 2009**

The Grundfos Prize was established by the Poul Due Jensen Foundation in 2001 for the purpose of promoting, acknowledging and supporting national and international research in innovative and foresighted solutions that are of benefit to the community within the fields of engineering and science.

The award consists of the sculpture 'Be-Think-Innovate' and a cash sum of DKK 1 million, of which DKK 250,000 goes to the award winner and DKK 750,000 goes to further research within the area.

Read more at: <http://www.grundfos.dk/grundfosprisen>

**Dorte Maach, GRUNDFOS Management A/S, [dmaach@grundfos.com](mailto:dmaach@grundfos.com)**

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 21 January 2009*

## **Invitation to Book a Researcher**

The secretariat for Book a Researcher invites the University of Copenhagen to another year of excellent collaboration on Book a Researcher. Book a Researcher 2009 helps promote the University and its research in alternative and relevant contexts. We therefore hope that you will encourage researchers from the University of Copenhagen to participate in Book a Researcher, which is held as part of the Festival of Research 09 on 23-25 April 2009.

Book a Researcher establishes dialogue between researchers and citizens. Workplaces, associations, libraries, public institutions, upper secondary schools, colleges and other institutions can book a research lecture. Anyone who can bring together an audience of 15 interested listeners can book a researcher. The researcher will give a lecture on his or her field of research at the place of request. The programme's researchers have visited such varied venues as Svendborg Upper Secondary School, the Main Library in Esbjerg, Testrup College, Dansk Parkinsoncenter (Parkinson's centre), Sydslesvigsk Forening (South Schleswig association), the state prison in Nyborg and the Ministry of Taxation. And the lecture topics have ranged from climate change, cancer research and mercenaries to crime reports, architecture and the Danish short story. Book a Researcher gives research institutions, researchers and audiences new perspectives.

In 2009, Book a Researcher will present an even broader programme than in previous years, while maintaining previous years' high standards. Book a Researcher 2009 will focus, in particular, on geographical and topic-related diversification to ensure that the programme is representative of current Danish research. In 2008 a total of 42 researchers from the University of Copenhagen participated in Book a Researcher. In 2009, the secretariat for Book a Researcher hopes to increase this figure to a representative share of the University. The individual researcher must register online at [www.forsk.dk](http://www.forsk.dk). The deadline for registration is 6 February 2009.

The secretariat for Book a Researcher hopes that you will encourage researchers from your research institution to participate in Book a Researcher 2009. We look forward to an excellent collaboration and continued dialogue on Book a Researcher in 2009.

Secretariat for Book a Researcher 2009

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## **Research funds etc.**

See the updated information on the Research & Information website.