Last week, dozens of researchers came to the University to attend a conference held on International Light Day. The conference was organized by Prof. Avraham Haim, the Head of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management in collaboration with the Israeli Light Association. The conference’s agenda included a discussion of the unique characteristics of light and the fact that it is prevalent in all things: art, literature and even as a therapeutic tool. In his lecture, Prof. Haim warned of the dangers of artificial light, especially white lights at night.

A silent testimony to the mega earthquake which took place in the year 363 CE was discovered. A university team of archeologists discovered the skeleton of a woman wearing a gold dove-shaped pendant under the collapsed roof tiles of a structure uncovered at the Sussita excavation site. Other discoveries during this excavation season at Sussita included: a large muscular marble leg and artillery ammunition which dates back 2000 years. "Finally the findings are coming together to form a clear historical-archeological picture," stated Dr. Michael Eisenberg, the Head of the Zinman Institute of Archaeology and the Head of the international excavation team at Sussita. The findings were published in the Jerusalem Post and in the local press.
This week, the University received the first installment of the generous gift from Sir Maurice and Lady Irene Hatter designated towards the establishment of the Department of Marine Technologies at the Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences.

Prof. Yitzhak Samuel is the newly elected Dean of the Faculty of Management. Prof. Samuel has replaced Prof. Yossi Yagil who ended his tenure as Dean last week and in his parting message he "wishes to thank all those I have worked with in my capacity as Dean. I wish to thank everyone for their cooperation and for their work in promoting the Faculty of Management and its growth."

Prof. (Emeritus) Amatzia Baram, Head of the Center for Iraq Studies and from the Department of Middle Eastern History, said in his interview for Time magazine: "One of the reasons why the Middle East is going bonkers today is that the existing borders are based on Western colonial thinking, drawn by a Frenchman and a Brit who divided up the spoils of the Ottoman Empire at the close of World War I. This is why, for example, ISIS became so powerful in Syria and in Iraq — for them and the fighters who join them there are no borders, no demarcation lines and no frontiers. From the little we know about them the core of the officers corps comes from the remnants of Saddam Hussein’s army that went underground when the U.S. invaded in 2003."

Have you ever eaten something completely new and the novel flavor made you feel bad? Don't give up – if you try the same food elsewhere, your brain will be more "forgiving" of the additional attempt. In a new study conducted by doctoral student Adaikkan Chinnakkaruppan, who arrived from India to the laboratory of Prof. Kobi Rosenblum at the Sagol Department of Neurobiology and in collaboration with researchers from the Riken Institute, the leading brain research institute in Japan, the researchers found for the first time that a connection exists between those areas of the brain responsible for the memory of taste in a negative context and those areas of the brain responsible for processing the memory of the time and location of the sensory experience. The findings were published in much of the media including the Jerusalem Post, Medical Xpress and Science Daily.
“The Islamic world is not ready to absorb the basic values of modernism and democracy” because “individual rights and freedoms inherent in democracy do not exist in a system where Islam is the ultimate source of law,” said Dr. David Bukay of the School of Political Science in an interview to the New York Times about Egypt’s political-social future, in light of events in recent years in the Middle-East.

Dr. Michael Lazar of the Dr. Moses Strauss Department of Marine Geosciences participated in the EuroMed 2014 conference which took place in Norway and dealt with gas discoveries in Israel and in Cyprus. When he returned he said to "The Marker": "The idea was how to generate collaboration between Israel and Norway in the area of gas and oil, mostly through the transfer of information. The Norwegians have 50-60 years' worth of experience in the area of oil and gas. They are currently still not active in the Mediterranean region. Their knowledge could be utilized to develop existing reserves."

"It is probably too early to say if this is a different strategy or just a tactical move to pacify the Saudis, but it can probably be linked to the meeting in July in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, between Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah," said Dr. Eran Segal, an associate researcher at the Ezri Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies and from the Department of Middle Eastern History to the Jerusalem Post. The article was written in response to the Qatari move to expel members of the Muslim Brotherhood from the country.

"The 2015 budget is regressive with undertones of destruction. It has absolutely no growth engine. It's clear that the security budget will grow, as it's clear that the education, welfare, health, infrastructures, higher education at best will remain as they are, and at worse will decrease. And this at a time when it is clear to everyone that they were greatly decreased in recent years." So said Prof. Dani Gutwein from the Department of History of the Jewish People in his interview to "The Marker," and he added: "In the public debate around the budget, taking place mainly in the media, there is a great distortion. Everyone is looking at the macro figures and not at the internal drama taking place within the budget itself – between the government offices."