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Issue No. 13

1

The Head of the General Security Services, Yoram Cohen, appeared before the University's Business Leaders Forum and summarized the security challenges facing the State of Israel. "The initial reason for my coming to speak to you is that the 'Commander' Ami Ayalon invited me. But no less important is the fact that I am an alumnus of and certified by the University, so it holds a special place in my heart. In addition, this is such a distinguished and influential forum," said the GSS Head.



2

Major-General Amir Eshel, the designated Commander-in-Chief of the Israel Air Force, is a University of Haifa alumnus (Master's degree in Political Sciences). The staff at the Division of External Relations and Resource Development is currently in the process of establishing a University alumni organization.



3

The University of Haifa hosted an international conference of leading brain researchers from around the world, where the participants attempted to answer the question of where and how memory is stored; or in less ordinary terms: *Cell and Molecular Mechanisms of Memory Formation*. "The more we know about where and how memory is formed, the better we will be able to treat diseases that are related to the brain's memory mechanisms, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's," says Prof. Kobi Rosenblum, Head of the Department of Neurobiology at the University of Haifa, who organized the conference with Dr. Raphael Lamprecht (for more information and a detailed program, visit <http://neuro.haifa.ac.il>). <http://newmedia-eng.haifa.ac.il/?p=5746>

**4**

At the end of January, the International School held a festive ceremony for its winter Ulpan class. This year, 100 students from 20 countries from around the world will study at the Ulpan intensively for four weeks. The Dean of Students and Head of the International School, Prof. Hanan Alexander, greeted the students at the festive ceremony.

**5**

The Bucerius Institute for Research of Contemporary Germany History and Society held its annual seminar for young researchers and scholarship recipients where their studies were presented. Topics included: *The Relations between West Germany and Israel in the Begin Era (1977–1983); International Politics and Historical Memory; Charlotte de Rothschild and her Networks in German Speaking Countries*, etc. Responses and feedback to the presentations were given by the senior researchers: Dr. Zur Shalev, Prof. Fania Oz-Salzberger, and Dr. Amos Morris-Reich, Head of the Bucerius Institute. Participants in the seminar, including students, faculty members and guests enjoyed the lively and enriching debates, as well as the spectacular view from the Rabin Observatory and the pleasant wintry atmosphere.

**6**

Many times computer games are blamed for corrupting our youth, either by being too violent or just by wasting their time. But the 100 youth who came on International Internet Day to the experiential workshop of the Graduate School of Management and the Sagy Center for Internet Research learned that "normal" video-games, like StarCraft, Alpha Centauri, or EnerCities, can also be educational.



7

Privacy and Security Challenges in the Digital Age was the topic of a recent lecture hosted by the law firm, Norton Rose, in Ottawa, Ontario. 40 members of the legal profession were in attendance, including Sara Cohen, a Toronto lawyer and member of the board of Canadian Friends of Haifa University. Guest Speakers were Dr. Tal Zarsky from the University of Haifa's Law Faculty and Dr. Michael Geist, a law professor at the University of Ottawa. The discussion was lively and informative and covered many topics regarding the internet including data mining, privacy and cyber law. The event was facilitated by Professor Adam Dodek from the University of Ottawa Law Faculty and Cory Olishansky from the Bora Laskin Law Society. The University of Haifa has a joint Masters of Law exchange program with the University of Ottawa.

**8**

The actor Shai Avivi spoke to the students at the University about consumerism and the environmental problems it brings. This was an initiative of the "Green Campus," which partnered this evening with the Student Union and the "Green Course" (Students Volunteer for the Environment). Over 50 students are currently environmentally active on campus.

**9**

Dr. David Carmel, a researcher at the IBM Research Lab in Haifa, was a guest of the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Library for its "Noontime at the Library" session. Dr. Carmel, a member of the team that developed IBM's smart robot system Watson – which beat the human champions on the trivia game show *Jeopardy* – discussed the work process of the system, and its basic handling of trivia questions in general, and of the television trivia show in specific.

**10**

Prof. Miriam Ben-Peretz of the Department of Learning, Instruction and Teacher Education just translated the 2009 book *Policy-Making in Education: A Holistic Approach in Response to Global Changes*. In light of this translation, Prof. Ben-Peretz was interviewed for the Reshet Bet radio program *Seder Yom* regarding the shaping of educational policy.



11

Dr. Eli Harley, Associate Researcher from the Institute of Evolution, just published a book: *"Where Science has Failed."* The book describes health conditions in the West, including Israel, and the fact that investment in public health is rising, while at the same time, disease is on the increase.

**12**

Where do birds fly when the lake is full? A new study by Dr. Noga Collins-Kreiner from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies has found that the many visitors to a small lake cause a disturbance in the activities of the birds on site, mainly in terms of the birds distancing themselves from the spot, and sleep and nutrition activities. The study was covered in depth in *Haaretz*, and Dr. Collins-Kreiner even interviewed on Razi Barkai's show *"What's the Rush"* on Galey Tzahal.

**13**

Children showing difficulty carrying out routine actions, such as getting dressed, playing with particular types of games, drawing, copying from the board in school and even typing at the computer, could be suffering from developmental coordination disorder (DCD), and not necessarily from ADHD or other more familiar disorders, points out Prof. Sara Rosenblum of the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Haifa, whose new study set out to shed new light on DCD. "In quite a few cases, children are not diagnosed early enough or are given an incorrect diagnosis, which can lead to frustration and a sense of disability. It can even result in a decline that requires psychological therapy," she explains. <http://newmedia-eng.haifa.ac.il/?p=5753>

**14**

A new study conducted by the General Health Services, the University and others found that most parents are interested in including alternative medicine in their children's health insurance coverage, and that they are even interested in cooperation between the pediatrician and the alternative care provider. "Today most parents are interested in integrative health care for their children, one which combines different practices," said Prof. Efraim Lev of the Department of Multi-Disciplinary Studies and the University's representative in the study.

**15**

Dr. Brenda Shaffer of the School of Political Sciences took part in a panel discussion that dealt with the latest gas discoveries in the Middle East in NESAC (Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies) of the US National Defense University. Dr. Shaffer also interviewed for the Channel 10 program *London and Kirschenbaum* about the advantages and challenges of using natural gas reserves that were discovered.

**16**

Whoever is interested in listening to Prof. Sheizaf Rafaeli, Director of the Sagy Center for Internet Research, talk about different issues in the world of information, is invited to listen to the program *"The Computer, the Network and the Information Age: A Journey"* which airs on Sundays and Wednesdays at 6 a.m. and midnight on the Reshet Aleph radio station.



17

Dr. Soli Shahvar, Head of the Ezri Center for Iran & Gulf Studies, interviewed for the *Saturday Evening News* on Channel Two and talked about the influence of the expected sanctions on Iran on the daily lives of the Iranians. Dr. Shahvar said that the sanctions, although difficult, will not bring the Iranian economy to a standstill, but they surely will make the lives of ordinary citizens more difficult. Therefore, the likelihood that the sanctions will halt Iran's nuclear program depends firstly on moving the sanctions from the phase of decision to the phase of implementation.

**18**

The University of Haifa was featured in a *Channel Two News* piece on computerized studies. Dr. Yaniv Levyatan of the Ezri Center for Iran & Gulf Studies and the Department of Multi-Disciplinary Studies showed how computerized studies look today. The University's Computer-Assisted Teaching Department Head from the Department of Learning, Teaching & Supervision and from the Department of Mathematics Education, is Dr. Dani Ben-Zvi, and the Manager of the University's eLearning Support Unit is Mr. Shai Spieler.

**19**

Dr. Yvonne Kozlovsky Golan, Head of the Department of Movie Culture, interviewed for the Spanish newspaper *El Confidencial* about the new trends in Israeli cinema, in light of the Oscar nomination of the movie "Footnote."

**20**

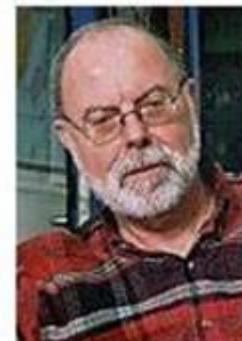
The third Haifa Tourism Conference dealt with changes taking place in the field due to the use of new technologies. Issues discussed included: What does the future hold for travel agents in the era of Google? Is it possible to use the net in order to improve Israel's tourism image? What is the technological vision of the Ministry of Tourism?

**21**

Dr. Avinoam Idan of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management interviewed for the Reshet Bet radio show "The International Hour" about the arrest of two citizens in Azerbaijan suspected of planning to assassinate the Israeli ambassador as the Iranian retaliation to the assassinations of the Iranian nuclear scientists. Dr. Idan also interviewed for the Galei Tzahal radio show "The Security Belt" and discussed the repercussions of the fall of the Soviet Union, 20 years after.

**22**

How much longer will China continue its economic growth? In his interview for *YNET*, Prof. Yitzhak Shichor of the Department of Asian Studies presented an optimistic viewpoint. "When you have over a billion people, you have among them a very large number of intelligent people, and there is a high likelihood that their thoughts will bear fruit. In China, unlike in other countries, the government is able to advance them in a concentrated fashion and utilize their abilities."



23

Prof. Oz Almog from the Department of Land of Israel Studies interviewed on Galey Tzahal for the radio show *Osim Tzohorayim* about an article by Thomas Friedman which determines that in today's world there is no room for average people. "Nobody is average, everyone has an area of expertise," he said. Prof. Almog also interviewed for the weekend edition of *Israel Today* on the phenomenon of expensive beds-and-breakfast: "There is incorrect consumerism here...people are ready to pay a crazy price for a night in a bed-and-breakfast. This is a culture of instant gratification...there is a childish element in today's Israeli society: people are incapable of showing restraint," he said.

**24**

Dr. Liad Porat from the Department of Middle East History wrote an opinion piece for *Israel Today* about the events in Syria: "Until a few months ago, according to witnesses from the field, the media blackout and the brainwashing of the Assad regime prevented the country's soldiers from perceiving the correct reality... Although the Syrian soldiers were told that they were fighting terrorist gangs, their eyes have been opened to the reality that their victims are unarmed citizens."

**25**

In an article to the *Calcalist* on the session concerning *The Future of Higher Education in Israel* during the Herzeliya Conference, the winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, Prof. Dan Shechtman, said that there is not even a single civil research infrastructure in all of Israel. The University's President, Prof. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev, who also took part in the panel discussion, added: "There needs to be wide cooperation between the universities and the rest of the institutions of learning and research. Each such partnership could save expenses and increase the production of research."

**26**

In his interview for the Reshet Bet radio show "*The International Hour*", Prof. Avraham Ben-Zvi of the School of Political Sciences predicted that the Republican candidate Mitt Romney will win his party's primary elections. Prof. Ben-Zvi interviewed on the same topic for the Channel 10 program *London and Kirschenbaum*.

**27**

Dr. Doron Navot of the School of Political Sciences interviewed extensively for *The Marker* regarding his new book about governmental corruption in Israel. He said, "The connection between wealth and government is far more dangerous than giving bribes." Dr. Navot also interviewed about his book for the Reshet Bet radio show "*All Talk*".

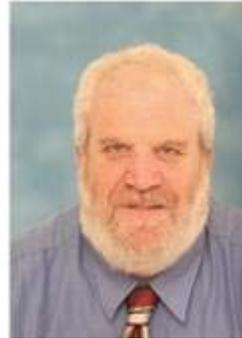
**28**

In a *Globes* article, Prof. Daniel Gutwein of the Department of History of the Jewish People analyzes the changes in the consumption habits of Israeli music lovers, who purchase tickets to shows a long time in advance. "You're not only paying for the cultural experience, but also branding your status in your own eyes as a consumer of culture. The sooner the ticket is purchased, the length of time in which you build yourself up in this status also increases."



29

Prof. Sheizaf Rafaeli, from the Graduate School of Management and Director of the Sagy Center for Internet Research, interviewed for a *Ma'ariv* article dealing with the psychometric revolution where computers replace pen and paper. "There are many advantages to using technology... The measurement is more reliable and valid, there are significant economic savings and it is possible to do things that the medium of pen and paper simply cannot do," he said.



30

Dr. Ayelet Ben-Yishai of the Department of English Language and Literature interviewed for *Haaretz* in an article which noted the 200th birthday of Charles Dickens: "His charm lies in the fact of his being the greatest artiste of literary characters. He created a few of the most unforgettable characters of all time: Oliver Twist, David Copperfield, Miss Havisham, etc.... We remember him and that is his greatest power."

