



Vice President for External Relations  
and Resource Development  
Division of Marketing & Media



# At a Glance

THE PAST WEEK AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA



University of Haifa  
Celebrates 40 Years  
THE ISRAELI MOSAIC

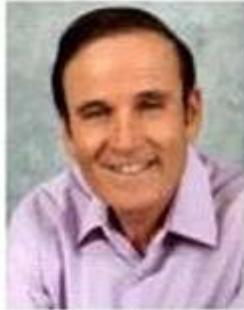
אוניברסיטת חיפה  
חוגגת 40  
ישראליות משותפת

April 2, 2012

Issue No. 15

**1**

The University of Haifa's Executive Committee has elected Amos Shapira as the University's next president, to replace current President Prof. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev who is completing two terms in this position. The appointment will be brought to the University's Board of Governors for its approval when the Board convenes at the beginning of June 2012. The members of the Executive Committee approved the search committee's recommendation to elect Shapira for the position. Shapira will take office in October 2012 with the opening of the 2012/13 academic year, and will in fact be coming full circle: He graduated the University of Haifa with a B.A. in Economics in the early 1980s and his first job was as teaching assistant in the Department of Economics. For further Reading:



<http://newmedia-eng.haifa.ac.il/?p=5796>

**3**

800 runners participated in the traditional University Ilan Shapira Z"L race. Ilan Shapira was killed in the Yom Kippur War during the Battle of the Chinese Farm. The course of the race is between the University and the Reali School. The two institutions where Ilan studied.

**2**

"I am full of hope that together we can learn the value of being a human being from you", so said the President of the University Prof. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev to Warsaw Ghetto Uprising survivor Pnina Greenspan-Primer at the "Following the Warriors" event, a unique and moving event held at the University. On this meaningful occasion it was announced that the Uprising survivors who are still with us and the families of those who had already passed away have established a Masters Scholarship Fund at the University's new program for Holocaust Studies.

**4**

Congratulations to Prof. Baruch A. Kipnis from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies who was chosen by the Council for Higher Education to be an evaluation committee member for the quality of Geography and Environmental Studies.



**5**

Dr. Daphna Canneti, Head of the Democracy Studies Program at the School of Political Studies was invited to lecture at the annual event of the Friends of the Fullbright Israel Foundation attended by the Deputy Ambassador of the United States to Israel. Dr. Canneti's lecture centered on the daily coping of Israelis and Palestinians with long term terror and war, and their political world.

**6**

Hundreds of researchers, therapists and professionals attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Israeli Conference on the Study of Contemporary Spiritualities organized by the Prof. Ofra Mayseless, the Dean of the Faculty of Education. Over 40 researchers from around the globe attended the conference, a fact that illustrates the good reputation of the conference worldwide. The Conference dealt with a wide variety of issues relating to the study of spiritualities, starting from Kabalistic Psychology, Medicine and Spirituality, Shamanism, Spirituality in Judaism and spiritual aspects of social justice.

**7**

"Acre, a Common Space", a new project of the Jewish-Arab Center with the Municipality of Acre has been inaugurated in a festive ceremony. The goal of this project is to create a model of coexistence that can be implemented all over the country.

**8**

Dozens of researchers, doctors, nursing staff and other professionals attended the conference themed *The End of the Program Implementation for the Update of the Pediatric Vaccination Plan – the Challenges for Public Health* under the auspices of the School of Public Health and the Pfizer Forum for Health Policy led by Prof. Orna Baron Epel and Prof. Shmuel Rishpon. As is the case in all conferences hosted by the School of Public Health, the participants took part in physical exercises between the various lectures.

**9**

A Farsi website aimed at acquainting the Iranians with the Israelis is the new project from the *Ezri Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies*. The website includes news items from western news outlets translated into Farsi as well as other more mundane items such as the recent speech given by Daphni Leef and a music video from Dudu Aharon. "The governments of the two countries can decide what they wish, however, the citizens of both can still talk to each other", so said the Director of the *Ezri Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies* Dr. Soli Shahvar who also heads this endeavor. The website is already visited by thousands of Iranians who express their desire to learn about Israeli life. This endeavor has already received media attention in Israel.

**10**

The University of Haifa has opened a brand new and exciting Facebook page, where you can find out about events, campus news, breakthroughs in research, photos from life on campus and much more. [Join us opening a new page](#)



**11**

Thanks to the mediation of Dorota Borda-Fischer and Dr. Marcus Zilber from the Department of Land of Israel Studies the Library received fifty books in Polish kindly donated by the Fundacja Semper Polonia - Semper Polonia Foundation.

**12**

A new exhibition by the artist Rachel Shavit Bentwich, "From Within the House", has opened at the Hecht Museum. For further reading: [http://mushecht.haifa.ac.il/art/ExhibitionD\\_eng.aspx?id=16](http://mushecht.haifa.ac.il/art/ExhibitionD_eng.aspx?id=16)

**13**

Readers whose mother tongue is Arabic have more challenges reading in Arabic than native Hebrew or English speakers have reading their native languages. This is the case because the two halves of the brain divide the labor differently when the brain processes Arabic than when it processes Hebrew or English. That is the result of a new study conducted by two University of Haifa researchers, Dr. Raphiq Ibrahim of the Edmond J. Safra Brain Research Center for the Study of Learning Disabilities, and Prof. Zohar Eviatar of the Department of Psychology. For further reading: <http://newmedia-eng.haifa.ac.il/?p=5799>

**14**

Wheats and barleys are the staple food for humans and animal feed around the world, and their wild progenitors have undergone genetic changes over the last 28 years that imply a risk for crop improvement and food production, reveals a new study. "The earliness in flowering time and genetic changes that are taking place in these important progenitor wild cereals, most likely due to global warming, can negatively affect the wild progenitors. These changes could thereby indirectly deteriorate food production," says Prof. Eviatar Nevo of the Institute of Evolution at the University of Haifa who directed the study. This study was published in PNAS Journal and other national and international publications such Haaretz and the Innovations Report.

**15**

Warmer temperatures in summer, warmer temperatures in winter, warmer temperatures within urban areas and rural areas – these are the major findings of a conference on climatic change in Israel held at the University under the auspices of the Israel Climate Change Information Center operated by the University of Haifa. How hot is it? The findings show that the last time it was this hot was in 1951. The conference and its findings were publicized in the Israeli press.

**16**

The Management School is launching a one-of-a-kind MBA program in Risk Management. The Program is an International program under the sponsorship of the Global AON Company and headed by Prof. Avigdor Kaplan, President of the Clal Insurance Group.



17

The exclusion of women in many areas of Israeli Society has recently made headlines. What are the structural reasons for this phenomenon? A new Masters Program for Women's' and Gender Studies was initiated and headed by Dr. Sharon Halevi and Prof. Nitzza Ben Dov. The new program aims to find the reasons for the inequality – the gender divide between men and women.



18

Are gender characteristics acquired or innate? Prof. Aaron Ben Ze'ev, President of the University, appeared on the Channel 10 morning show to address this issue. Prof. Ben Ze'ev stated that "there are certainly some innate characteristics and there are certain social and cultural characteristics which make men different from women and vice versa....the number of female faculty members in academia in general is on the rise and the University of Haifa is leading the way with the highest number of female faculty members."



19

The University of California is returning to Israel through the University of Haifa. Almost a decade after the State of California suspended collaborations with Israeli universities it began sending students wishing to study in Israel. At this point in time this collaboration was renewed solely with our University. Prof. David Farragi, the Rector of the University was interviewed on the subject on Israeli radio. He stated that "this decision confirms the prestige and attractiveness of the University of Haifa when it relates to students from abroad."



20

Dr. Brenda Shaffer from the School of Political Sciences was interviewed by the Bloomberg news edition regarding the effect on oil prices of a proposed, or even threatened, Israeli strike in Iran. Dr. Shaffer stated that "the Obama administration, in regards to its policy towards Iran, is undoubtedly taking into account the effects on oil prices ". Dr. Shaffer has also been interviewed by *Globes* magazine and the *Jerusalem Post* regarding Israeli Natural Gas discoveries: "We need to be more humble in the estimates of how much geo-political power Israeli gas can bring...we need to look at energy security as we do national security. We do not privatize national security and using the same reason we need to ensure security in gas supply in the long run".



21

The new and innovative treatment for dealing with the fear of flying through virtual reality pioneered by Prof. Marylin Safir and Dr. Helen Wallach from the Department of Psychology was widely publicized in the *Jerusalem Post*. For further reading: <http://newmedia-eng.haifa.ac.il/?p=5806>



22

The subcommittee of the Knesset's Committee for Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs discussed the issue of opening an Israeli Embassy in Bangalore India, the High-Tech capital of India. Two students from the Program of Hinduism Studies and Jewish History Studies presented the main aspects of a program headed by Dr. Ithamar Theodor and Dr. Yossi Chajes' which is receiving wide publicity in India. The proceedings were also publicized in "*The Marker*".



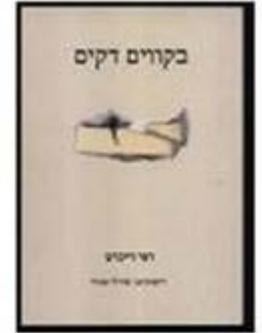
23

Prof. Yoseph M. Edrey from the Faculty of Law was interviewed by *Calcalist* magazine on the topic of rising petroleum prices where he suggested adopting the European Taxation system on transportation: "We have severe pollution issues and many vehicular accidents, and one of the methods to fight both is the increase of petroleum prices. The government would be wise to divert the revenue from excise taxes to reducing the prices for public transportation."



24

In honor of the publication of his tenth book "Fine Lines", the poet, translator and publisher Prof. Rafi Weichert from the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature spoke to *Haaretz* newspaper about the issue of protest through action and explained why we should not be looking for the next Yehuda Amichai amongst young writers: "There is wonderful poetry out there but in an age where books who do not sell are sent back to the warehouses and poetry books are not on the store shelves, how will we discover young poets?"



25

Academic collaboration: the University will collaborate with Bar-Ilan University and the Hebrew University at the Institute for the Study of the Sea Animone and its unique ability to regenerate its organs. Dr. Tamar Lotan from *The Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences* explained that "the entire world is beginning to study these simple creatures. Sea Animones belong to the most primary of evolutionary groups."



26

The video signage on the sides of the roads is dangerous for drivers. This is the conclusion of a study conducted by the National Road Safety Authority and led by Prof. Joel Norman from the Department of Psychology. In the course of the study the reactions of students with over five years of driving experience were tested on a special driving simulator. The results of this study were published in *Yedioth Aharonot* newspaper.



27

Dr. Ido Zekovitz from the Department of Middle Eastern Studies was interviewed for a TV talk show on Channel 1 on the subject the elimination of terrorist leaders operating in Gaza and its impact on the terrorist organization and its function. "In small organizations such as the Popular Resistance Committees the information and method of operation is usually known by the higher ranking leaders. We can safely say that eliminating the heads of these Committees can cause a great deal of damage to the organization."



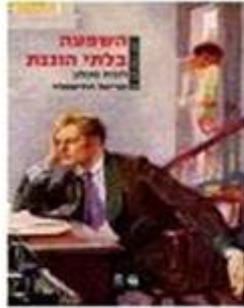
28

Dr. Avinoam Idan from the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management was interviewed by two Israeli radio shows on the Iran-Azerbaijan terror connection. He stated that the joint border between the two countries allows the Iranians to cross the border by foot to train.



29

When Prof. Ronit Matalon from the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature and Ariel Hirschfeld toyed with the idea of writing an epistolary novel, not only did their characters fall in love but they also did. In a joint interview to Ha'aretz on the occasion of the publication of their novel "Undue Influence" they speak of this literary experiment and love which is woven through an intricate web of life.



30

"Why do we do good deeds?" This is the title of an article published on the psychological and philosophical roots of good deeds in the Israeli website *Mako*. Professor Daniel Statman from the Department of Philosophy reflects on the writings of Thomas Hobbes from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century: "Hobbes claims that we are totally driven by psychological egoism. He claims that everything we do, consciously or subconsciously, we do because it serves our self interest."



31

Dr. Soli Shahvar was interviewed in Farsi for "The Voice of America" radio show in conjunction with Dr. Abbas Milani, the Head of the Center for Iranian Studies in Stanford University and the Head of the Association of Iranian Researchers based in Washington. The three discussed the US-Israeli relations as it pertains to the Iranian nuclear threat.



32

The commercial world is no longer holding on to tangible assets but is transitioning to an information economy and trading in Intellectual Property. This was stated at an article in *The Marker* magazine. Prof. Niva Elkin-Koren, the Dean of the School of Law was interviewed for this article and said that "the transition to an information economy created enormous pressure on patent registrations. As a result, the system has ceased to serve us in certain areas. Instead of attracting investments in certain areas it actually deters investors from investing in these areas."



33

"The Age of Reality" Is it ending or just beginning? Prof. Gabriel Weimann from the Department of Communication was interviewed on this issue to *Globes* magazine. "The threshold will always be lowered in order to fascinate viewers. This means more violence, more humiliation, and more crassness. Even in game shows you can no longer bid farewell to contestants with a simple thank you, you need to drop them into a hole."



34

Prof. Onn Winckler from the Department of Middle Eastern Studies was interviewed by the IDF radio station on the concept of Cash Economy and its sustainability in the Middle East. "To begin with, it already exists in some of the countries in the region but not in the context of imports and exports and certainly not in oil. There is no doubt that due to the latter the Iranian economy will be hurt, however, it actually hurts the entire global economy due to rising oil prices."



Prof. Amatzia Baram from the Department of Middle Eastern Studies was interviewed for Israeli radio regarding the countries which are involved with the Syrian conflict. "Iraq is one of the countries that always supported Assad."

