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# RESOURCE <sup>[ENG]</sup>

For students and employees of Wageningen UR

no 9 – 10 December 2015 – 10th Volume



## Muddling along at the Dreijen

p.14

**INTERNATIONAL  
EDITION**



# >> JEROEN + FOOD BANK

Jeroen Candel, PhD candidate in the Public Administration and Policy chair group



## 'You get to meet Wageningen folk of all sorts'

Jeroen Candel's work involves studying global food security. At his computer. 'The Neder-Veluwe Food Bank gives me a chance to have a direct impact,' he explains. 'It is also just a nice thing to do.' Sadly, it is badly needed. 'More and more people come to the Food Bank. We have 250 households now. But last year alone the number went up by a third.' <sup>®</sup>

RK / Photo: Guy Ackermans



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## SILENT CORRIDORS

Monday afternoon. I get into the lift and see that some of the options have been taped over. Floors 4 and 5 are closed. I go to the third floor. On the way I fiddle with the curly cable of the telephone on which is written in green letters: Wageningen Agricultural University. The lift smells of the past. I saunter down the long grey corridors. The linoleum looks freshly polished. Tucked away behind a door I find a large empty room with a torn poster full of faces staring into space. I can just about make out that it has something to do with student orchestra *De Ontzetting*. For an hour I walk through an all but deserted Dreijen. A strange place for someone who has never been there before. I just wander wherever I want; there is no one to ask what I am doing there. Fascinating. All those silent corridors and the occasional sound of footsteps in the distance. Deserted and rundown. The nameplates, the stools, the flags hanging from the ceiling, the mosaic on the floor. Walls covered in memories of a time when the place was full of life. I wasn't around for that but I can still feel it.

*Edwin van Laar*



>> [Will the new plan save the godwit? | p.9](#)

# 'WU MUST WORK HARDER ON DIVERSITY'

## • 60 professors sign petition

Wageningen University must be more proactive in its efforts to become a diverse university, say 60 professors in a petition presented to the Executive Board on Thursday 10 December.

The petition is intended as 'encouragement for the Executive Board to really go for it,' says initiator Ellis Hoffland. The initiative was a response to disappointing figures for Wageningen University in the latest Monitor of women full professors. The number of women holding chairs at Wageningen has not gone up in 12 years. What is more, Wageningen University is trailing behind other Dutch universities. Hoffland wants to see this

tackled with 'an ambitious gender balance programme'. As well as moral support, this should be given systematic financial support.

Wageningen University drew up an action plan at the end of 2013. The project manager implementing this is paid, however, from NWO funding which ends in March. Hoffland wonders whether after that there will be sufficient built-in emphasis on – and therefore money for – gender policy. And she also hopes the university will aim at diversity in the wider sense, appointing more researchers from minorities and more professors from abroad. On that last point the Executive Board wholeheartedly agrees, says spokesperson Simon Vink. 'That is already in the Strategic Plan.' And the board understands the impatience too.

'The number of women chair-holders is only increasing slowly. That has to do with promotions.' He does point out the progress that has been made, though. For example, the number of women associate professors is increasing, and thanks to tenure track there are now far more female personal professors.

Vink also wants to reassure everyone that efforts will not slacken after March. The current policy, including awareness-raising courses and a coaching programme, will be continued. It is not clear, however, whether this will be led by one staff member or will be organized differently. That decision will not be made yet, says Vink. The Executive Board wants to wait for Ingrid Lammerse, the new head of HRM who starts on 1 January. **RR**



Read too IMO on page 22:  
Impose gender balance?



PHOTO: AART-Jan VAN DE GLIND

## THE WEPod HAS LANDED

The driverless car has arrived on campus. The state-of-the-art vehicle was driven onto the campus on a transporter and will be doing test drives around the campus in the coming weeks. The vehicle will have to prove along a set route that it can drive safely unguided. It will be officially launched at the end of next month by Minister of Infrastructure and Environment Melanie Schultz van Haagen. The aim is for the WEpod to ply between Ede-Wageningen station and the campus. The little car drives itself with the aid of a battery of sensors, cameras and computers. **RR**

## COMMUTING SURVEY

### • Update of 2012 survey

How sustainable is the way we commute to work or to class? A new survey aims at showing whether our ecological footprint is keeping up with the times.

The last study of our commuting habits, in 2012, showed that as many as 57 percent of staff come to work by bike. But one in three came by car. The proportion of cyclists is likely to be higher among students, but they were not included in the study. This time they are. Last week in the Forum, Orion and Leeuwenborch 853 students were questioned about their means of transport.

In the next couple of weeks it will be the turn of the staff. They will be invited to fill in a questionnaire online. Erna Maters, policy officer for corporate social responsibility at Facilities & Services, hopes for at least 1250 responses.

The survey of 2012 urgently needs an update, says Maters. 'We now have a bus line that crosses the campus and a lot more people have started using e-bikes.' One of the conclusions of the previous study was that there was a need for more charging points for such bikes. And these have now been put in place. **RR**



## VAN DAM WANTS TO DISCUSS 2 PERCENT RULE

• 'The cabinet sets great store by the golden triangle'

State Secretary Martijn van Dam of Economic Affairs (EZ) intends to consult Wageningen UR about the 2 percent rule which sets a limit to state funding of the university. He said this in the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament in 3 December.

Van Dam and Minister Bus-

semaker also plan to clarify in writing whether the cabinet wants to transfer green education, including Wageningen University, to the Ministry of Education. It was obvious that Van Dam felt this needed careful thought. 'The cabinet sets great store by the golden triangle between the business world, the government and knowledge institutions, as it does by the quality of education,' Van Dam told the House. Van Dam did not make a statement about Wageningen UR's claim that the Min-

istry of EZ's funding does not cover the growth in student numbers. He will first discuss this with the Executive Board.

He advises the House against going along with a Christian Democrat (CDA) motion to retract the cuts in vocational agricultural education and a Christian Union (CU) motion to bring the funding of Wageningen University in line with that of the technical universities. The CDA motion has already been voted down; the CU motion still stands. **AS**

## © COLUMN | STIJN

### Publication prize

The atmosphere is tense. Five nominees have just been announced and three of them are about to be awarded the PE&RC prize for their academic article. I am on the edge of my seat in a darkened room because my colleague Jan Kuiper is one of the nominees.

I feel Jan deserves to win. He hovers somewhere in between his two supervisors' subject areas. In other words: he has not had an easy time of it. Many an evening I found him groaning at his pc: 'My supervisors don't understand each other,' he would say. But Jan ploughed on: more than three years of his life went into this publication. And now Jan still isn't getting much sleep. Because having been so devoted to perfecting this article, he is left with three weeks to finish off the rest of his thesis.

The third prize is announced. Not Jan, but someone I don't know. Huh. Second prize then. No. The presenter clicks on the next PowerPoint slide. 'The first prize goes to an excellently written article that...' This has to be Jan, I think. She clicks again. I look at the screen: YESSS! It's him.

At the drinks party afterwards Jan has a big smile on his face. He holds a bottle of beer in one hand and his award and a pot of flowers in the other. 'We should tweet this,' I say. Within a couple of hours the tweet has been seen more than a thousand times. Sixteen people have clicked on the photo to get a good look at Jan's big smile, and eight people thought the news important enough to retweet it. A resounding success, in other words.

Not a single twitter user thought to ask what the paper was actually about, though. Come to think of it, I have no idea either. **B**



**Stijn van Gils** (28) is doing doctoral research on ecosystem services in agriculture. Every month he describes his struggles with the scientific system.



### in brief

#### >> VIC STERKSEL

##### New manager

Theo Duteweerd from Mariënheem will become the new manager of the Swine Innovation Centre (VIC) in Sterksel as of 1 January 2016. This means that VIC will once again have a full-time manager, someone from the pig farming sector. Duteweerd is currently the vice chairman of NVV, the Dutch pig farmers' union, and treasurer of POV, the pig farming producers' organization. He will be resigning from these positions on 1 January to concentrate fully on his new duties. Duteweerd succeeds Han Swinkels, who has been acting as interim manager of VIC Sterksel for the past year and a half. **AS**



#### >> WUR NETWORK

##### Regulations approved

The WUR Council has agreed to the revised network regulations, which are designed to guarantee that the WUR network will remain secure and stable. The council originally had big objections to the proposed code of conduct on the use of social media. The WUR Council claimed they would restrict the freedom of expression of students in particular. The Executive Board said it understood the objections and consulted with them to draw up a compromise text. Student Council member Wilco Muller confirms that they have managed this. The new regulations will come into effect on 1 January. **RR**

#### >> EUROPEAN GRANTS

##### The Netherlands does well

This year, the Netherlands secured 32 European starting grants for young researchers. Only the United Kingdom and Germany obtained more. Wageningen University got one grant, for entomologist Erik Poelman. The university secured one grant last year too. The big winners in the Netherlands are Delft University of Technology and the University of Amsterdam, with seven and six grants respectively this year. Wageningen University aims to get over four percent of all European grants going to the Netherlands, which is about in line with its share of direct government funding. They are indeed managing this, says policy officer Henrieke de Ruiter. The university got 8.4 percent of the advanced grants and 3.7 percent of the starting and consolidator grants in the period 2008 to 2014. **RR/HOP**

# 'GROWTH IN PHDS NOT OUT OF CONTROL'

- **Dean Van Arendonk looks back with pride**
- **Animal breeding is 'fantastic challenge'**

Johan van Arendonk, professor of Animal Breeding & Genetics and Dean of Sciences, will be leaving Wageningen at the end of December. After 33 years 'cycling to work', he will be going to Boxmeer to head the Research & Development department at Hendrix Genetics. He will be dividing his time between North Brabant and trips abroad; the Netherlands accounts for only a couple of percent of the company's sales.

This new job will be very different to his work as a professor. A deliberate choice, says Van Arendonk. 'This is completely new, a fantastic challenge.' Rather than producing knowledge, he will be delivering 'products' – he uses the word hesitantly as he is talking about animals after all – that offer the best fit with what livestock farmers and consumers want. Animal breeding

is time-consuming and requires you to look ahead. What will farmers want in their laying hens, turkeys or pigs in five years' time? 'If you make the wrong choice, that immediately costs you market share and takes a lot of time to put right.'

Van Arendonk is looking forward to being more closely involved in animal breeding again. He will have a small team, so few management tasks. And he will no longer have a second job as Dean. 'That combination was fascinating but very demanding.' Looking back, he sees many things to be proud of, in addition to his own group's achievements. He cites the university's PhD programme, which has improved further in recent years. The entire process from selection to doctorate was recently evaluated by external experts. 'That's not required and we're the first in Europe to do so.' Van Arendonk says looking for ways to improve even when things are going well is typical for Wageningen.

The number of PhDs at Wageningen University has risen steeply in

recent years. This caused the PhD Council to worry about the quality of the supervision. 'I understand the concerns,' says Van Arendonk. But he does not think the growth is out of control. He also sees initiatives for better supervision. For example, all PhD performance and development interviews will be processed in the same e-tool as of 2016. This will end a discrepancy between the groups, says Van Arendonk. He also expects that all supervisors will need a 'basic qualification in supervision' in a few years' time. **RR**

**Climate professor Pier Vellinga will also be leaving Wageningen UR this month.**

**Read all about it at [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl)**



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

## JOHAN VAN ARENDONK

1985	Obtained PhD and got a job with the Wageningen Agricultural University
2002-2015	Professor of Animal Breeding and Genetics
2004- 2007	Scientific director of the WIAS graduate school
2010-2015	Dean of Sciences

## DEMOLITION HAS STARTED



PHOTO: REMO WORMMEESTER

The tropical greenhouse will be biting the dust in the coming weeks. Demolition company Hooijer from Renkum has made a start by removing the glass and asbestos from the premises. The metal framework will be literally cut away next week so the greenhouse will be gone by Christmas. The greenhouse on the Arboretumlaan will be replaced by 20 to 25 apartments for starters on the housing market, two-person households or seniors. **Evl**

## POSSIBLE PILOT FOR EVENING LECTURES NEXT AUTUMN

- **Student Council's consent still needed**

The university wants to look into the possibility of piloting evening lectures next September. This wish was expressed in a letter from the Executive Board to the Student Council. It is not yet certain whether the pilot will happen as the Student Council has the right of veto.

The university sees evening lectures as an important means of coping with growing student numbers in the next few years. In the letter the Executive Board says it would like to work with students and staff to come up with an evening timetable that is accept-

able to all parties. The pilot is intended to help with this. Which courses will be involved, until what time lectures will run, and how many days a week they will be held, is not clear yet.

To create a flexible evening timetable the current timetables would need adjusting first. Currently the day is divided into four teaching blocks, starting at eight thirty and ending at six o'clock. The Executive Board is working on a proposal for having some students start a quarter of an hour earlier, while others go on a quarter of an hour longer. Facilities & Services is investigating the consequences of this for staff, IT support and catering. The Executive Board will decide in May whether to go ahead with the pilot. **LvdN**



# FIRST PLUS ULTRA OCCUPANTS ANNOUNCED

- **Mainly service companies**
- **Four companies from Business and Science Park**

So far, Plus Ultra is mainly attracting local service companies. Only one of the first 12 companies is not from Wageningen or Ede.

The new multi-tenant building for start-ups and growing knowledge-intensive companies is nearing completion. The first companies will be moving in before the new year. Kadans spokesperson Chiel van Dijen says 12 are now definite. They include one start-up: NutriLeaks, a company that develops new nutritional ingredients. In addition, two communications companies will be moving into Plus Ultra (Schuttelaer & Partners and Jenx), two recruitment firms (CLS Services and Agrojobs), one educational organization

(AOC Council) and a publisher specializing in agricultural and nature education (Ontwikkelcentrum). Others on the list are a patent consultancy (Ellens & van Essen), a sector organization for converting waste into biobased raw materials (BVOR) and a foundation that aims to make the eel industry more sustainable (Dupan).

Completing the list is the Chinese dairy corporation Yili, which is now in Radix, and a driving simulator manufacturer (Green Dino). The 12 companies will only take up a quarter of the available space, says Van Dijen. He expects to be able to announce more names early in the new year. 'There is plenty of interest. We'll have to enlarge the place if we are to house all of them.'

Three companies are currently based elsewhere on campus. Four of the 12 companies have premis-



es in the Business and Science Park. But Van Dijen does not think that Plus Ultra will be emptying the ABP. 'I don't see that happening at all. These are relatively small businesses making a

deliberate choice to be on campus.' Van Dijen admits that so far, the new occupants have mainly been taking up office space. 'But that gives a distorted picture that will soon be put right.' **RK**

## 'THE CLIMATE CONFERENCE IS A BIG CIRCUS'



### What was it like in Paris?

'I was there for three days and I gave several talks. It is a big circus with about 25,000 people, a lot of security and a lot of nice words. I had some dealings with climate negotiators from the EU as well. That was very good, although I don't know whether it helped, of course, because the negotiations are still going on.'

### What are your expectations?

'The outcome will probably be quite weak. That is because the parties submit plans but are wary of binding agreements. The EU, for example, wants to work towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent. That is a nice goal but if you don't turn it into a binding agreement I wonder what will come out of it. I have made clear what the potential of the European forests is for such a reduction, but it does mean investing in tangible measures.'

### Doesn't sound very promising.

'Working parties are honing the texts now. I think in the end the big boys – the EU, US, China and Brazil – will get together and formulate a concise declaration.'

**AS**

**Who?** Professor by special appointment of European Forests, Gert-Jan Nabuurs  
**What?** Took part in the UN climate conference in Paris  
**Why?** To draw attention to the issue of sustainable forest policy

## The Brand Portal is live!

Take a look at the Brand Portal to find and share photos and videos of Wageningen UR

[www.wageningenurbrandportal.nl](http://www.wageningenurbrandportal.nl)



**WAGENINGEN UR**  
For quality of life

## RESISTANT BACTERIA TAKE UNKNOWN ROUTE

- Literature study shows gaps in knowledge
- Transmission from environment to people remains a mystery

While alarm bells are ringing in response to a new antibiotic-resistant bacterium found in Chinese cattle farming, research on the routes by which such life-threatening bacteria are transmitted in the environment leaves much to be desired. This is evident from research carried out by the Quantitative Veterinary Epidemiology chair group and RIVM, published in *Environmental Science & Technology*.

The researchers wanted to know whether and how bacteria with antibiotic-resistance present in cattle farming and hospitals escape into the environment. Using the available research literature, they established that resistant bacteria occur

throughout the environment – in soil, in waste and surface water, in dust particles and in wild birds. But they found no transmission of these bacteria from the environment to people.

What the search of the scientific literature mainly revealed are gaps in knowledge. Existing studies have been conducted mainly on farms or in hospitals. Waste water has also been much studied. But there is no research describing the route taken by resistant bacteria from, say, manure and surface water to a recreation lake where swimmers could be infected. Only research like this can reveal with certainty whether and how a resistant bacterium survives in the environment and poses a public health hazard, say the authors. Furthermore, the dose of resistant bacteria required to cause a human infection cannot be deduced from the existing research. This limited knowledge stands in the way of a good risk analysis. **AS**

## CHOOSE THE BEST COVER OF 2015

Wageningen University produced more than 300 PhD theses this year. Enough to choose from for the ten theses selected for Resource's annual Cover Prize. The ten nominated theses and a short description of them are presented on [www.resource-online.nl](http://www.resource-online.nl). You can vote there until midnight on Sunday 10 January. The Cover Prize goes to the cover that gets the most votes.

There were a few crucial factors in the selection of the ten nominated covers. Of

course the cover had to reflect the topic of the study. And creativity was paramount. There were points for the production quality and the use of colour, and the preferred overall effect was that of a book cover.

Eight out of the ten nominees are women. They come from France, Mexico, Poland, Brazil and the Netherlands. Both the men come from Brazil. The result will be announced on Monday 11 January on the Resource website and in the first magazine of the new year. **RR**



PHOTO: AART-JAN VAN DE GLIND

## FRIED INSECTS CAN TRIGGER ALLERGY

- Eating insects gaining popularity
- People with shellfish or mite allergy at risk

People who are allergic to shellfish or dust mites are at risk of having a reaction to edible insects, even if they are fried. This means caution is advisable now that eating insects is becoming more usual in the West. This is the conclusion drawn by Sarah van Broekhoven in her thesis, which she is defending today.

Insects have long been eaten in all parts of the world, except in Western countries. But this taboo seems to be lifting. Nevertheless, there are still a couple of practical obstacles to be overcome before eating edible insects becomes commonplace. One of these is uncertainty about safety. Tales are heard of people who have had an allergic reaction to eating insects. In view of this, the Netherlands Nutrition Centre Foundation adopts the precautionary stance of warning people with a shellfish or dust mite allergy. After all, like shrimps and dust mites, edible insects are arthropods. They share similar allergy-generating proteins. Knowing this, Van Broekhoven became curious whether people with a known allergy are indeed sensitive.

With laboratory experiments, she demonstrated that the blood of seven people with a shellfish or dust mite allergy did indeed contain antibodies to mealworm proteins and produced an immune response to them. This happened even when the mealworms were fried, although the reaction was weaker. This test in particular was highly relevant, says Van Broekhoven, 'given that here in the Netherlands people will probably not be eating insects raw.' Blood samples taken from 16 people who have an unrelated allergy, such as a pollen allergy, showed no reaction to the mealworm proteins.

These blood tests alone do not provide evidence that patients will also have a reaction in daily life, says Van Broekhoven, but indications of this are starting to accumulate. The researchers are still working on a 'blind' test in which the reaction to insect proteins is compared with a placebo. **RR**



# PEATLANDS CAN COPE WITH CLIMATE SHOCK

- **Small-scale processes form buffer against drought**
- **Peat shrinks and swells like sponge**

Peatlands play an important role in the carbon cycle. One fifth of all the carbon in the soil is stored in peatlands, making them significant carbon sinks. But will they continue to function as such when the climate changes? Jelmer Nijp received his PhD last week for a study on the effect of changing rainfall patterns on peatlands.

Peat mosses or sphagnum, the main plant in the northern peatlands, are highly dependent on the availability of water, especially in the top layer, which is 5-10 centimetres thick. Nijp and his colleagues put this to the test by exposing different kinds of sphagnum to different rainfall patterns at different groundwater levels in a climate chamber. The total volume of rain per test did not vary, but the interval between showers and the volume per shower did. The results varied. Some species of sphagnum grow better if it rains more frequently; for others it is the other way round. In the climate chamber, that is.

To find out how this works outside in the field, Nijp compared 11 years' worth of CO<sub>2</sub> data on peatland in Sweden with the mete-

orological records. What emerged was quite the opposite: the more often it rained, the less CO<sub>2</sub> the peatland absorbed. 'In view of our experiment that was quite unexpected,' says Nijp. But an explanation was soon found. 'Clouds during a shower reduce the amount of light so much that the absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> by the sphagnum goes down. Light has a greater effect on CO<sub>2</sub> absorption than the soaking caused by rain.'

According to Nijp, showers reduce carbon absorption by sphagnum by one quarter. Drought on the other hand appears at first sight to be a less pressing problem. The peatland protects itself against drought by shrinking, 'pretty much like a sponge'. When groundwater levels fall, the peat shrinks, and vice versa. Nijp: 'Swelling and shrinking stabilizes the moisture balance of sphagnum. In these kinds of peatland systems, that can make a difference of up to eight centimetres.' This makes peatland more resilient in the face of climate change than has been assumed.

Nijp calculated the effects of rain and drought at micro level using a simulation model. The result is encouraging. Small-scale processes which regulate moisture for sphagnum play a key role in CO<sub>2</sub> storage. But these kinds of processes are usually ignored in large-scale climate models. And wrongly so.' **✎ RK**



## VISION <<

### 'Agricultural nature management will be less fragmented'

**The new agricultural nature management system will come into effect on 1 January. Will this save our meadow birds? Hens Runhaar, the new professor of the Management of Biodiversity and Agrarian Landscapes, is cautiously optimistic.**

*What does the new setup for agricultural nature management involve?*

'The Ministry of Economic Affairs was a key player in the old system. Farmers made individual agreements to take measures for pastureland and arable land. The new system focuses on core areas for farmland birds that are of real ecological significance. Groups consisting mainly of farmers will draw up proposals on how to meet the provincial management objectives and will be responsible for monitoring and enforcement. The sector itself will be made responsible. The idea is that this will increase commitment, support and the effort people put in. Of course we'll have to see how that works out.'



*Are we giving up on birds outside the core areas?*

'Not at all. There are many initiatives by farmers, volunteers, NGOs and businesses to protect farmland birds. But the money for agricultural nature management will only go to the core areas.'

*Did the old agricultural nature management system fail?*

'That is oversimplifying things. There has been a lot of criticism. And criticism of that criticism. It is a politically sensitive issue. The new system is aimed at enhancing the effectiveness. The effort will be less fragmented because you are working with groups and focusing on core areas.'

*Can this work?*

'They have deliberately made changes that can improve effectiveness. It is still too early to say whether that will work.'

*The godwit has become our national bird. Do you agree with that?*

The godwit is a yardstick. If the godwit is doing well, then so are the other farmland birds. In addition to this ecological value, the godwit also has great symbolic and emotional value for many people. The godwit is characteristic for our landscape and the vast majority of godwits in Europe breed in the Netherlands. I can understand why people voted for the godwit and why they had that poll now.' **✎ RK**

## CHICKEN FEATHERS GIVE AWAY ANTIBIOTIC USE

- **New weapon in battle against uncalled-for use**

When a chicken has been dosed with antibiotics there is no trace of it in the meat after some time. There are still traces of it in the feathers, however, discovered researchers at Rikilt. The analysis of those traces is a powerful aid in combatting excessive and unnecessary use of antibiotics, says researcher Tina Zuidema. By examining the position and distribution of an antibiotic in and on the feathers, the researchers can tell which antibiotic was used and at what stage in the chick-

en's life. These results can then be compared with the poultry farmer's antibiotic records. If the feather scan diverges from these, it could be a case of improper use.

The researchers used fluid chromatography together with mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) to expose the presence of antibiotics in the chicken feathers. Mass spectrometry is a widely used technique for identifying molecules. That identification is based on the mass of several fragments of the molecule in question. Each antibiotic has its own 'fingerprint'. The researchers can identify more than 40 different antibiotics this way. **AS**

## GUT BACTERIUM PURIFIES HEATED FOOD

- **Gut flora a determining factor in health**

Wageningen microbiologists have discovered an intestinal bacterium which breaks down the potentially harmful substance fructoselysine in heated food while producing health-promoting butyrate. Such insights into the life of our intestines can help us tackle diseases such as irritable bowel syndrome and diabetes type 2 in future. The results were published in *Nature Communications* on 2 December.

In order to gain a better understanding of our gut flora, PhD candidate Nam Bui of the Microbiology chair group looked for bacteria that produce butyrate. This substance is

food for colonocytes, the cells in the colon wall, so they have a positive impact. She succeeded in isolating a bacterium – *Intestinimonas butyriprodicens AF211* – in the lab. The microbe turned out not only to produce butyrate but also to be able to survive on fructoselysine as its only food.

Fructoselysine is created out of protein and sugar in our food when it is heated during cooking. The substance is an interim product from which Advanced Glycolysation Endproducts (AGEs) can be formed. AGEs are linked with various diseases, including cardiovascular diseases. 'This study suggests that the danger of this may be less straightforward than was thought,' says Plugge. Apparently our gut flora can render these substances harmless. **RR**

# WHO WROTE LA BOHÈME AND TOSCA?

- **Postdoc deciphers Puccini's librettos**
- **Alternative use of multivariate analysis**

Multivariate analysis is a handy tool for problems involving several variables. Postdoc Edoardo Saccenti usually uses the method for synthetic biology but now made an excursion into his beloved classical music. Be-

cause Edoardo is not only a scientist but also a member of the Italian association of music critics and editor of the Italian music website OperaClick.com.

Classical music experts have been puzzling for years over the question of who exactly contributed to Giacomo Puccini's most famous operas in the early 20th century: *La Bohème*, *Tosca* and *Madame Butterfly*. Puccini did not write them single-handedly. A famous duo, poet Giuseppe Giacosa and librettist Luigi Illica provided important input too. But what exactly did they

contribute? The correspondence between the famous composer and the two writers did not provide conclusive answers. Multivariate analysis did, however: one hundred years down the line.

Saccenti solved the problem on his computer. He found 28 texts by Giacosa and 34 by Illica that predated their successful collaboration. The computer put these into a table based on an analysis of word choice, word length and sentence structure. Then the writers' three jointly written operas, divided into nine acts, were subjected to a computer-linguistic analysis.

This produced new insights. In the literature study Giacosa was usually put forward as Puccini's main collaborator, but Saccenti discovered that Illica's impact on the style and the poetic tone of the three librettos was much bigger than has been assumed. So the prevailing assumption that Illica only produced the dramatic parts of the arias needs to be revised, concluded the researcher in his article in *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*. **AS**



PHOTO: JEFFREY DUNN, BOSTON LYRIC OPERA



A discussion about online courses in Chinese got quite heated and Idealis tenants vented their frustration with their new internet provider. Got an opinion too? Email [resource@wur.nl](mailto:resource@wur.nl) or join the online discussion.

REACTIONS ON...



# RESOURCE-ONLINE.NL

## AM I TALKING CHINESE?

Resource blogger Jan-Willem Kortlever does not want the university to translate its MOOCs, free online courses, into Chinese. He thinks campus education will suffer as a result.

He received immediate support from JH, who sees no reason to 'stream our knowledge to China for a few cents'. Knowledge which he thinks will quickly be repackaged and marketed by local higher education institutions there. The university is more interested in yuan than in the best education, in his view. Reading between the lines, **Modern** sees a lot of resistance to educational innovation. And he thinks that resistance is a poor guide, especially these days. Not only is Wageningen University growing apace, but some traditional teaching methods are beginning to show the cracks. **Modern** gets a lot of support too, especially from teaching staff involved running in the online courses. **G.B.R.** has other reasons for opposing translation into Chinese. The choice is arbitrary: why not Spanish, Portuguese or Bahasa? What is more, translating is outdated. 'English is the international language of science.' Not a good arguments, says **Sander Kersten**, himself a professor who created his own online course. It is precisely in places where there is no money for education in English that knowledge transfer is most urgently needed. **Kersten** thinks it is logical to translate the courses. After all, professors like



him are judged on their impact as scientists. There is no basis for the claim that the translation is done at the expense of education for Dutch students, he says. 'On the contrary, our students benefit too from the possibilities that are created through online education.'

## NOT KEEN ON ZIGGO

A lot of Idealis housing is switching to Ziggo as internet provider. The transition is not going smoothly everywhere.

A few residents talk about their problems on Resource-online. Around 5 December people even waxed lyrical with rhyming grumbles, true to the Sinterklaas tradition. 'The connection wasn't that bad before / as those who read the reactions saw,' writes **DwalendeDichtPiet**. As far as he's concerned, there was no need for a new provider. But Piet is an optimist and is

sure Ziggo will get it all sorted out. 'Not to worry, everyone /the troubleshooting will soon be done.' **Realistic Sint and Piet** are not so sure, especially about the behaviour of student accommodation provider Idealis, who gave tenants the choice of Ziggo or sorting out something for themselves. 'Grumbling is something Sint and Piet hate /But Idealis really hasn't been straight.' Fortunately the anonymous rhymester has some solutions up his sleeve – though he seems to have run out of rhymes:

'Idealis should treat its tenants as normal clients rather than trading their rights and responsibilities like cattle.' And a Merry Christmas to you too. **RR**

## PROPOSITION

*'It is better to be a considerate carnivore than a dogmatic vegetarian'*

Pascale Jacobs, who received her PhD on 4 December in Wageningen.

Arthur Mol looks back on his first six months as rector

# ‘I expected more of an us-and-them attitude’

He misses the writing and the travelling. ‘Now I am rector, I don’t have as much freedom.’ And yet Arthur Mol does get a kick out of his new job. He is struck by how understanding and realistic staff are, and what confidence they have in Wageningen UR. ‘Broadly speaking things are going well and people feel that.’

text Albert Sikkema en Edwin van Laar photo Guy Ackermans

**O**n request, Arthur Mol brought his diary along to our meeting at Vredenburg music centre in Utrecht. We’d like to know how it’s changed since the professor of Environmental Policy joined the executive board. He’s a lot busier, is what we hear from other people.

Mol: ‘It’s more a matter of the way I’m busy. I was busy as a professor too, but more on things I did on my own, such as commenting on the work of my PhD students, and writing. You can do that anywhere and you can juggle with it. Now I’m rector I don’t have as much freedom. I’ve got non-stop appointments in my office. When you write you can sit and think things through on your own and you formulate insights as you write. Now everything is planned and I hardly get out of my office. It’s a different kind of day.’

## *Would you like to write more?*

‘Yes, I miss writing. Writing is nice; it is really research. And it is important that I keep on thinking about my subject area. I had expected to be able to go on spending at least half a day a week on environmental policy and my PhD students but I don’t manage that. Maybe it’s because of the initial pressure when you’ve just started a new job. But I do want to find the space for that.’

## *Is your door still open?*

‘My door is always open, literally. The digital door is open too; I want to be accessible. I haven’t created a shield around me.’

## *How do you like your new job, actually?*

‘It is really nice, but that is partly because things are going so well at the university. There are always little things that could be better, but broadly speaking things are going well and people feel that throughout the organization. Yesterday I was talking to a group of Master’s students who want to do a PhD. I told them they should move abroad but they said no, this is where the quality is. You get a kick out of that. Without any distortion of the facts I can say that it’s going well. We are fed up that the Ministry of Economic Affairs doesn’t fully fund our growth, because we almost can’t manage. It narrowly avoids affecting our basic quality.’

## *The Dutch government puts too little money and effort into agricultural innovation, notes the Dutch Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OESO).*

‘We need to develop our own ideas about a good science policy. The Ministry of Economic Affairs’ financial and substantive contribution to DLO is gradually dwindling and there are no indications that that trend will reverse. The Hague subsidies continue to decline and I see

that people in DLO respond very realistically to that. Everyone thinks: we’re in a good organization, and the staff and the executive board are doing their best to make something of it together. I hadn’t expected that; I expected a much stronger us-and-them attitude.’

## *Or do people just agree with the boss?*

‘I still have good antennae on the work floor at the university, and not just in the Social Sciences Group. I get feedback from a lot of people and they are not kowtowers. I do need to watch out that I don’t shut myself away in Atlas too much; I travel much less now that I used to. And I should carry on travelling, to get ideas from all around the world. I was on the trade mission to China and then I visited a small company that develops MOOCs for the Chinese market at the moment, and will soon do so for the international one. It is a young university-based company that is developing a virtual platform where 100 Chinese universities post and find MOOCs. It has received 30 million euros for developing and disseminating online courses. As rector you need to see that sort of thing for yourself. I want to go on looking around.’

## *What about your plans for more internationalization?*

‘We have a lot of agreements with other universities and institutes around the world but what





**‘If we want to be good in ten years’ time still we must internationalize and digitalize now’**

we want now is to collaborate intensively and strategically with a few renowned institutions, so as to get better together. Examples in the US would be Cornell University or UC Davis, which are sterling universities in our field. We are already working well with Nanyang Technological University in Singapore and we should probably also select strong Chinese and Brazilian universities to work with. We are not going to send teachers back and forth but above all develop teaching and research together, in the form of joint degrees with online courses, for instance, with students going on exchanges between the institutions. We are very strong internationally. I get a visit from an ambassador every week at the moment. We should have a policy for this. If we want to make sure we are still good in ten years’ time, we should collaborate internationally more extensively and intensively now, and digi-

talize. That’s where the innovation is.’

***Does that mean an end to the patchwork of project in developing countries?***

‘No. At the project level, chair groups and institutes should decide for themselves who they work with. What I’m interested in is the larger strategic programmes. In those you need to make decision about which partners to invest in. If you want good MOOCs with Chinese subtitling, or MOOCs in Chinese, you need an outstanding Chinese partner. And we want to collaborate with universities which, just like us, are working on global issues worldwide. In Africa I haven’t seen a global partner of good enough quality yet; many institutes there focus exclusively on one country. In China there are top universities that are just as internationally oriented as we are.’

***Why does a strong university have to beg for funding in The Hague?***

‘Wageningen UR gets used as a flagship on foreign missions, but that does not get reflected in more money. And that is strange. The Ministry of Economic Affairs really says: we don’t have any money. We are increasingly admired, in the Netherlands too, but Wageningen UR is not a political priority. Although food and sustainability are increasingly important, the funding from The Hague for agricultural and environmental research is dwindling. We have to compensate outside the Netherlands, such as at the EU, and we are doing so already. I think the foreign funding will increase a lot and that in future we’ll be offering much more digital education to new target groups.’ 

# The Dreijen campus: the long goodbye

This year the university was supposed to ditch the Dreijen campus once and for all. But events took a different course. In half-empty, decaying buildings dozens of researchers and students have no choice but to make the best of it. 'It is so boring here.'

*text Rob Ramaker photos Guy Ackermans en Rob Ramaker*

**T**he drawing of Helix has been hanging near the lobby of the Microbiology department for so long that sunlight has bleached it into illegibility. Actually, the department's researchers should have been sitting in that new building on the campus long ago. But last August the planned relocation was cancelled at the last minute; the air

quality management in the new building was not functioning properly. And so the academic life of the Dreijen was unexpectedly prolonged.

These days, working up on Wageningen's hill is nothing like it used to be back in the glory days. No official lectures are held here and many researchers have already left. In the buildings that are still in use, there are just eight chair

This was once Biotechnion's busy canteen.



More and more rooms in Biotechnion are being locked.





groups. Accordingly, on a damp December afternoon there is not a soul in sight on the Dreijen square. Most of the parking spaces for cars and bicycles are vacant. Minutes later two students cycle past, temporary residents of the former Computechnion. A little while later two researchers brave the rain to smoke a cigarette.

#### DESERTED

'It is so boring here,' says Christie Nguyen Minh, PhD candidate at Organic Chemistry in the Chemistry building. Together with a colleague, she works in a room on an otherwise deserted corridor. Nguyen Minh is frustrated that their relocation has been postponed; she feels the campus must be a much more inspiring place to work. It offers more col-

## Sunlight has faded the construction plan for Helix

leagues and students to talk to, and there are lectures and activities.

Farther along in the Chemistry building, at Microbiology, they have been able to see an upside to their situation. The department will soon have to fit into Helix. For the time being they can enjoy having plenty of space, say researchers Nico Claassen and Stan Brouns, who are sitting down to lunch in the communal coffee corner.

Here and there in the corridors are the silent witnesses of the abandoned move. The faded construction plan, a pallet of unused moving boxes. Last October a second target date passed by unnoticed. Since then no new date has been set and many microbiologists have the feeling this is their long-term home.

#### PLANNING IN DISARRAY

For Sidharam Pujari, postdoc at Organic Chemistry, the uncertainty is a problem. He likes to plan his research projects a year in advance because he needs to purchase and install expensive equipment. Similarly, Martijn Diender, PhD candidate at Microbiology, has had to change his plans. In his project he is studying a bacterium that grows on the gasses carbon monoxide and hydrogen. To enable him to track this process safely, he is building a special bio-

reactor that cannot simply be moved. Wisely, he planned to do this work after the move but now he is having to get started in January. 'Fortunately, this is not messing up my entire PhD,' says Diender. 'It's early days for me yet and I can still be flexible.'

#### FILTH

Whereas the Chemistry building is still reasonably fully and in good condition – even the canteen has reopened at the request of the university – other buildings on the Dreijen are showing signs of decay. In De Valk part of the ceiling has fallen down and Agrotechnion is plagued by localized leaks. The most spartan conditions are to be found in Biotechnion, whose top floors have been vacant since September 2013. On the other floors more and more stickers are appearing. They read: No access; room always locked. Here and there the corridors – where calendars from 2013 still hang and the way is occasionally barred by a shelving unit – make a spooky impression.

Nonetheless, here too people are still working. On the ground floor Iris Rijnaarts and Malou Thijssen, Master's students of Nutrition and Health, are preparing a meeting. What do they think it is like working in Biotechnion? 'Shit,' says Rijnaarts with a laugh. It was initially cold because the central heating gave up the ghost, and now it is uncomfortably warm. 'I frequently have a headache when I'm sitting here working. And that is even more annoying than the filth.' By filth, she means the bugs and the grubbiness that leads them to suspect that the cleaning is less thorough than it used to be. Rijnaarts points to a bucket containing some dirty cloths; it has been left standing in the corner for ages.

#### BYE BIOTECHNION

Nevertheless, the duo can still laugh about the situation. Like many occupants, they are doing their best to keep up their spirits. Some of their fellow students along the corridor enjoy the peace and quiet. Where else can you work on your thesis without being disturbed? Besides, for the time being there is no alternative. The garlands in the former canteen, where 'Bye Biotechnion' has been written on the wall in big letters, are evidence of a farewell party that did not get into its stride and now seems never-ending. ③

PhD candidate Martijn Diender had to change his plans because he cannot relocate his test set-ups midway.



On the campus you have to fight for a space to park your bicycle; at the Driven there is plenty of choice.



Biotechnion's top floor has been vacant since 2013.





There's no such thing as a boring year for news. When you look back you are always amazed at how much happened. 2015 is no exception to the rule. Why is Helix still empty? What is wrong with the nude in the Restaurant of the Future? All this and more in the traditional end-of-year quiz. The answers are on page 29. But have a go yourself first!

**1. 'I DON'T FRET ABOUT IT.' WHO?**

- A. Martin Kropff wouldn't dream of another term as rector
- B. Martian gardener Wieger Wamelink doesn't want to go to Mars in Mars One
- C. Huub Savelkoul refuses to hand out the Teacher of the Year award because he wasn't nominated
- D. Adriaan Geuze doesn't want to see his performance on TV chat show Zomergasten

**2. PHD CANDIDATE NO LONGER HAVE TO TRANSLATE THE SUMMARY OF THEIR THESIS INTO DUTCH. WHY NOT?**

- A. Because foreign PhD candidates cannot read Dutch
- B. Because foreign PhD supervisors cannot read Dutch
- C. Because the new rector thinks a Dutch summary is nonsense
- D. Because the language of communication at the university is English



### 3. IT DRIVES THE IT DEPARTMENT CRAZY. WHAT DOES?

- A. The helpdesk is often unreachable because so many users call in with simple questions
- B. Users fall en masse for fake emails from cyber-criminals
- C. More and more people access the internet from smartphones and tablet, slowing down the Wifi
- D. The network cannot cope with the success of the online MOOCs

### 5. WHAT DID THE UNIONS GAIN IN THE NEW DLO LABOUR AGREEMENT?

- A. Trick question! There is no new agreement. The CAO negotiations are still stuck.
- B. 7% more pay and a T-shirt saying 'Tijds Breukink is a boss!'
- C. 3% more pay and as many holidays as WU colleagues
- D. 1.5% pay rise twice, and a one-off bonus of 1.5%



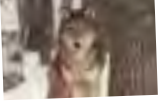

### 7. THE UNIVERSITY IS CONSIDERING INTRODUCING EVENING LECTURES. WHY?

- A. The classrooms are cosier in the evening
- B. A lot of students are evening people
- C. There isn't enough space for all the lectures during daytime
- D. We want to be number 1 in the Dutch higher education guide again next year

### 9. WHY IS HELIX STILL UNOCCUPIED?

- A. Future users think the building stinks
- B. There are problems with the air extraction system
- C. Due to a calculation error lots of large machinery cannot be got through the entrance
- D. We're waiting until Queen Maxima can open the building

### 12. WHICH IS THE ODD ONE OUT?

- A. 
- B. 
- C. 
- D. 

### 15. MARTIAN GARDENER WIEGER WAMELINK HARVESTED THE FIRST MARTIAN VEGETABLE IN JUNE. WHAT WAS IT?

- A. Radish
- B. Potato
- C. Poppy seed
- D. Cherry tomato

### 18. STUDENTS ARE GOING TO THE PSYCHOLOGIST MORE OFTEN. WHY?

- A. The binding study advice is causing more dropouts
- B. The Ziggo deal is bugging a lot of students
- C. The shortage of accommodation forces many students to commute
- D. The current academic climate is stressful

### 4. 'I AM NOT A REALLY TOP RESEARCHER.' WHO?

- A. Marten Scheffer explains why he likes chilling out
- B. Alumnus Jeroen Dijksebloem in College Tour
- C. The new dean Richard Visser in his job interview
- D. Nutrition prof Frans Kok in his parting interview

### 6. THERE IS TO BE A BIODIVERSE TRIAL GARDEN NEXT TO RIKILT WHERE STUDENTS CAN GROW VEGETABLES. WHAT IS IT CALLED?

- A. The Field
- B. The Spot
- C. Eat!
- D. Strawberry Fields

### 8. 'WOW!' WHO?

- A. Louise Fresco sees a portion of fries
- B. Louise Fresco hears that she is the most powerful woman in science, according to Opzij magazine
- C. Louise Fresco reads that 2016 is the year of the pulse
- D. Louise Fresco sees the mural in Orion

### 10. WHO DIDN'T VISIT THE CAMPUS IN 2015?

- A. Constantijn, Prince of Orange
- B. Dennis and Valerio of BNN
- C. Sheikh Wasina, prime minister of Bangladesh
- D. Karmenu Vella, European commissioner for environment, maritime affairs and fisheries

### 13. ROWING WITH ARGO IS POPULAR WITH WAGENINGEN STUDENTS BECAUSE...

- A. New members get a nude calendar with their choice of male or female Argo rowers
- B. The clubhouse roof is full of solar panels
- C. The prices in the canteen are ludicrously low
- D. Argo is a sporty alternative to a student society

### 16. THE FIRST EVENING LECTURE ON CAMPUS DREW A FULL HOUSE. WHY?

- A. Astronaut André Kuipers came to talk about his fear of heights
- B. K3 candidate Pippi-Lotte Maessen was performing
- C. Student Sterrin Smalbrugge was talking about how she loves her pets
- D. TV biologist Freek Vonk brought along a king cobra

### 19. 'I GET A BIT SENTIMENTAL WHEN I SMELL GUNPOWDER.' WHO?

- A. Argo rower Marten Breeuwer on the best moment of the race: the starting shot
- B. Transvaal president Stef Heijink on his shooting course with the Ministry of Defense
- C. Campus manager Petra Caessens opposes a firework ban on campus
- D. Student Xi Pang at the Chinese New Year celebration in Impulse

### 11. WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY IS DOING GREAT! BUT WHICH CLAIM DOESN'T HOLD?

- A. Wageningen is number one in the Dutch higher education guide, Keuzegids
- B. Wageningen is the world's leading agricultural university
- C. Wageningen has the highest percentage of female full professors
- D. Wageningen provides the best facilities for students with a disability

### 14. THE WAGENINGEN WARRIORS HAVE BEEN PROMOTED TO THE FIRST DIVISION. IN WHICH SPORT?

- A. Lacrosse
- B. Quidditch
- C. Underwater hockey
- D. Zwerkbald

### 17. PAINTINGS OF NUDE SENIORS AT THE RESTAURANT OF THE FUTURE CAUSED AN OUTCRY. WHY?

- A. Some people felt the paintings ruined their appetites
- B. Some people found the paintings offensive
- C. Some people thought the paintings tasteless
- D. Some people thought the paintings overly sensational

### 20. WHY DOESN'T WAGENINGEN HAVE A BRANCH IN YANTAI IN CHINA?

- A. The executive board was afraid that no more Chinese would come to Wageningen
- B. Wageningen UR already has the Sino-Dutch Dairy Development Centre in Beijing
- C. The executive board is prioritizing MOOCs
- D. The University of Groningen beat us to it



# MUSIC FREAKS BREATHE NEW LIFE INTO WAGENINGEN POP CULTURE

# ROCK THIS WAY!

Bands will be springing up all over the place and there'll be gigs galore. It's going to be just like old times again if Popcultuur Wageningen has its way. The town is going to be the musical hub it was in the 1980s, and a player in the Dutch music scene.

*Text* Ton van den Born *photos* Guy Ackermans, Remo Wormmeester, JV Unitas, Stichting Popcultuur

*Whisky Priests in Unitas, 1994.*





**B**ack in 1989 Nirvana almost performed at Unitas. 'When we were tidying up we came across a cassette tape, but we thought 500 guilders was too much and they got put to one side,' says Gert-Jan Kat, a member of the Wageningen youth club's band committee ('baco') at the time. A shame in retrospect. But even without a performance by the future world-class band, the Wageningen pop scene was lively enough in the 1980s.

'Looking back you can see two sides to the scene,' says Joost Witte, drummer in the Wageningen pop group Toontje Lager, who scored some national hits later with Lente in Twente and Stiekem Gedanst. On the one hand there was the homegrown Wageningen music circuit which boasted as many as 80 active bands in its heyday. Troost, an originally left-wing music café in the building which now houses barbecue restaurant Kelly's, had a local act on the programme almost every week for years. Many of them were young bands 'who could barely play five chords,' according to Witte.

## 'AFTER THE CONCERT THE BAND HAD THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES AT DROEVENDAAL'

### MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

The other side of the scene was the many famous Dutch and foreign musicians who performed in Wageningen. Hans Dulfer came, and later his daughter Candy. De Dijk played here, and so did Urban Dance Squad, OB40, and Echo & the Bunnymen. De Tröckener Kecks were a pretty regular fixture at Unitas (see box).

'Our goal at Unitas was to become a venue for national bands,' says Gert-Jan Kat. There were pop venues all around the country at the time and Unitas was up there with the likes of Tivoli, Doornroosje, De Effenaar and Paradiso. Kat: 'Bands like Claw Boys Claw, Ivy Green and De Kift loved coming here, amazed that you could get full houses in Wageningen.'

A lot was possible in those days, recalls Guido van Vulpen. When he joined Unitas in 1988, he didn't know much about pop music. 'But they put me in front of a mixing board and said, you can do that, surely.' It was the start of a brilliant career as a volunteer lighting and sound technician.

Van Vulpen remembers a concert by the Skatellites one Sunday at Unitas. 'They came in and wondered where on earth they were. This really is the middle of nowhere! But their mood quickly changed once they started playing. And afterwards they ended up at Droevendaal, where they had the time of their lives. That is typical Wageningen: there is no need to make things complicated.'



Concert by a local band in 1984, with a young board spokesman-to-be Simon Vink (left) on the mouth organ.



Pop festival in the stadium on the Wageningen hill, early 1990s, with Candy Dulfer (left) among the performers.



The Wageningen band Toontje Lager plays at home.

**COOKING FOR THE BAND**

At the end of the 1990s the Wageningen pop culture started going downhill. Kat, Witte and Van Vulpen have different explanations for this. Lack of budget, a different audience, a more serious atmosphere at the university, changing ways of listening to music, the lack of a venue after Unitas went bankrupt, and the rise of dance and DJs. But now it looks very much as though that pop culture is

## **'WE ALWAYS COOK FOR THE MUSICIANS OURSELVES, SOMETHING WE INHERITED FROM UNITAS'**


making a comeback in Wageningen. 'A place in Wageningen which people mention as somewhere they can go to hear live music. That is the idea,' says student Wouter Thomas, who has been actively involved in Popcultuur Wageningen for one and a half years now. The volunteers collective, which grew out of Unitas in 2009, organizes shows and festivals at various locations in Wageningen and wants to offer local talent a platform.

The 1980s pioneers like the sound of this. Van Vulpen:

'Popcultuur has that attitude that it doesn't have to be complicated. The musicians are really treated like guests. People underestimate how much atmosphere matters to musicians. A lot of venues are highly commercialized. The programming and organization is not done for the fun of it or with passion; it's just work. Then I think there is less understanding of how musicians think.'

'We always cook for the musicians ourselves,' adds Wouter Thomas. This tradition was inherited from Unitas, where it was always done. 'Musicians really appreciate that.'

According to Van Vulpen, not having premises of its own has its advantages for Popcultuur. 'They look for a venue that suits the act. A brilliant solution actually. Popcultuur acts as a kind of agent, working with the library, Loburg café and the Junushof theatre. The more suitable venues there are, the nicer it gets. Keep it that way; keep it flexible.'

'Popcultuur is growing,' says Wouter Thomas. 'The volunteer group has doubled and that means we can organize more events. Our main aim is to give everyone, including international students, a sense that it's lively around here. There is a cosy atmosphere in Wageningen, with a lot of potential. Good music should be part of that.' 

## **UNSPOKEN BOND**

'Our first gig at Unitas was - I have just looked it up - on 4 January 1985. The room was just like so many in the Netherlands and we felt at home there. The clammy smell of full ashtrays and stale beer from the night before, which hit you in the face when you opened the door. The grumpy bartender trying to tidy up the bar during the sound check. The volunteer proudly serving up a pan of mushy pasta with an indeterminate sauce. All of it contributing in its very own way to the success of the evening. Perhaps it was a tacit sense of togetherness that I liked so much. An unspoken bond, which you got with the audience during the show as well. The outside world was far away, and we had created a world of our own, with its own logic.'

Our last gig at Unitas was just under ten years later - even your own logic has a limited shelf life, luckily. I will always cherish the happy memories though.'

**Rick de Leeuw, lead singer with Amsterdam pop group Tröckener Kecks from 1980 to 2001** ➡







## POP ABC OF WAGENINGEN

### BERGPOP

A pop concert to wind up the academic year. Formerly at Unitas, since 2010 on the Conventplein in town.

### BEVRIJDINGSPOP

Big annual festival on 5 May, first organized in 1980 in Wageningen and Haarlem. The Wageningen band Toontje Lager was the big act in the first festival. The Kabaal am Gemaal podium has been a feature since 1998; other podia with dance and hiphop followed later. The latest addition in 2013 was Sena Talent Stage, Popcultuur Wageningen's own podium for 'rising talent'.

### BIRDLAND

Bimonthly musical concept from Popcultuur Wageningen and Junushof theatre. The first Birdland was held on 7 January 2015.

### LOBURG LIVE

Concerts in the music room at Wageningen café Loburg, for 150 people max. Loburg Live collaborates with Popcultuur Wageningen. See [live.loburg.com](http://live.loburg.com).

### POPRONDE

National festival with young talent held in 30 towns. Popcultuur Wageningen organized the Wageningen edition early in October, with venues all around town.

### QUIET IS THE NEW LOUD

Monthly acoustic concerts in the Wageningen town library, mainly singer-songwriters. Started in 2011.

### STICHTING POPCULTUUR WAGENINGEN

Volunteer collective organizing concerts and festivals at various venues around Wageningen. Set up in April 2009. See [www.facebook.com/popcultuurwageningen](http://www.facebook.com/popcultuurwageningen).

### UNITAS

A youth club which used to have a clubhouse on the Generaal Foulkesweg and has not had a permanent home since 2009. Unitas was set up in 1935 as a student society and was open to all youth from 1972. There was an active band committee, the 'baco'. Stichting Popcultuur Wageningen was started by former members of this committee.

### WOETSTOK

Annual thematic festival in the Torckpark. Wageningen musicians play numbers by the artists who performed at the legendary Woodstock in 1969.



# IMPOSE GENDER BALANCE?

Wageningen University has the smallest proportion of female full professors of any university in the Netherlands, revealed the Dutch 'Monitor of female professors' recently. And it hasn't gone up in the last 12 years. Time to up the pressure?

text Rob Ramaker illustration Henk van Ruitenbeek

## Liesje Mommer



**Professor of Plant Ecology and Nature Management**

'I am ashamed to be working for an organization which scores so badly on gender balance. This way we neglect potential, because it has been proven incontrovertibly that diverse teams achieve more. What is more, a better gender bal-

ance makes the organization more open to minorities. Personally I do not favour quotas as such but it is a fact that nothing has changed in 12 years, so something must be done. **I think it's time to set targets per science group. We need a clear statement from the head office on the importance of this theme.** And all members of appointment committees – especially those appointing a chair-holding professor – should be trained in gender awareness.'





## Bert Holtslag



### Professor of Meteorology

'It is not clear to me why the monitor only looked at chair-holding professors. **At Wageningen it is among the personal professors that you see the number of women increasing, and elsewhere no distinction is made be-**

**tween chair-holding professors and personal professors.** So I would count all professors, otherwise it is an unfair comparison. And I don't know how you can increase the number of women professors except through participation in tenure track. Targets - such as 30 percent women among new professors - were already suggested a few years ago by a committee I was on myself. They were rejected by the executive board of the time.'

## Katrien Termeer



### Professor of Public Administration and Policy

'There is a need for more ambition, at any rate. It is a good thing for the university to say it aims at a balanced ratio of men to women and more professors from all around the

world. But I think you should be cautious about imposing rules. **As a woman you want to be appointed because you are the best candidate, not because of a quota.** The most you can do is to require appointment committees to invite at least one woman for interview. What you can do is to change incentives. Currently at Wageningen you get four months' deferment for pregnancy, while at the NWO you get a year. What is more, this is funded by the chair group and not from a joint fund. That discourages chair groups from appointing women.'

## Bart Thomma



### Professor of Phytopathology

'This is a sorry and shameful state of affairs. For me, it is no excuse that we score better if you look at all the professors, not just at full professors. **There is obviously still a glass ceiling somewhere.** I don't know what we

can do about this in the short term. You can of course argue that it is time for quotas. But I don't think you do women any favours that way because you are really saying women don't seem able to make it by themselves. One option that has never been looked at seriously, I think, is talent-scouting. There have been coaching initiatives but at an earlier stage too you can consciously go looking for talented woman.'

## Ellen Kampman



### Professor of Nutrition and Disease

'The organization needs to pay systematic attention to gender balance and that is why it is importance to allocate funding to this. There is already an action plan led by Kristina Raab, but she is paid from Aspasia

funds from the NWO. It is not clear whether her contract will be renewed. I think we'll be missing an opportunity if this action plan isn't taken any further. Let's follow the example of the business world, where the gender balance at the top is already much better. A good start has been made in Wageningen. **Now we must keep going with training appointment committees, creating woman-friendly job advertisements and scouting for women** in a targeted way. It is also good to get women students to start thinking about their careers at an earlier stage.'

## Wouter Hendriks



### Professor of Animal Nutrition

'I've done two gender awareness workshops myself. There we discovered that we've all got prejudices - mindbugs. That is in the system, at every level of the organization. I think Human Resources should pursue a


policy aimed at getting more woman professors. You can make sure everyone on an appointments committee has taken that workshop, for instance. **Of course you want to appoint the best candidate but you must also actively look for suitable women in your network - and above all outside it.** I am much more aware of how I deal with these things now - for example when we were looking for 'opponents' for a PhD graduation recently.'

## Marian Stuiver



### Chair of the WUR Council

'This absolutely must be given more priority. We need clear-cut goals at every level of the organization. That means for every type of professor as well as for the executive board and the supervisory board, which are now al-

most all-male. **Wageningen UR sets clear-cut goals in relation to every theme we commit ourselves to, so why not here?** And it's not just a matter of gender but of diversity across the board. Everyone who plays a decisive role in appointing professors and managers should take a course in gender awareness. Including women. They are just as prone to the unconscious prejudice that leaders are male. One of our requests to the executive board is to continue with the current gender action plan after its term ends in March. We must keep it up now.' 

**Full professors, personal professors, professors by special appointment?**

**How is the gender ratio in Wageningen UR?**

Read up on it at [Resource-online.nl](http://Resource-online.nl), search term 'gender'.



# STUDENTS DESPERATE FOR HELP WITH WRITING

**Wageningen students are eager for a bit of support in improving their writing skills, show figures from the Wageningen Writing Lab, which is now one year old. More than 200 students sought help with a writing assignment at the lab this year.**

In October of last year Joke Marinissen took the initiative to launch a Wageningen writing lab along the lines of writing centres in university towns such as Nijmegen and Tilburg. In the lab students are guided by specially trained students in identifying and applying new strategies in their writing, whether it is a Master's thesis or a Bachelor's essay. In its first year the lab conducted nearly 300 interviews with more than 200 Bachelor's and Master's students. Most of the discussions focused on the writing process, says Marinissen. 'That varied from questions like 'how do I interpret the assignment' to 'how do I plan my text'. That is often a stumbling block, particularly for international students. They are not always used to having to understand and carry out an assignment independently, and at their previous university they got more guidance from the teach-



er.' As well as the writing process, questions come up about the structure of the text, style and formulation.

The tutors are specialized in writing skills and not in the content-related side of a project, so the emphasis lies on structure and strategy. Most students can carry on independently after a single discussion, about 15 percent need a second meeting and a very small number need several meetings.

## ENJOYING IT MORE

Three hundred meetings were more than Marinissen had expected in the trial period. It proves that

there is a need for a writing lab in Wageningen, she says. 'The students tell us there is sometimes a lack of attention to writing in their courses, and that this lab meets their needs. They say that after feedback from the lab they not only enjoy writing more, but they also write faster and end up with higher grades.'

Continuing with the writing lab is attractive for the university, too, says Marinissen. 'I expect, for example, that students will be able to finish off their theses faster and better, so the university will be able to keep up its current pass rate in spite of the problems caused by the

growing student numbers. It also relieves the pressure on teachers, whose busy schedules mean they don't always have time to supervise students adequately in the writing process.'

The writing lab is scheduled to continue until the end of this academic year, but it is not clear whether Marinissen and her tutors can continue after that. The rector, who visited the writing lab at the end of November, was certainly impressed. It looks fairly hopeful, thinks Marinissen. The decision on whether the Wageningen writing lab continues after the summer will be taken in February. **LDN**

## 5 TIPS FROM WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB

1. REWRITING IS INEVITABLE; EXPECT TO DO SO AT LEAST TWICE
2. TELL YOUR STORY TO AN OUTSIDER. IF NEEDED, RECORD IT AND WRITE IT DOWN
3. READ YOUR SENTENCES OUT LOUD, OR HAVE SOMEONE ELSE DO SO. THEN YOU'LL AUTOMATICALLY HEAR WHETHER THEY FLOW WELL AND WHETHER THEY ARE TOO LONG
4. USE (DIGITAL) REFERENCE SOURCES FOR STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS
5. MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AT THE WRITING LAB 😊

**Students, thanks for all the tips, responses and photos you sent us in 2015!**

**Want to be part of it in 2016 too? Please do. Resource always welcomes news, ideas, bloggers, vloggers and student editors.**

Look on [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl), email [resource@wur.nl](mailto:resource@wur.nl) or drop in on the first floor at Akkermaalsbos 14 (Nexus). The door is open.





# 'MY BURNOUT WAS A GOOD LIFE LESSON'

**Laura van der Tuijn had an ideal picture in mind: she would complete her Bachelor's and Master's degrees as fast as possible. But after two years' hard work things went pear-shaped. 'All the fuses in my body blew.'**

'I had just started on the Master's in Nutrition and Health when I noticed I was less and less motivated to study. I wasn't too surprised at first as I had been working on my Bachelor's thesis all summer. Altogether I had been studying and working with very few breaks for two years. So it is not so strange if you feel you've had enough for a while. But at one point I was sitting in a lecture and all I could think was: what am I doing here?

I hardly touched my books until exam time came. Suddenly I was terrified of failing. I sat studying from eight thirty in the morning till ten thirty at night, and I wanted to know everything down to the last detail. But if you study for 12 hours a day you stop taking anything in. At some point I started to cry because I realized I wasn't going to make it. It was so important to me to have everything under control, and that wasn't the case now.

One evening, just before Christmas, it all went wrong. I started to shake uncontrollably, I was nauseous and I thought I was going to throw up. That night the palpitations kept me awake. It was as if all the fuses in my body had blown. I had a horrible Christmas holiday. I just lay on the sofa like a sack of potatoes, I

was irritable and oversensitive to light and sounds. I was hungry but I couldn't swallow anything. It was clear to me that it wasn't the flu; I felt ill in a different way than that.

The doctor said I had a burnout. I thought: I am only 23, surely I can work and study normally? It was good to get the diagnosis but I didn't want to sit around at home for long. So after the Christmas holiday I carried on with my courses, cautiously and in consultation with the doctor and the dean. I assumed it wouldn't take me long to recover, as long as I took things gently. That went well in period 3 but in period 4 I started to feel panicky if I looked at the timetable. Then I stayed at home again for a couple of weeks, although instead of taking it easy I started planning my internship and my thesis. Because of that things went wrong again in period 5. I couldn't concentrate and I had attacks of trembling again. Then I made an appointment with

the psychologist. It was all too much for me, and I couldn't cope. With the psychologist I analysed the patterns in my thinking which make me believe I am not allowed to make any mistakes. I needed to learn to let go when things didn't go the way I wanted them to. The psychologist asked me, what can go wrong? It's not the end of the world if you fail an exam.

That was challenging for me. I had an ideal scenario in mind in which I was going to get my degree as fast as possible, and now I

am a year behind. But I have learned to accept that. After all, what is one extra year in a whole life? The burnout was a very good life lesson for me. I am now 24 and I have already learned things about myself which will benefit me the rest of my life. I hope my story can help save other students from falling into the same trap. You don't have to do everything at once, and it doesn't all have to be perfect. You are at university to learn. About yourself above all.'

📍 LvdN



ILLUSTRATION: EVA VAN SCHIJNDEL

## 'DON'T IGNORE STRESS'

Wageningen student psychologists got 30 percent more requests for help in 2014 than in 2013. The increasing number of students with study-related problems such as stress was particularly striking. Continuous stress can lead to a burnout, says student psychologist Ineke Leenders. 'If you ignore stress, the fuses can suddenly blow.' Students with a burnout are often out of the running for a while. A handful of students in Wageningen have been advised to drop out for a while. The student psychologists help the students find out what lies behind their behaviour, and how they can break the hold of patterns.

## PUBERTY

Roundworms live 30 to 40 per cent longer if they are dosed with mianserin, researchers at the Scripps Research Institute in California have discovered. The substance extends their youth specifically. The ultimate elixir of life. And it gets better: mianserin is an antidepressant! But before we get too excited – we are talking about worms here. The effects on humans are not clear. Anyway, who wants to extend puberty?

## SMILE

Can you measure humour? Yes, say mathematicians at the University of Alberta. Nonsense words seem to be funnier the lower their entropy, which means the more unpredictable they are. This emerged from a study among students, who cracked up at words like *snunkoole* or *quingle* and barely smiled at *octeste* or *heashes*. The students got credits for participating. Now that's a laugh.

## Q

American researchers at North State University have made a new material: Q carbon. It's harder than diamond, it's magnetic and it lights up if you apply energy. So far they can only produce it in extremely thin layers. But the diamond industry should can gird its loins. Q diamonds are a man's best friend.

## BLUE

All blue-eyed people are descended from the same ancestor. Who lived six to ten thousand years ago, concluded Danish researchers after studying 'blue-eyed DNA' from all around the world. They've all got a mutation at exactly the same place in their DNA, which ensures that they do not make much melanin and are therefore blue-eyed. Where that ancestor lived is not known.



# Cycling danger behind Bongerd

**The temporary diversion for cyclists between the Leeuwenborch and the campus is causing a lot of frustration and some near-collisions. In particular, the unmade section through the bushes behind the Bongerd sports hall is too narrow and poorly lit, say users. And this causes accidents.**

The diversion is necessary because a second sports hall is going up where the original cycle path runs. But the narrow, unmade part of the route is really dangerous, says a student who uses it a lot. 'I have almost knocked someone over several times already. Especially elderly people who come onto the path from the tennis courts. They don't expect to find bikes coming towards them, and cyclists don't expect them.'

Henri ten Klooster, manager of the Bongerd sports centre, under-

stands the frustrations. 'It certainly isn't an ideal situation but we are doing our best to keep the connection between the Leeuwenborch and the campus as good and as short as possible.' In the interests of safety there are barriers and ribbons demarcating the route and a 10kph sign has been put up to slow cyclists down, says Ten Klooster. 'Unfortunately we can't widen the unmade path because we would have to fell trees to do so and we don't want that.' Two lampposts are going to be placed along the dirt



PHOTO: REMO WORMMEESTER

path as soon as possible.

And the situation should not last very long, says Ten Klooster. The new sports hall will be ready at the end of February and then there will be a new, wide, well-lit cycle path.

ⓑ AJ

# Teething problems in Ziggo transfer

**The transition from the WUR network to Ziggo is not going smoothly for some. During the past two weeks the Idealis complexes on the Marijkeweg and the Haarweg, the Binnenveld complex and the Asserpark flats have been connected to Ziggo's network. This amounts to about half of all the 4244 new connections.**

Some students experienced problems with the transfer right from the start. Their first step was to register with Ziggo, and that failed. Others say that since the transfer to Ziggo the internet connection fails regularly and is considerably slower than the WUR network. Their experience of the Ziggo helpdesk varies. For every student who is satisfied with the service because problems are solved almost immediately, there is another who is highly dissatisfied.

'I got in touch with Ziggo because the internet connection is forever failing and is slow,' says Marijkeweg resident Charlot, who

relies heavily on the internet at the moment to do her academic work. 'I was advised to be patient and register again.'

Ziggo has engaged the company ITTdesk, which is based in Hoevelaken, to inventorize the problems and solve them. Bernard Edelenbos of ITTdesk foresees no major difficulties. 'Everything is going normally, within the parameters of the current standards.' Student accommodation provider Idealis is keeping a close eye on developments. 'We find it very annoying that students are experiencing problems with the transition,' says spokesperson Corina van Dijk. 'Unfortu-

nately, it is inevitable that people will experience temporary disruptions to their internet service.' In view of both the self-study week and exam week, no other Idealis complexes will transfer to Ziggo this week and next. All complexes must be connected by 13 January.

ⓑ CN



The residents of student house Bolus 9 won themselves a Christmas tree with their photo of their alcoholic Sinterklaas fancy dress party.

**Want to see the winning photo in all its glory? Go to [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl).**



## EPISODE 62 - MORTIERSTRAAT 14B &lt;&lt;

Text  
Rob  
Ramaker

The story so far: Vera has been in a relationship with Robby for some time now. Recently, a former boyfriend, Ruben, got in touch with her.

## Lightsaber

'Six.' Willem-Jan looked at the die. 'Filippo can unwrap a present.' At Willem-Jan's insistence (a 'dyed-in-the-wool Sinterklaas fan'), all the housemates were playing the Sinterklaas game, throwing dice for presents. Filippo took one of the many presents wrapped in green paper. They had all been bought by Willem-Jan, whose ideas about the perfect Sinterklaas present were rather bizarre.

'Geez, a ice-cube tray to make penis-shaped ice cubes,' said Filippo. 'Thank you Santa, I'll treasure it.' He pulled a funny face and his mitre fell off his head. Everyone around him laughed, except for Vera. All evening, she had barely looked up from her smartphone.

'Why aren't you laughing, honey?' whispered Robby, just loud enough for the others to hear. 'Let me be,' she said, turning away from him to take a handful of gingerbread biscuits.

Meanwhile Bianca was tearing the wrapping paper off a plastic lightsaber. She twirled it around to set off the sound effect. The housemates roared with laughter while Vera just sat there, her arms crossed.

'Is anything the matter, sweetie?' asked Robby, placing his hand on Vera's shoulder. She pulled away so that his hand fell.

'Nooo!' she hissed, louder than she meant to. Most of the housemates tried to ignore their bickering, but a worried glance passed between Bianca and Derk. What was up with Vera? Meanwhile, oblivious to everything, Willem-Jan was opening one beer after the next and passing them round.



ILLUSTRATIONS: KIM PETERSE

'Come on, throw the die, Derk,' he urged. 'Throw a six. There are still some real jewels left.' The game continued. Willem-Jan cheered when he threw a four, and grabbed the lightsaber from Bianca's hands. 'Mine!'

When it was her turn, Vera hastily flung the die. Six. With a sullen face, she unwrapped a tatty old book. On the front cover was a picture of a woman with big breasts clad in a leather catsuit. Willem-Jan laughed furtively.

'What are we supposed to do with all this crap you've bought?' asked Vera, before throwing the book back on the pile.

'Darling, be nice..., ' said Robby, his voice fading.

'Leave me alone, Ruben.' Silence descended.

'What did you call me?' Robby's voice sounded very different. Vera could probably have dug herself out of this hole had she not blushed scarlet.

'Er...' She looked around, searching for some kind of help.

'Who is Ruben?' Vera burst into tears, ran to her room and slammed the door shut. The silence was broken by Willem-Jan, who began to sing in an unsteady voice. 'Dag Sinterklaasje dá-haag, dá-haag Zwarte Piet.' Byebye Sinterklaas.

Resource follows events at Mortierstraat 14B

## No exams after Liberation Day

**This year students get a day to recover from their hangovers after Liberation Day. In consultation with the Student Council, the Executive Board decided there will be no exams on 6 May.**

Since exams will be held in the new sports hall from period 5, exam timetabling is not as tight. The Executive Board put a few suggestions to the Student Council for making use of this extra space: no exams on 6 May, no evening exams or no exams on the Friday

of the revision week. A survey of about 350 students done by the Student Council showed that 77 percent prefer to keep the day after the Liberation Day festival exam-free.

A lot of students help out as volunteers at the various podia of Be-

vrijdingspop, explains Bram Kerssemakers of student party VeSte. If you have an exam on 6 May you cannot really help or party on Liberation Day. 'It is a pity for students not to be able to join in the freedom celebrations.'

'So there are no official exams timetabled on 6 May, but individual teachers are free to plan something else on that day if they want to,' says Simon Vink, spokesman

for the Executive Board. According to him, the teachers are happy with the extra day off too, because this year it happens to fall on the Friday after Ascension Day.

The Student Council demanded an exam-free day after Liberation Day once before, in 2013. At that time it was decided to keep the morning of 6 May free, but many students had to get to work in the afternoon. **IK**

## &gt;&gt; PARTIES

The best parties according to Wageningen Uitgaans Promotie. Check [www.wageningenup.nl](http://www.wageningenup.nl) for all parties.

**CERES - PROPPENFEEST**

**Friday 18 December from 23:00 to 05:00**

Friday 18 December is the last day before the Christmas holiday. All the exams are over and it's party time. Just like every year there is the 'proppenfeest' at Ceres. A fun party for all students still around in Wageningen.

**CAFÉ LOBURG - THE DOORS ABSOLUTELY LIVE**

**Saturday 19 December from 22:30 to 04:00**

This tribute is going to be fabulous for all those who love The Doors and their songs. The band performed at the Woetstokfestival in June 2015 and were such a smash hit that LoburgLive asked them to perform there. The resemblance to the real Doors is stunning. The event will start at 22:30 with the guys from Baobab play-

ing vinyl. The Doors tribute band will rock your socks from 23:30. Tickets are available at the door for €5. No presale, no reservations.

**JUNUSHOFF - UNITAS: NEW YEAR PARTY**

**Thursday 31 December from 23:45 to 04:00**

Raise your fist, shout out loud and celebrate the New Year! Participate in an epic battle of 'Red v Blue'. Electro, Pop, Rock, Drum 'n' Bass, Hardcore and a lot more genres will be battling each other. Show your preference with the red or blue light provided and decide who wins. Also visit our 80s & 90s disco in the second area and enjoy a free drink at the entrance. Buy your ticket (€15) online or at Generaal Foulkesweg 74, Heerenstraat cinema, Theater, Junushoff Theatre or Bblthk (the town library). ®

## &gt;&gt; THE WORKS

**'I LEARNED TO DO NOTHING'**

**Who?** Donya Madjdian, just completed her Master's in Health and Society

**What?** Four months' internship at The Nepal Trust, an NGO

**Where?** Humla district, Nepal

'Humla is a very remote area. With the nearest road-head a nine-day walk away, the only way to get there is by light aircraft. Terrifying. The pilot only flew if the sky was clear so I had to wait for hours before we could take off.

I was there to do research on the distribution of food in households. The villages in Humla are interesting because Hindus and Buddhists live side by side. They have different family systems. Buddhist women marry several men in one family and are relatively prosperous, partly because land stays in the family. In these households food is distributed equally. In the monogamous Hindu community, I saw women who were very much discriminated against and almost all the women were undernourished because they eat only leftovers. These women and girls live such desperate lives without any hope of improvement that many parents offered their daughters to me. My host family spoke no English. Actually no one did in the entire district except for my translator. I had a room measuring two metres by one in a small loam house where rats scurried across the ceiling. But you soon get used to it. There was barely any electricity, so I got up at sunrise and went to bed at sunset. Power cuts were frequent. And there I was, trying to use my MacBook.

I learned to do nothing. I wanted to do an interview twice a day, but often I couldn't because the women were working on the land. I had a



choice between feeling lonely or dealing with the peace and quiet. Eventually I could spend an entire day sitting and looking at the mountains and beautiful surroundings, doing nothing, thinking of nothing. I thought: I must hold on to this experience. But once I was back in the Netherlands, I still had my entire report to write.

At one point a group of Dutch tourists came to the district as part of a pilot to see whether tourism could work. Being typically Dutch - tall and blond - they were offered even more children than I was. They would walk around in tears because it was all so shocking. When I saw their encampment, I ran down the mountain. It was so nice to be able to speak Dutch and they had chocolate spread, chocolate and cheese with them. Never in my life have I appreciated a piece of cheese more.'

® MvdH





PHOTO: BYVALET/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

## MEANWHILE IN... <<


### Meanwhile in... Aruba

**In the news:** Rising sea levels are an urgent problem for Aruba. The island's Prime Minister Eman said so at the climate conference in Paris last week. Do Arubans themselves see it that way?

*Commentary by Omar El Hage, student of Business and Consumer Studies*

'This was the first time I had heard the Prime Minister talking about the danger of rising sea levels in Aruba. I myself see it as a major threat to our island. I can already picture it: beaches will partly disappear and buildings will be flooded. That is a disaster. Our economy largely revolves around tourism. If this happens all the tourists will stay away.

This may sound negative but it is difficult to see it otherwise given the way the climate is changing at the moment. Among my friends in Aruba hardly anyone seems really concerned about it. They realize it is an issue but as long as they can't see the effects, they do not worry. The big problem is that if you only go into action when the effects are visible, you are too late.

You can already feel the effects of climate change in Aruba. My grandparents complain about it when we skype. There used to be a lot of trees on their land. Nowadays the drier climate makes that difficult. I am curious to see how their land looks when I fly to Aruba in two weeks' time. The government is trying to make our country completely self-sufficient in terms of energy supply. We aim to achieve that by 2020. That's a good initiative. It is gradually getting through to people that keeping up our current lifestyle is not an option. Just like many others I hope that this time a binding agreement will come out of the climate conference. An agreement that halts and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Back home the future is seriously threatened by climate change. That is a strange thought. We've got to take steps in Paris now so that Aruba and the rest of the world have some chance in future.'  LdP

1. D	9. B	13. D
2. A	10. C	14. A
3. B	11. C	15. A
4. D	12. C	16. C
5. D	(A: Bram de Vos, new director of	17. ABCD
6. A	Alterra, B: Arthur Mol, new rector,	18. D
7. C	D: Ingrid Lammerse, new director HR...	19. B
8. A	vos = fox; mol = mol; lam = lamb)	20. C

### PROFILE Roel Peerenboom

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# Forum Irregular Opening Hours Christmas Holidays 2015

	2015	The Building	The Library	Student Desk IT Service Point	WURshop	Restaurant	Grand Café	Wageningen in'to Languages
Monday	21 December	8 am - 11 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Tuesday	22 December	8 am - 11 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Wednesday	23 December	8 am - 11 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Thursday	24 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 4 pm	Closed	10 am - 2 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed
Friday Christmas	25 December	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday Christmas	26 December	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	27 December	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday	28 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Tuesday	29 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Wednesday	30 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
Thursday	31 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 4 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Friday New Years day	1 January	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	2 January	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	3 January	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

During working hours, the building is open to the public. After working hours, entrance is only possible with a WUR card.



## Orion Irregular Opening Hours Christmas Holidays 2015

	Date	Monday to Sunday
The Building	21 December to 3 January	Closed
Bike basement	21 December to 3 January	Closed
Restaurant	21 December to 3 January	Closed
The Spot	Available for Christmas celebrations, email your request to <a href="mailto:osp.fb@wur.nl">osp.fb@wur.nl</a> Check the opening days and hours during Christmas Holidays on <a href="https://www.facebook.com/TheSpotOrion">facebook.com/TheSpotOrion</a>	



## Leeuwenborch Irregular Opening Hours Christmas Holidays 2015

	The Building	Coffeebar/ Restaurant	Library
21, 22, 23 December	7 am - 10.30 pm	9.30 am - 3 pm	9 am - 5 pm
24 December	7 am - 6 pm	9.30 am - 3 pm	9 am - 4 pm
25, 26, 27 December	Closed	Closed	Closed
28, 29, 30 December	7 am - 6 pm	9.30 am - 3 pm	Closed
31 December	7 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed
1 January	Closed	Closed	Closed
2 January	8 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed
3 January	Closed	Closed	Closed

After 6 pm entrance is only possible after registration at the reception desk.





## Classifieds

### Fancy trying softball?

Once again next season the Wageningen Matchmakers will enter the softball arena with men's and ladies' teams. Our players' levels range from experienced to beginners. We are looking for new members so if you have played before or if you'd like to find out what it's like to play softball as a competitive sport, rather than the way it's played at secondary school, get in touch! Preferably by email: [hscmatchmakers@gmail.com](mailto:hscmatchmakers@gmail.com). You can join the training session three times for free. [hscmatchmakers.blogspot.nl](http://hscmatchmakers.blogspot.nl)

### Fancy theatre production or acting?

Stichting Lens is starting preparations for the Greek tragedy *Antigone*. With Joeso Peters as director, the group aims at a production in which the location adds an extra dimension to the play. The production period is January to June. Anyone interested in acting or the production side is welcome to meet us on 7 January in the theatre at De Wilde Wereld.

[www.stichtinglens.nl](http://www.stichtinglens.nl)

### The Climate Street Party

Saving energy has never been so much fun, so rewarding or so easy! Sign up with your colleagues, neighbours, sport or study association friends or housemates and win climate points by getting as big a group as possible to save on heating this winter. The groups with the most points at the end of the competition wins a fantastic street party. Green Office and Wageningen

municipality are offering additional prizes for the best Wageningen contestants.

[www.klimaatstraatfeest.nl](http://www.klimaatstraatfeest.nl)

## Agenda

Thursday 10 December to  
Wednesday 13 January

### FILMS FOR STUDENTS

Lots of films at Movie W filmhouse, like:

*Mustang*, a lighthearted Turkish family drama pitching modern sisters against old traditions; *Ixcanul*, a lovely drama about the troubled love life of a teenage girl in an isolated Maya community; *Life*, a quirky story about James Dean and Dennis Stock, who took a famous photo of Dean; *Crimson Peak*, a fantasy horror film set in a mysterious house in which a husband is not what he seems to be. Venue: Movie W: Wilhelminaweg 3A.

[www.movie-w.nl](http://www.movie-w.nl)

Saturday 12, Thursday 17,  
Saturday 19 December at 20.30

### STICHTING LENS PRESENTS HIPPOLYTOS

The great Greek writers wrote their tragedies over 2500 years ago. This year Lens theatre group performs one of these classics: Euripides's *Hippolytos*. Seven actors and a percussionist bring this tragedy to life. The actors and the director have been working for three months to create their version of the tragedy: a musical spectacle blending theatre with percussion. Location: De Wilde Wereld Theatre, Burgtstraat 1, Wageningen

[www.stichtinglens.nl](http://www.stichtinglens.nl)

Friday 11 & 12 December, 20.00

### WSKOV WINTER CONCERT

Following the departure of Ger Vos, who directed the Wageningen Student Choir and Orchestra for 30 years, the baton has been handed to Krista Audere. This experienced choir conductor from Lithuania pulls out all the stops with a capella pieces by Chilcott, Byrd and other British composers. The music focuses on the positive side of death: the newfound peace and the prospect of a new journey. Led by Frank Adams, the choir and orchestra take this theme to great heights in Vaughan Williams's *Toward the Unknown Region*. The orchestra stars in the performance of Mendelssohn's *First Symphony* and a selection of Bruckner.

Venue: Wageningen UR aula, Gen. Foulkesweg 1 Wageningen

[www.wskov.nl](http://www.wskov.nl)

Friday, 1 January, 0.30-5.45

### NEW YEAR'S EVE: RED V BLUE

Raise your fist, shout out loud and participate in an epic battle between Electro, Pop, Rock, Drum 'n' Bass, Hardcore. Show your preference with a red or blue light. The winning music genre will play until the next battle starts. Or join our 80s & 90s disco. Tickets € 15. Venue: Junushoff theatre

[www.jvunitas.nl](http://www.jvunitas.nl)

Deadline for submissions: one week before publication date (max. 75 words)  
Email: [resource@wur.nl](mailto:resource@wur.nl)

## colophon

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# >>TYPICAL DUTCH



ILLUSTRATION: HENK VAN RUITENBEEK

## Exercise in all weathers

**It was a cold November night last year, and I was still adapting to temperatures below 25°C. I was on my way home from the Leeuwenborch, steadying my almost-shivering limbs. And suddenly a girl was zooming past me in her jogging shoes and sports outfit, which barely covered her arms and legs. Is she human, I asked myself?**

One thing I find interesting in Netherlands is the fact that people over 60 can still enjoy life to the full. Even some of my lecturers are already in their 60s and they are still sharp and witty. It's so different back home, where people like them have already experienced their first (or second) heart attack and have diabetes or osteoporosis. I suspect this has something to do with cycling around every day. It's a no-brainer that daily exercise can protect you from age-related diseases.

But apparently, for Dutch people cycling around town every day is not enough exercise. Day and night, even when it's windy or rainy, I keep seeing people running diligently around town or the jogging track at De Bongerd. I find it amazing that those people choose to run when a mere mortal like me chooses to sit as close as possible to the heater. Maybe it has something to do with the so-called 'thermal pants' they wear. In any case, it shows their respect for their bodies, and it's a good habit that I should pick up during my stay here. **🇮🇩 Ferdy Sechan, MSc student of Biotechnology, from Indonesia**

**Apparently for Dutch people cycling every day is not enough exercise**

*Do you have a nice anecdote about your experience of going Dutch? Send it in! Describe an encounter with Dutch culture in detail and comment on it briefly. 300 words max. Send it to [resource@wur.nl](mailto:resource@wur.nl) and earn twenty-five euro and Dutch candy.*