



# Dondrite news

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**N° 05.**

**Nijmegen, Sunday, May 27, 2018**

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Dear Dondrites, we present to you May's edition of the Dondrite News. Read it while enjoying the sun that is shining without shame, during the lectures that are continuing without any changes and within the last stress-free month before the exams. In

this edition, you will find next to the usual Dondrite and Donders events something on mental health, the yearbook and an interview with a CNS student, so read on!

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## **Mental health**

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May is the international month of mental health. In that vein, and because of the importance of a clear and healthy mind, Dondrite has organised a discussion panel on mental health on the 30th of May. The idea of such an event came from none other than the new head of the Donders, professor Harold Bekkering. In a talk with him, he raised some concerns on the mental health of the students, as this is a subject not often addressed or discussed. More importantly, problems with mental health appear to be more of an issue in the academics every year. In such a highly competitive field, it is not surprising to find that many struggle with the pressure and stress of publishing and striving for the best. As most Dondrite members will enter this field, it might be a good idea to make sure you are doing okay. Unfortunately, it is difficult to provide concise

advice on how to cope with pressure, stress and other causes of mental health problems, but most people and institutions seem to recognise the struggle of many students. In one nature article, five researchers talk about their experiences. They mention the importance of talking to others and having a community and life around you. You are not alone in this field, and certainly not the only one experiencing pressure or difficulties. Your studies, internship and lab work are important, as much as your life around. Our programme has a tendency to proclaim us the brightest minds of neuroscience, which we obviously and undoubtedly are, but at times it might be better to take a step back and appreciate what you have achieved so far and enjoy life. Some of these tips might work for you, and some might not. In the discussion panel, Harold Bekkering, a PhD and

a CNS student will discuss their experiences and how they dealt with these issues. Prior to the actual panel, one of the university's student psychologists will give a small talk about the symptoms of mental health problems and some advice on what you can do to prevent and handle

such situations. If you want to read more on this topic, a quick google search shows that many articles have been written about mental health in academics. The Nature article mentioned in this section might serve as a good starting point: [Nature Article](#)

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## The CNS Yearbook

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The Scribe committee is still creating a yearbook for the CNS programme. Although we are a Dondrite committee, we would be happy if non-Dondrite members also want to take part in the yearbook. Generally, participation is voluntary, but we think it is a nice memory to keep from your time in Nijmegen. For Dondrite members it will even be free! The yearbook will span all current CNS students and will include short profiles of members and committees, and some other parts regarding Dondrite and non-Dondrite activities. (Just as for the Dondrite News, if you have any

additional ideas for what to include in the yearbook, feel free to contact us!) Most of you have probably already received the e-mail, but we have already made a form for members (and non-members) to fill out for their profile in the yearbook. If you haven't done that yet, please go and fill it out as soon as possible: [here](#) (and before 31 May 2018, 23:59!!!) Finally, if you have any other visions for what the Scribe Committee could do regarding our current projects, or for new projects, feel free to let us know.

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## Recent Dondrite Activities

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### **Brewery Excursion:**

Early on May the Activity committee took roughly 20 Dondrites to explore a world of magic, with hidden treasures. As soon as they entered they believed themselves in Heaven. Which was not far off, as one of Nijmegen own's breweries is called de Hemel. Our guide showed us around and told us about the history of beer,

the brewery and how the beer making process actually works. We tasted hops and mustard, and of course beer! To do so, the guide let us to a secret little balcony, almost like a narrow garden. We tasted six different kinds of beer, with their own story, colour and flavour. Some even had koriander in them! Not everybody was a fan of that, but the night was a huge success.

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## Upcoming Dondrite & Donders Activities

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## Synapsium

Busy working on your thesis internship and very motivated about the research you have been working on for a while now? Join us for this year's Synapsium as a student speaker or for a poster presentation! We are still very actively searching for both, so we encourage all CNS students to sign up, or to tell any other bachelors, masters or first-year PhD students you know to present their own research! If you are interested you can sign up here: [\[link\]](#)

For everyone else, if you are interested in listening to the research of your fellow students, or of our keynote speakers (check them out on our social media!), you can now sign up to attend on our website: [\[link\]](#) (Tickets are 5€ if you pay before the event.) If you have any other questions, you can contact us by mail and you can follow updates on our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

**Info:** June 9, Elinor Ostrom Building

## General Assembly (September)

A message from the board: Coming September, the next General Assembly will be held. Here we will discuss the plans for the coming year, as well as the accompanying budget. The board was in doubt when to have this GA. The

Advisory committee recommended to have it this year, whereas we favored the beginning of next year. We have decided to make these decisions next year instead of this year so that the new members can have a say in the budget and plans for their year. Furthermore, the board could use some more time to finalise the plans and make them concrete. These plans will be sent to you before the GA, as well as an announcement on the date and location, so stay tuned!

**Info:** September, Location: TBA.

## Dondrite Barbecue

Summer is almost upon us, and so is the end of this academic year. Time has flown past and lots has happened this semester. Before you spread your beautiful wings and fly off to some tropical location, we want to have one last Dondrite party. Therefore, there will not be a Dondrite Borrel in June, but a barbecue instead! We will provide the barbecues and drinks, so bring your own food (and maybe some extra drinks) and meet us at the beach! We will send the exact location through Facebook and Whatsapp, but it will be on the island in the Waal. Stay tuned for more info!

**Info:** June 22, Waal beach (Veurlent)

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### Upcoming Donders Events:

### Date:

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Lecture: **Yavin Shaham: Incubation of craving after voluntary abstinence: behavioral and neuronal mechanisms**

[\[url\]](#)

Tuesday 5 June  
13.30 - 14.30

Formal DCC Lecture **Thomas Metzinger**

[\[url\]](#)

Tuesday, 12 June  
12.30 - 13.30

Symposium **Art and Science**

[\[url\]](#)

Friday, 29 June  
13.00 - 17.00

## Interview with an Intern

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Since we have started writing the Dondrite News with the Scribe Committee, we decided to add some new features! Today, we are starting with a new series, interviewing 2nd year interns of the CNS master programme on their internship.

This time, we are starting with *Lisanne Schroer*, who is a 2nd year intern with Sabine Hunnius at the Baby BRAIN Group, the topic of her internship is “Infant sensitivity to emotional information conveyed in kinematics”.

*What are your daily tasks/activities?* It depends on the day, in the beginning I had to mainly plan the experiments and read the literature, whereas now I am mainly testing, coding, writing e-mails and preparing analysis.

*What does your schedule look like?* With infant research, it really depends on when the kid can come. Generally, it's 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. I always work at the lab at Spinoza (there are people who partly work on their internships at home) and try to keep my weekends off.

*Are you happy with your internship?* Yes, it's the best internship ever! We always have lunch together and everyone knows each other. Although, the interns are in a closed-off room with no windows.

*How do you combine the internship with course load?* I take courses on the side, but I always have things to do for the internship, homework is secondary. I can keep time slots free for classes, though. As long as you do your stuff in time, it works out, so self-planning is important.

*Do you feel you have enough supervising?* Yes, I was planning experiments once per week with my supervisor. Now, it is not really necessary, though, so we meet less often. I also still meet colleagues, anyway, and I can always send an e-mail or walk in.



*Is it difficult to recruit participants, especially considering they are babies?* There's a database, and parents are often motivated to participate. There's 80 kids, who have to come twice, and they usually receive a baby book, or 10€ “for the piggy bank”. The parents are usually higher educated. It is really nice to work with babies, but that probably depends on personal preference.

*How is it to test such young participants?* Every test session is different, because every kid is different, sometimes it is also strenuous. Generally, around 50% of data is “lost” due to these kind of factors.

*Do you already know where you are going?* Yes, I will be starting a PhD position in London in this topic after I finish my masters. I already

worked in this field in the honours programme during my bachelors.

Thanks a lot to Lisanne for volunteering for this very first interview!

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### **Fun Fact**

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(Almost) everyone wears underwear. You put them on (usually) every day, but some people have managed to make this into a sport of its own. The world record for most underpants pulled on in 30 seconds is 13. However, that is not the most fun fact of this month! This month's actual fun fact is a peculiar one. It might not even be true, although it appears to

have been verified by the protagonist of the fact. Allegedly, our very lovable Neuroimaging teacher and respected researcher David Norris has been an underwear model in his younger days! We haven't been able to find you any pictures, but maybe you might find some if you look hard enough...