



Simen Henriksen and Inger-Johanne Mørk, seated at table, sign copies of their debut CD "Snøstjerna" following a release party Friday at Barentz Pub. The five-song collection of original songs is scheduled to go on sale at Longyearbyen stores within a week.

## Never melt alone

Two youths feature songs from an Arctic upbringing on debut CD

It seems the life of snowmen, even those who are stars, includes hardships that go beyond melting in spring.

That story, a fish's wish to swim in the frozen winter sea and others are captured on "Snøstjerna," the debut CD by Simen Henriksen and Inger-Johanne Mørk. The self-released five-song disc is essentially a collection of their greatest hits, at least to Longyearbyen residents who have seen their extensive cultural and other community activity while growing up.

Their CD release party Friday at Barentz

**Web exclusive:** Download the MP3 "Magic Wand" from the CD *Snøstjerna* free at [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net).

Pub, in fact, brought a wry twist to what for many was a celebration of their efforts. Only days earlier Mørk helped lead a successful effort to ban everyday sales of alcohol from Longyearbyen's new cultural center cafe, to the dismay of cafe managers who also happen

See SNØSTJERNA, page 4

# Budget goes up 7 percent

Police, environmental protection, museum, UNIS, research among priorities for Svalbard in 2011

Norway is still feeling a pinch, but Svalbard will nonetheless see an increase in next year's budget as research, emergency response and environmental protection remain priorities in the High North.

An overall increase of about 7 percent is in the Norwegian government's budget for Svalbard in 2011, with the 266.7 million kroner allocation an increase of 18.1 million from this year. The government, unveiling its budget today, is projecting a national deficit of 135 billion kroner, not including oil and gas proceeds, and is seeking to trim expenses as the country tries to recover from the effects of the global recession.

The government is planning to allocate about 1.2 billion kroner to High North regions in 2011, a 180,000 kroner increase from this year.

"Never before have there been any similar focus and funds invested in the High North," said Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg in a prepared statement.

Budget items include a better surveillance system at sea for the Barents Sea region, strengthening marine bioprospecting research, weather radar for eastern Finnmark, more funds for polar research and boosting tourism marketing campaigns.

See BUDGET page 2

### Inside

<b>Governor's weekend car wash job</b>	Page 2
<b>Headlines from Svalbardposten</b>	
- Separate entrance sought for alcohol sales	
- LNS charges to alter deals with Store Norske	
- Bigger rescue helicopters sought by 2020	Page 3
<b>Weather forecast</b>	Page 3
<b>Events calendar</b>	Page 4

## Seeking reason in the ruins

Review: Book shows conflicting images from Pyramiden's history

It was picturesque glacier-encroached mining town suffering from an identity crisis as demands of political uniformity clashed with individually necessitated by its location.

The conflict continues today as Russian officials mount what might be called an inexact effort to restore some of the ruins now popular with a select group of tourists.

An examination of the conflicts and their meaning is captured in the newly published book "Persistent Memories: Pyrami-

den – A Soviet Mining Town in the High Arctic."



The three co-authors – Elin Andreassen, Hein Bjerck and Bjørnar Olsen – wrote the photo-dominant hardback in English following a week-long trip to the town in 2006. Bjerck and Andreassen returned to Svalbard on Monday for a slideshow presentation and lecture at Svalbard Museum.

"The focus is about the human things," said Bjerck, an associate professor of

See MEMORIES, page 3

## Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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## Corrections policy

When we screw up you'll know about it – on the front page. One of the big complaints about newspapers is they tend to bury corrections and clarifications deep inside where few people who read the original article see them. If we need to fix something, an alert box on the front page will state what story is in error and where the full correction is printed.

## Submitting material

Letters, columns, photos and other material are welcome, but we can't offer pay for published items since nobody here is getting paid at the moment. Submissions in electronic form (text, Word documents, JPEGs, etc.) are highly preferred, although typing and/or scanning of items will be considered on a per-case basis. We reserve the right to edit submissions for length, clarity, accuracy, libel and other reasons, but we will also make every reasonable effort to contact the author about any changes prior to publication.

## Cleaning up government



Per Kyrre Reymert washes a Spitsbergen Travel van Saturday during an annual fundraiser hosted by the Svalbard governor's office. Proceeds this year totaled 8,679 kroner, including a high of 1,000 kroner for a single vehicle wash and a woman who paid 70 kroner to have her boots washed. The money will be donated to NRK's annual telethon, which is raising funds for the Norwegian Refugee Council. The organization helps run refugee camps, provides legal assistance, distributes food and other relief, and teaches refugee children. The telethon is Oct. 24, with several local events planned before then. Photo courtesy of Svalbard governor's office.

## UNIS, museum get more money

### BUDGET, from page 1

"We will focus even more on developing the prospects of this region, with its unique nature, diversity and magnitude of resources and possibilities connected to the proximity to our northern neighboring Russia," said Magnhild Meltveit Kleppa, Norway's minister of local government and regional development. "To secure a good settlement policy and increased growth in the north, a well-developed infrastructure is important. Therefore the government will complete the extensive infrastructure goals for the High North which have been notified in the National Transport Plan."

Highlights in Svalbard's budget include:

- 97.2 million kroner for The University Centre in Svalbard, including an increase of 4.8 million to allow for 20 new students and to continue a study of new coal possibilities for the area started in 2009.

- Continuing a 10 million kroner increase in the Svalbard governor's budget approved this year to strengthen law enforcement and emergency response, as well as renovating building facilities.

"The increase means that the governor can still perform current responsibilities in a proper and efficient manner," the published budget notes. "This strengthening will be continued in 2011 and will contribute to ensure a high level of preparedness in the archipelago."

- Continuing a 2.1 million kroner allocation for Svalbard Tourism as part of a national marketing budget of 252 million kroner, which officials said is a 150 percent increase since the coalition government took office in 2005.

- An increase of 435,000 kroner in the grant for Svalbard Museum.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

## Briefly

### Oil exec: Norway needs to lead Arctic exploration

Norway needs to take the lead in development of the Barents Sea now that a treaty establishing boundaries between Norwegian and Russian waters has been reached.

That assessment is being offered by Erik Haugane, administrative director for Det Norske Oljeselskap. He said the agreement is important, but so is maintaining a sense of urgency in oil and gas exploration efforts.

"In the eastern parts of the area south of

Bjørnøya there is no reason to not just open," he said in an interview Monday with NRK. "The whole purpose to clarifying the dividing line was exactly so the oil industry can find resources there that are important for the world."

The agreement signed last month roughly divides evenly a 175,000-square-kilometer area of sea between Svalbard and Russia's Novaya Zemlya, which has been disputed for four decades and is seen as valuable oil and gas territory as the polar ice cap recedes. Environmentalists are raising strong objections to the hazards presented by oil drilling in the area.



Hein Bjerck shows an overhead map of Pyramiden during a presentation Monday at Svalbard Museum to introduce a book he co-wrote with two others capturing their impressions from a 2006 expedition to the abandoned Russian mining town.

## Seeing life in Pyramiden's ruins

### MEMORIES, from page 1

archaeology at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. "It's kind of a narrow book, but there are many people internationally interested in it."

The 215-page book alternates between historical and modern times, combing factual details of mining life in the town with analysis of political and sociological lessons contained in the ruins.

"Despite being a thoroughly modern community, there are few written records of everyday life in Pyramiden," the co-authors write in their introduction. "Thus, in this sense at least, we were encountering what may be described as a 'pre-historic' society."

Perhaps, but there's little in "Persistent Memories'" narrative of Pyramiden's history that can't be found online or to varying degrees in numerous publications. Where the book enters more unique territory is the observations of modern decay and reflections on their societal meaning.

The generally scholarly tone also gets a welcome break with a few tales of watching the community's decline during previous visits, plus a concluding story about an encounter with "The Last Man."

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**

### A peculiar 'non-place'

*The following is an excerpt from "Persistent Memories: Pyramiden – A Soviet Mining Town in the High Arctic."*

"The Pyramiden that came into being during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and as witnessed today by surviving piles of material utterances, may be conceived as a peculiar Soviet version of the 'non-place' ... it denotes a place that is everywhere and nowhere..."

"Pyramiden started out as place; a small mining community that at least to some extent was sensitive to local conditions and the nature of place. However, during its heyday it was increasingly turned into a Soviet 'non-place,' a site that denied or ignored its own location. The town square developed into a rigidly structured space of ideological performance containing the obligatory Lenin monument, the Pyramiden/Trust Arcticugol monument, and the free-standing poster boards announcing the worker of the month, official information and production rates..."

"The Soviet version of Pyramiden, however, rested on an extensive regime of skilled management and surveillance that enabled it to perform *despite* its location..."

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Separate entrance at store for sales of alcohol proposed

A separate entrance and checkout register for alcohol sales for the Nordpolet store in Svalbardbutikken is being sought by Longyearbyen politicians. "I hear comments about alcohol that are not so good for children and young people to hear, like how much people will drink this weekend," said Jon Sandmo of the Svalbardlista party. He said requiring customers to go through the grocery store also makes it more likely they will purchase other goods, which gives the already dominant Svalbardbutikken an extra advantage. Lars Sogn, chairman of Nordpolet, said he has not heard about the proposal and the board's next meeting is in November.

### LNS charges to alter deals, Store Norske director says

Corruption charges against two former top officials of Leonhard Nilsen & Sønner, will present challenges for Store Norske, whose longtime former administrative director is also facing charges. Bjørn Arnestad, current administrative director for Store Norske, said existing contracts with LNS will not continue, but declined to speculate on how they might be renegotiated or the relationship between the two companies will proceed. Dag Rindal Brox, appointed the acting administrative director of LNS, said the company has been praised for responding quickly to the charges, and "we are known for doing a good job and we will do well in the future."

### Bigger helicopters by 2020 sought in rescue proposals

Rescue service in Svalbard will feature two bigger and more secure helicopters as efforts to replace the current model by 2020 are underway. "The government is keen to secure a faster and more efficient rescue service that can get as many people as possible to a rescue in a difficult situation," said State Secretary Terje Moland Pedersen in a prepared statement. Three options are recommended in a recent report, which also aims to alleviate delays in responses during multiple incidents here and on the mainland.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Cloudy with periods of rain. SE winds at 7 km/h. High 2C (0C wind chill), low 0C (-2C wind chill). Sunrise: 8:09 Sunset 17:19	Cloudy with periods of rain. SSW winds up to 14 km/h. High 3C (-1C wind chill), low 3C (-1C wind chill). Sunrise: 8:16 Sunset 17:11	Rain. SSE winds at 11 km/h. High 3C (0C wind chill), low 3C (0C wind chill). Sunrise: 8:24 Sunset 17:03	Snow. SSW winds at 10 km/h. High 0C (-3C wind chill), low -2C (5C wind chill). Sunrise: 8:32 Sunset 16:54

**Extended forecast:** Sunday, cloudy, -3C (-7C), -6C (-10C), light 8:05h; Monday, cloudy to partly cloudy, -7C (-11C), -9C (-13C), light 7:48h; Tuesday, cloudy, -9C (-13C), -10C (-14C), light 7:31h; Wednesday, cloudy, -9C (-13C), -9C (-15C), light 7:13h.

Data provided by yr.no



Simen Henriksen, center, and Inger-Johanne Mørk, right, perform a song from their debut CD "Snøstjerna" during a release party Friday at Barentz Pub as Kyrre Fledsberg, left, works the soundboard. Fledsberg also recorded and mixed the five-song album.

## Youths learn studio differs from stage

**SNØSTJERNA, from page 1**  
to operate the pub.

But managers weren't going to let a dispute spoil the party and Mørk said there's nothing wrong with bringing youths and adults into a setting with alcohol for special occasions

"We wanted to have this concert for the whole town," she said. "We knew if we played it at the youth club than not as many adults would come."

About 75 people filled the room, and a couple dozen of their teenage peers erupted into a raucous cheers as Mørk and Henriksen entered the pub and took the stage. There was little evidence of any stage awkwardness from younger days and rougher sound stages. Both came dressed for show in distinctive ways, with Henriksen in a black shirt and tie, and Mørk wearing a leather cutoff jacket and plenty of jewelry.

After the half-hour show they spent about another 30 minutes signing what they said were the first autographs of their lives as the crowd snagged 78 of the 1,000 first-edition copies of "Snøstjerna."

The album opens with the bouncy "Fisken Pelle," about a fish forced to swim in the bathtub instead of the winter seas he longs for (its a popular singalong tune at their performances). The title track, which in English means "snow star," is a ballad shining light on a female of the species and how "all she wants is a friend ... a friend among all the thousands of snowmen."

"Apekatten Arne" is a tale opening with a monkey hiding in a tree from hungry lions. The album moves to personal pontification in "Alene" and concludes with fantasy in "Magic Wand," the only song with English lyrics.

Henriksen, 17, and Mørk, 16, are both past winners of Longyearbyen's annual cultural scholarship presented to a student for outstanding achievement. They've performed exten-

sively as a duo in Svalbard and on the mainland, but found going into the recording studio a new experience.

"At the start I thought it was going to be easy and then I was like 'oh, my god,'" Mørk said. "Sometimes we got it right, then we failed on one little thing and we would have to do it all again."

They recorded the album at Huset on weekends during a four-week span earlier this year, with sessions typically lasting four or five hours.

"Magic Wand" took the most time because "I was a bit sick when we started that song," while "Apekatten Arne" took the least because "it's a very easy song, very short," Mørk said.

They co-wrote all of the songs except "Magic Wand," written by Henriksen. Both perform on vocals throughout the album, with Henriksen also playing piano. Other performers include Nick Weiss-Fogh on bass and guitar, Glenn Karlsen on drums, and Liv Mari Schei on keyboards and background vocals.

Schei, who is the youths' music teacher and has recorded two acclaimed albums of her own, also provided studio performance advice, as did Kyrre Fledsberg, who recorded and mixed the album.

"They found out it's not as easy as just singing," Schei said, adding "hopefully they can make some money from this and do a full-length CD."

"Snøstjerna" will be sold for 89 kroner at Svalbardbutikken and other stores, with digital sales through iTunes being considered. Henriksen said they are also sending 100 copies to radio stations throughout Norway, hoping to get exposure through airplay.

More copies can be made if they sell out – and a way is found to pay for them.

**There's more! Visit [www.icepeople.net](http://www.icepeople.net) for the complete story.**



## What's up

### Oct. 8-10

School autumn holiday.

Tango class. More information available at [elise.stromseng@unis.no](mailto:elise.stromseng@unis.no).

### Oct. 10

11 a.m.: Baptism liturgy, Svalbard Church.

8 p.m.: Rolf Stange presents his book "Svalbardsommer: Fra Bjørnøya til Nordaustlandet 2010." Lecture is in Norwegian. Svalbard Museum.

### Oct. 12

10 a.m.: Administration Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

7 p.m.: Catholic mass and fireplace gathering. Svalbard Church.

### Oct. 14

2 p.m.: Board for Culture and Leisure Authority meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

6 p.m.: Bydrift board meeting. Næringsbygget 2, Smutthullet room.

### Oct. 15

9 a.m.: Control of Growing Enterprises Authority meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

### Oct. 17

11 a.m.: Baptism liturgy, plus offerings for annual Norwegian telethon aid campaign.

### Oct. 19

7 p.m.: Discussion of "Tett på" ("Hands-on") with Priest Leif Magne Helgesen, Longyearbyen Mayor Kjell Mork and Svalbard Museum Director Tora Hultgreen. Svalbard Church.

### Oct. 21-24

Dark Season Blues. Full details at <http://blues.svalbard.com>.

### Oct. 25

6 p.m.: Guided tour of new Longyearbyen Cultural Center for organizations interested in using the facility.

## What's online

**Icepeople.net** provides daily updates of news about Svalbard and the world's polar regions, plus extras for articles from the print edition. Among the latest news:

- *Russia's pricey cleanup near Svalbard*
- *Arctic sea ice at third-lowest level ever*
- *Street-level views of Antarctica on Google*
- *Penguins once wore earth tones, no tux*