



# A mostly good life up north

*Longyearbyen residents generally satisfied in lifestyle survey, but some improvements still possible*

Residents love the people and recreational activities, but it'd be nice to get better bike and pedestrian paths.

Those findings are part of a portrait of Longyearbyen residents and their attitudes about the city's living conditions detailed in a survey published this month. The study, conducted in cooperation with Statistics Norway, is the first of its kind for the city.

It concludes the average length of residency among the highly transient population has declined during the past decade. But that's not because people are eager to get away, as 77 percent of those queried said they would recommend family and friends move here, which is "a greater extent than citizens of mainland municipalities," a report detailing the findings notes.

A total of 42 percent of respondents said they have lived here less than two years, compared

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## Breaking: Strike looms

A strike by 231 Store Norske employees at Svea and Mine 7 is set for 6 a.m. Friday if mediation talks in Oslo on Thursday fail. More on page 2 and updates at icepeople.net.



Victor Wainwright, above left, and Greg Gumpel perform Saturday on the main stage at Huset during a concert marathon as part of Dark Season Blues. At right, musicians from various groups join during a jam session Sunday at Barentz Pub to close out the festival. The four-day festival, generally considered Longyearbyen's biggest music event, featured a record number of bands this year.



# Make that extra dark

*Record lineup of bands, lights-out ending energize blues festival*

Normally it's a sign of failure when the stage goes dark during a concert. Here the power failure just gave extra energy to the climactic finale of a festival marathon whose crowd was already celebrating the beginning of the polar night.

The lights went out on the main stage at

Huset as Knut Reiersrud was playing the second-to-last song of his gig sometime after 3 a.m. Sunday, the final day of the eighth annual Dark Season Blues festival. Undeterred, the longtime guitar legend finished the show with an extra sense of intimacy with listeners

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# Time to act for center's debut

*Rehearsals, ticket sales for first shows at new cultural center happening during coming week*

The "official" opening is more than a month away, but those wanting to see – or star in – the first performances at Longyearbyen's new cultural center should start planning now.

Tickets go on sale next Tuesday for an experimental theater performance at the center Nov. 12, three weeks before the official opening. For those interested in actually being on stage during the Dec. 2 evening of events, an all-day rehearsal for an operatic choir is scheduled Saturday at Longyearbyen School.

The first show on the main stage will be the Jo Strømgren Kompani, whose experimental performance is called a play on Gibberish Russian because it "can communicate freely across geographical and cultural boundaries, without being subjected to censorship or creating unnecessary provocation."

"Four patriotic women have volunteered as guinea pigs for human trials," a description promoting the show notes. "But – even if the laboratory is warm and cozy, with chairs to sit on and sometimes filled with music, it grows gradually until a doubt – it is something that is not true. Unfortunately, the doors locked, and

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## 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.

## Helping those with no place to call home



Youths rummage through donated toys being sold Oct. 19 at Longyearbyen School as part of NRK's annual telethon fundraiser. About 204 million kroner was raised nationally, an average of 42 kroner per person. Svalbard, as in past years, has the highest to-date average of 583.83 kroner per person resulting from several weeks of high-profile events, with more scheduled through next month. This year's funds will be used to help refugees in war-torn areas including Colombia, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

## Briefly

### Miners may go on strike Friday over pay dispute

A deadline of midnight Thursday has been set to reach a wage settlement for employees of Store Norske's coal mining operations on Spitsbergen. A strike by 231 workers in planned starting at 6 a.m. Friday at Svea and Mine 7 if an agreement is not reached.

Mediation talks are scheduled to begin Thursday morning in Oslo after management and union officials were unable in September to resolve differences about pay increases and calculating shifts, according to a statement by the Norwegian Union of General Workers.

### Ship's owner, captain fined for false fish report

A Russian shipping company has been fined 300,000 kroner and a ship's captain 15,000 kroner for falsely reporting the amount of catch it received from other vessels fishing in the area, according to the Svalbard governor's office.

The Norwegian Coast Guard detained the *Atlantic Lady* on Monday after the ship received the fish from five other Russian vessels between Oct. 16 and 23. The captain, according to coast guard officials, sent messages reporting the "product" weight of the fish after the heads and entrails were removed, which was about 450,000 kilograms less than the live weight that should have been declared.

The *Atlantic Lady* is registered in the Central American state of Belize, but has an all-Russian crew. The ship was escorted to Longyearbyen by Coast Guard officials to en-

sure payment of the fines.

### Tickets for *Norsk Dylan* concert go on sale Friday

A Norwegian reinterpretation of Bob Dylan's legendary "Blood on the Tracks" album will be performed Nov. 13 by Tom Roger Aadland and TreGangerTre as part an evening featuring a three-course meal and art auction.

Tickets for the concert are 800 kroner and go on sale at 9 a.m. Friday at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel. The event is part of this year's KunstPause Svalbard festival.

### Lease payments for car heater power due Nov. 5

People using power boxes for car engine heaters without a lease must contact Bydrift Eiendom by Nov. 5, after which the boxes will be locked.

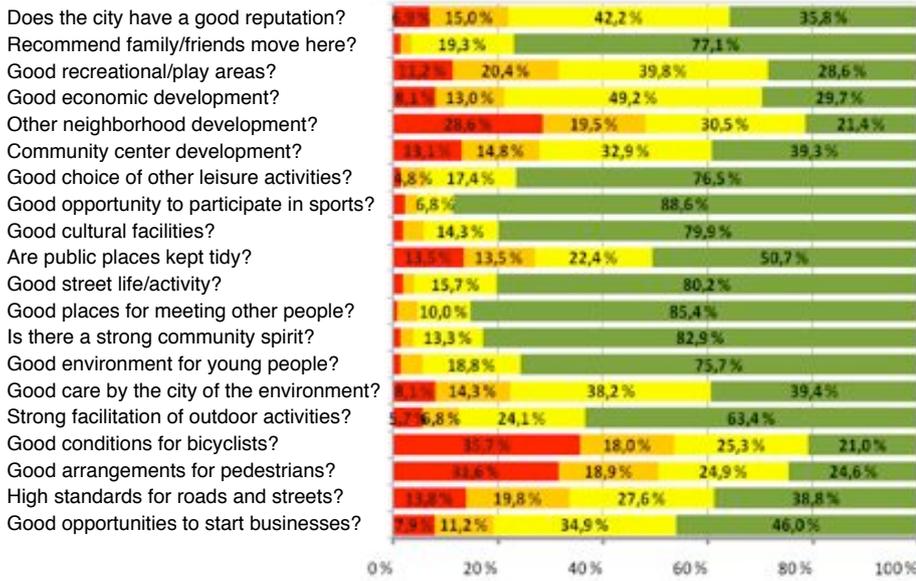
More information and arrangement of payment is available by contacting postmottak@lokalstyre.no or calling 7902 2150.

### Items sought for annual UNIS charity flea market

Donated items for the annual flea market at The University Centre In Svalbard will be accepted from 4 to 7 p.m. Nov. 5 at the university. The sale, which will raise money for NRK's annual telethon, is at UNIS from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 6.

More information is available by contacting 9178 8597 or 4150 0757.

## Survey: Feelings about Longyearbyen



Red=Strongly disagree Orange=somewhat disagree Yellow=agree Green=strongly agree  
Graph provided by Longyearbyen Lokaltystre

## Development a sore point in poll

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with 38 percent in 2000, according to the survey of 372 residents conducted in the fall of 2009. Only seven percent said they have been living here more than 20 years, down from 15 percent in 2000.

The best aspects of Longyearbyen include sports opportunities, cultural facilities, places to meet people and a strong community spirit, with 80 percent or more of respondents strongly agreeing such things exist. Also scoring high were the environment for young people, a good selection of leisure activities, tidy public places, strong support for outdoor facilities and

good opportunities for those looking to start a business.

But significant dissatisfaction was voiced as well, notably about aspects of life related to neighborhood development.

Only 21 percent said they strongly agreed good conditions exist for bicyclists and 25 percent said the same for pedestrians. About one-third strongly disagreed in each category.

Also, respondents were less satisfied with the city's recreational/play areas and economic development.

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

## Ticket sales, rehearsals for center begin

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there is no one to ask."

Ticket sales begin at 9 a.m. Nov. 2, and are available at [www.longyearbyen-kulturhus.no](http://www.longyearbyen-kulturhus.no) or by calling 7902 2150 from the same time. Prices are 200 kroner for adults, and 150 kroner for students and seniors.

Going on sale at the same time, and at the same prices, are tickets for the cultural center's official opening night, featuring multiple concerts and presentations. Those wanting to be in

the show can participate in Saturday's rehearsal of "Slavekoret ("Slave Choir") from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the school. Helping guide the session will be Jan Helge Trøen of Den Norske Opera & Ballett, who is conducting the concert.

Anne Lise Sandvik, who is organizing the choir, said about 70 people have been practicing in separate groups, but she would like 100 for the performance.

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

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Governor reprimanded in cable car cleanup dispute

A reprimand of Svalbard's governor for failing to enforcement a cleanup of land around the old cable car warehouse near Skjæringa has been issued by Norway's Ministry of the Environment. The dispute, dating back to 2006, involves illegal construction by owner Jason Roberts, who wanted to convert the site to housing. He was fined 50,000 kroner and ordered to restore the area to its condition in 2003, when the site was classified as protected. The governor's office issued a press release this summer declaring the matter resolved, and that Roberts did not need to remove steel posts between the building and road since they could be used for safety fences. The release also stated reconstruction of the entrance and removal of gravel around the building was not necessary. The ministry, in an Oct. 7 letter to Gov. Odd Olsen Ingerø, states the director did not have sufficient time to review the governor's claims before they were made public and reiterated that all aspects of the order must be implemented.

### Shops, not eatery, to replace Busen at Lompensenteret

The space long occupied by Busen will not be replaced by another restaurant as part of the renovation at Lompensenteret, according to a co-owner of the center. Lars Erik Hoel of Eiendomsinvestor AS said the area will be converted to shops, although he declined to state the specific types. He said there are also ongoing discussions with people interested in renting space at the center. Busen, an old miners' cafe long known for its simple fare at low prices, closed last August.

### Two power failures hit city

Two power failures hit Longyearbyen on Thursday night due to a security check by service personnel that went awry. "They did something that we do not have knowledge of," said Knut Flå, energy chief at the plant. The first outage at about 6 p.m. lasted 20 minutes before backup facilities were activated, but the power went out again at 7:30 p.m. for about 30 minutes when the crew tried to switch back to the main generator.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. NW winds at 7 km/h. High -13C (-14C wind chill), low -7C (-18C wind chill). Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Clear. ESE winds at 3 km/h. High -20C (-20C wind chill), low -23C (-23C wind chill). Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Partly cloudy. N winds at 7 km/h. High -14C (-15C wind chill), low -24C (-24C wind chill). Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00	Partly cloudy. ENE winds at 7 km/h. High -14C (-15C wind chill), low -18C (-18C wind chill). Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00

**Extended forecast:** Sunday, partly cloudy, -18C (-19C), -18C (-19C), light 0:00h; Monday, cloudy, -18C (-19C), -19C (-20C), light 0:00h; Tuesday, cloudy, -18C (-19C), -19C (-20C), light 0:00h; Wednesday, cloudy, -17C (-18C), -17C (-18C), light 0:00h.

Data provided by yr.no



Rita Engedalen and Margit Bakken, center, join members of the Longyearbyen Blandakor for a gospel and blues concert Sunday at Svalbard Church during the Dark Season Blues festival.

## New blues events, musicians a hit

### FESTIVAL, from page 1

sturdy enough to remain for the end of more than seven hours of concerts. The lighters came out *en masse*, offering accolades at least as much as illumination.

"It gave me goosebumps," said Veronica Andersen, a local store employee who was one of the volunteer hosts for visiting bands.

Plenty of other notable moments occurred during a festival that was bigger than ever before as a record-high 15 bands performed more than 30 concerts over four days. New and rarely offered shows ranged from a scenic formal dinner at the Spitsbergen Hotel to a relatively small gathering in a Sami tent on the edge of the foothills a kilometer outside town.

"We haven't gone through the ticket sales yet, but we have a feeling of higher attendance in total this year," wrote Marianne Bakken, the festival's chairwoman, in an e-mail interview.

In fact, the lineup may have been too much, she added, as festival planners look ahead to next year.

"We will try to keep the Lavvo (tent) concert and the (hotel) dinner concert at Funksjonærmessen," she wrote. "We have to look at the program at Huset, and maybe have one or two bands less next year. It is a very long night, and there are not so many people staying in the end."

**Web extras:** Download free MP3s from Dark Season Blues musicians, watch videos and more at [icepeople.net](http://icepeople.net).

A sense of many musicians' gigs came simply from the one-liners they threw out.

"I know only one Norwegian word and that's 'skål' (cheers)," said Victor Wainwright, hamming things up with comical facial expressions and sweeping flourishes on his keyboard Saturday at Huset.

"We're going to take you from the beginning of when they played the blues," said Bill Sims Jr. at the start of his Friday night gig at Kroa, where all of the sounds were deliberately blunted into a gritty mix that would be perfectly at home on a turntable.

While the mostly local audience got their fill of new events and bands, the musicians experienced the inevitable novelties of playing in the sub-freezing Arctic.

"One thing I learned is you can't walk between gigs," said Gráinne Duffy, whose band was the first from Ireland to play at Dark Season Blues. "I was walking around outside and I almost froze my fingers off, and I couldn't have played if I did that."

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



Deadwood, above left, performs a free concert Friday morning for students at Longyearbyen School as part of Dark Season Blues. Above right, Ledfoot performs a solo concert at Barentz Pub on Thursday, the opening night of the festival.



## What's up

### Oct. 28

8 p.m.: Book launch: "Jeger i Svalbard's Villmark," about Tommy Sandal, a trapper who has lived alone in Svalbard's wilderness for years. By Julie C. Knarvik and Sverre Jarild. Svalbard Museum.

### Oct. 31

11 a.m.: Liturgy with substitute priest Ragnar Aase. Svalbard Church.

### Nov. 1

7:30 p.m.: Book presentation by Tom Egeland, a thriller author. Soup, wine and other drinks. 100 kroner. Library.

### Nov. 4

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

6 p.m.: Bydrift board meeting.

Næringsbygget 2, Smutthullet room.

### Nov. 5

9 a.m.: Board for Controlling Growing Enterprises Authority meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

### Nov. 6

10 a.m.-3 p.m.: Flea market to raise money for NRK's annual telethon to aid war refugees. UNIS.

11 a.m.-4 p.m.: Sports exchange with Barentsburg. Various sports competitions with members from the Russian mining community. Svalbardhallen.

### Nov. 7

11 a.m.: All Saints Day service with walk to cemetery. Svalbard Church.

### Nov. 9

7 p.m.: Local Board meeting. Lompensenteret, Mediateket.

### Nov. 11-14

KunstPause Svalbard, featuring concerts, art exhibitions and other activities throughout Longyearbyen. Full schedule at [icepeople.net](http://icepeople.net)

### Nov. 14

11 a.m.: Baptism Liturgy. Svalbard Church.

## What's online

[Icepeople.net](http://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:

- *Global extinction crisis looms, study says*
- *Arctic shipping likely to hasten ice melt*
- *A photographer's 'Oscar' shot of Svalbard*
- *Polluters want warming data off Web*