



# Late deal prevents walkout

*New contract for Store Norske employees reached hours before deadline; vote by miners awaits*

A strike by Store Norske miners was avoided hours before its scheduled start when a labor agreement was reached in Oslo shortly after the stated negotiation deadline of midnight Friday, according to representatives of both sides.

More than 14 hours of mediation talks resulted in a wage-increase limit of 3.9 percent, or an average of about 12 kroner an hour. The terms must still be approved by a vote of the 321 employees by the end of November.

"This is a result we are very pleased with compared with other settlements reached this year," said Thorbjørn Jungård, chief negotiator for the employees, in an interview with NTB.

Employees were set to walk off the job at 6 a.m. Friday if negotiations failed.

The mediator, according to *Frifagbevegelse*, noted Store Norske is going through a period of change and "there were great expectations that the employees would get paid for this transition." The settlement was comparatively favorable to employees, but since "they had taken the greatest burden of restructuring, they expected more."

Store Norske is cutting costs, and reducing both its short- and long-term workforce as it copes with a coal market that collapsed last year and an inevitable decline in Svalbard production as existing mines are tapped out.



New interactive ↑ maps online. Page 2

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## STOP-PARTYING-AND-CATCH-UP ON SCIENCE ISSUE

*Too many festivals and artistic happenings means we've neglected our studies. Time for a roundup of the coolest research these days.*



Hunting avalanches – and hoping others don't fall prey to them. Page 3



Free UNIS class offers new look at prehistoric fossils of Svalbard. Page 4

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## Beer here? Maybe, if law chills

*Two applicants seeking to start breweries in Svalbard, hope ban on alcohol production set aside*

Since in Svalbard it's always a certainty you can get a beer that is cold, why let a little thing like the law stop you from making it?

Two companies are applying to start breweries despite a provision in the Svalbard Act of 1925 banning the production of alcohol. But Norway's Ministry of Health and Care Services "has not rejected the applications," according to a report by ABC News.

"I realize that you made a law against alcohol production in Svalbard - then it was com-

pletely a male society," said Robert Johansen, who hopes to start Svalbard Bryggeri in Longyearbyen, in an interview with the station. "However, other laws have been changed as the makeup of the community here has also changed."

Johansen's is seeking to produce 100,000 liters of beer annually. In addition, the state-owned Russian company Arcticugol wants to establish a brewery in Barentsburg capable of producing 50,000 liters annually.

The world's northernmost brewery now is Mack Brewery in Tromsø. If both Svalbard breweries are approved the title would remain

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

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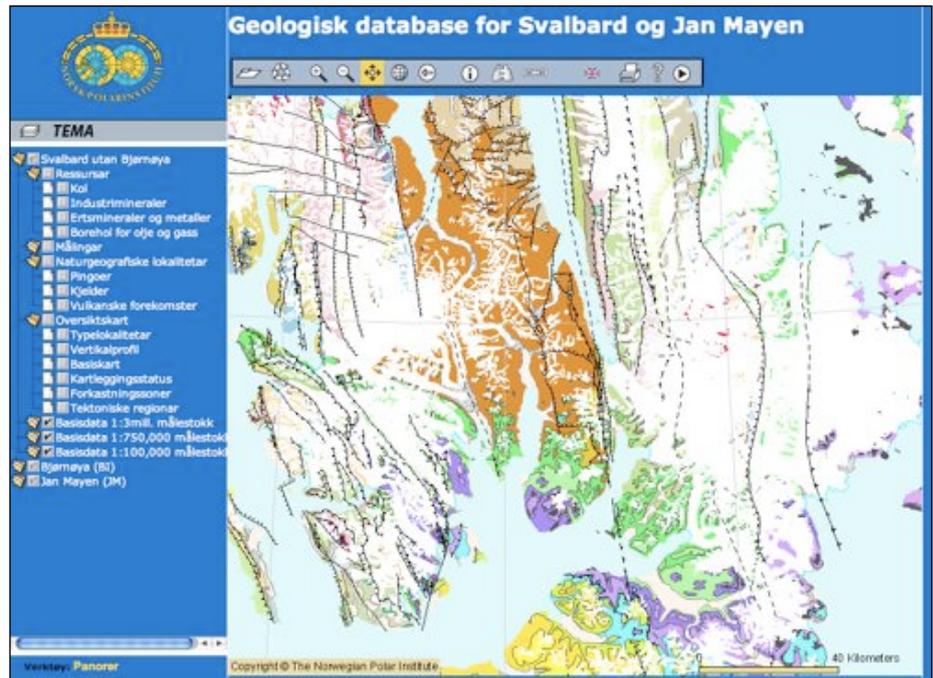
## Corrections policy

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.

## Even more exploring without leaving home



Two new geology maps are now part of an interactive online collection from the Norwegian Polar Institute allowing Svalbard to be charted using a wide variety of magnifications and feature highlights. The collection, launched earlier this year, also allows searches, text and drawing markups, and printouts of specific segments. The new areas are Åsgardfonna and Gustav Adolf Land. The collection is at <http://kart.npolar.no/website/barentsgeo/start.htm>.

## Briefly

### Heat from food grinders concerns city officials

New food waste grinders, already under fire for multiple problems since their installation, are now literally a heated concern.

Several incidents of the devices overheating, including three where smoke resulted, has Longyearbyen officials discouraging their use until more is known about the situation, according to a statement issued this week by the city. The city has requested an investigation from the Norwegian Civil Protection and Emergency Planning, and expects a response within the next week.

The city mandated food grinders be installed in all homes this summer, but the quality of the first units from the selected vendor were questioned as they resulted in numerous clogs and other problems. Further installations are on hold indefinitely.

### City awards 2.6 million kroner in culture grants

A motorsport club, music festivals and youth camps are among the 32 recipients sharing 2.6 million kroner in this year's annual cultural grants from the city of Longyearbyen.

Longyearbyen Motorsport Club received 300,000 kroner to help construct a permanent lighted facility. Svalbard Turn received the largest grant at 560,000 kroner, which will fund a wide variety of sports activities and operation of Svalbardhallen. A 540,000-kroner

grant was approved for Longyearbyen's Board of Cultural and Recreational Enterprises, to be used for activities such as Camp Svalbard, Kunstspause, and Svalnardo.

The grants are funded by surplus revenue from retail alcohol sales. This year's applicants sought more than six million kroner in grants.

*Icepeople* received 40,000 of a requested 50,000 kroner for printing, Web hosting and related publishing expenses. The weekly publication is distributed free, does not actively seek advertising, and its staff and contributors are not paid.

### Thais host Loi Krathong festival Saturday at UNIS

A feast and festival celebrating the Thai holiday of Loi Krathong is scheduled from 7 to 11 p.m. Saturday at The University Center in Svalbard.

The holiday, during the full moon of the 12th month in the traditional Thai lunar calendar, is a "festival of lights" celebrated in Thailand and Laos, with hundreds of thousands of decorated *krathong* (traditional banana leaf floats) set adrift in rivers and waterways. In Svalbard, Thais are the largest non-Norwegian group of residents among the more than 30 nationalities living here.

Tickets, 200 kroner for adults and 150 kroner for youths, are available by calling 9670 6905 or 4827 6209. Proceeds will go to the annual NRK telethon fundraiser for refugees displaced in war-torn countries.



Members of the British Schools Exploring Society cooking rations during a break at the midpoint of their five-week research expedition in Svalbard. Photo courtesy of BSES.

## Brits' studies roam far and wide

*Teenagers look deep in the soil and high in the skies during summer Svalbard science trek*

Getting back to school might be easy compared to this summer vacation.

Nearly 50 teenagers from Britain made long treks across rocks and glaciers, studying everything from soot in the snow to aerial photography from kites, during a five-week research expedition to Svalbard.

"By dividing into six independent walking groups the expedition covered a large area from the Wahlenberg glacier in the south to Tre Kroner in the north," an expedition summary

by the Svalbard Science Forum notes. "Each group carried out a different scientific project."

"These included an investigation of the hydrology of Lappdalen, cartography, sampling and field analysis of black carbon concentrations in snow, snow pit analysis, glaciology, kite aerial photography and meteorology. There were also several projects that involved all members of the expedition."

The trip was led by the British Schools Exploring Society, which regularly guides such trips. The expedition blog is at <http://blog.bses.org.uk/arcticadventure2010>.

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

## Avalanche season also people season

*Three-year probe of 731 slides reveals causes, active periods and possible impacts of climate*

A three-year data-collection project aimed at increasing the scant knowledge of Arctic avalanches reveals both snow and snowscooters share a fondness for spring.

"The researchers note that the period with highest avalanche activity lasts from mid of

February until end of May, which also is the time when most people are travelling around Longyearbyen," the Svalbard Science Forum notes in a summary of the CRYOSLOPE project conducted by researchers at The University Centre in Svalbard.

More details about the project are at [www.ssf.npolar.no/pages/news394.htm](http://www.ssf.npolar.no/pages/news394.htm).

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## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Terms of contract for cafe in cultural center questioned

The contract for the cafe in Longyearbyen's new cultural center is being reviewed at the request of a city board member who said the terms are "very poor. The city risks losing 3.5 million kroner over 10 years." Jon Sandmo, leader of the Svalbardlista party, is questioning why the agreement with the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel was reached without approval from local board politicians and its value is not in line with the cafeteria's operations. Lt. Rune Fred Jensen of the Svalbard governor's office said they have received the request and will assess if it merits an investigation for impropriety. Einar Buø, the city's culture and leisure director, and Roger Zahl Ødegård, the department's consultant, said they had not heard about the complaint and declined to comment.

### Moving skateboard ramp to central square sought by city

Longyearbyen's skateboard ramp will be moved to the central square to free up parking space in front of the city's new cultural center before it opens Dec. 2 if a proposal by the local government board is approved. "The ramp is still in the center, so everyone's happy," said Einar Buø, head of culture and leisure activities for the city. "And we think there's a little bit of security that no ramp is standing in a parking lot." Notifications of the proposal have been sent to adjacent businesses, with action likely next week. Svalbardbutikken Administrative Director Morten Helliksen responded he opposed the proposal, but did not specify why. A previous proposal to relocate the ramp next to the ice rink near Longyearbyen School was unpopular with youths.

### Coal rebounds past \$100/ton

Coal prices just surpassed \$100 (U.S.) a ton, nearly double a low of \$54 last year, but are still less than half of the peak of \$219 reached in 2008, according to Nils Tokheim, marketing director for Store Norske. The company plans to ship nearly 2 million tons of coal from Svalbard this year, mostly from Svea for power stations. Coal from Mine 7 will be exported for metals industry use.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

### Wednesday

Partly cloudy. E winds at 18 km/h. High -11C (-19C wind chill), low -13C (-21C wind chill).

Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00

### Thursday

Partly cloudy. E winds at 5 km/h. High -16C (-20C wind chill), low -21C (-25C wind chill).

Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00

### Friday

Partly cloudy. NE winds at 7 km/h. High -18C (-23C wind chill), low -20C (-26C wind chill).

Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00

### Saturday

Partly cloudy. NE winds at 7 km/h. High -20C (-26C wind chill), low -21C (-27C wind chill).

Sunrise: 0:00 Sunset 0:00

**Extended forecast:** Sunday, partly cloudy, -21C (-27C), -21C (-27C), light 0:00h; Monday, cloudy, -21C (-27C), -22C (-28C), light 0:00h; Tuesday, cloudy, -21C (-27C), -21C (-27C), light 0:00h; Wednesday, cloudy, -21C (-27C), -22C (-27C), light 0:00h.

Data provided by yr.no



An excavation team examines fossil samples during a two-and-a-half week dig at Janusfjellet in August in this image from one of four Web cameras broadcasting their work live at the time. A potentially new marine reptile species was among the finds of the expedition.

## A new look at old fossils

### *Free UNIS course examines finds from prehistoric era, their role in coal and climate change*

A free two-week class about prehistoric fossils co-taught by a paleontologist involved in some of the most publicized finds of the past decade starts Monday at The University Centre in Svalbard.

"The Fossils of Svalbard and the Evolution of Life" offers an overview of the extensive excavations and research into species dating back as far as 800 million years ago. Also featured is how climate change affected species and the role of fossilized plants in Svalbard's coal industry.

"The main focus will be on the fossil records of the late Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Paleocene," a description of the course notes. "Economic activity (such) as mining and oil will be briefly mentioned. The history of the science of paleontological exploration at Svalbard will be outlined from its early beginnings in the 18th century until the present, including the more spectacular finds."

The Paleozoic era is when life was almost "invisible," but organisms played a key role in forming oxygen in an otherwise oxygen-poor atmosphere, according to the overview. During the Mesozoic era, about 150 million years ago, in the Late Jurassic, enormous marine reptiles like ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs and pliosaurs

evolved in the sea, while dinosaurs roamed dry land.

Climate change evidence is seen in tropical evaporites and coral reefs developed in Carboniferous time, about 300 million years ago, when Svalbard was close to the equator.

The course will be taught by Jørn Hurum and Hans Arne Nakrem, both paleontologists at the Natural History Museum at the University of Oslo. Both are also involved in ongoing Svalbard projects, some of which have attracted widespread interest worldwide.

The 2007 unveiling of "Predator X," which Hurum claims is the world's largest and most dangerous pliosaur, resulted in sensational headlines and illustrations. This year's annual excavation with a group of students and others led by Hurum attracted a consistent stream of viewers as four Web cameras captured their actions at Janusfjellet around the clock. In addition to removing previously located marine reptile fossils, the group may have discovered a new species of sea creature.

Classes are from 5:15 to 7 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays the weeks of Nov. 8 and 15, with Nakrem lecturing the first week and Hurum the second. Coursework includes projects, essays and a graded written exam.

More information and registration is available by calling 7902 3300 or at [www.unis.no](http://www.unis.no).

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

## Brewers would mostly sell suds locally

### **BEER, from page 1**

in Norwegian hands since Longyearbyen is farther north than Barentsburg.

Arcticugol does not plan to sell beer outside Svalbard, according to its application. But Johansen said he may eventually seek to send some Arctic suds south.

"In the medium term it may be appropriate to sell outside the archipelago, but basically this should be a local product," he told ABC News.

Kjell Mork, head of Longyearbyen's community council, told the station he supports the

proposed breweries.

"This will certainly become a local product and bring local food even more into focus," he said. "It will also have an environmental benefit to produce beer up here rather than transporting the bottles up here."

Harald Bredrup, administrative director of Mack Brewery, said he won't concede his northernmost title to the newcomers, calling them microbreweries instead of full commercial operations.

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

## What's up

### **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. 8**

9 a.m.: Web site for ticket sales to events at Longyearbyen's new culture center begins regular operations. Site is at [www.longyearbyen-kulturhus.no](http://www.longyearbyen-kulturhus.no).

### **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.

### **Nov. 16**

7 p.m.: Evening fair and open fireplace. Svalbard Church.

### **Nov. 22**

10:15: Environmental and Economic Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 1, Tundra room.

## 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:

- 'Seniors unwanted' after life of hard work
- New Warren Miller film features Svalbard
- Arctic lake yields Earth's best climate log
- Learn to drive in the Arctic in a Porsche