



Sex scandal hits Labor

Christin Kristoffersen takes big step toward being Svalbard's 1st Parliament member amid turmoil

**By MARK SABBATINI
Editor**

A once seemingly longshot effort to make Longyearbyen's top politician the first member of Parliament from Svalbard is now being widely discussed in the wake of a sex scandal that

threw the Labor Party's nominating vote into chaos during the past weekend.

Christin Kristoffersen, head of the municipal council, is receiving strong support as the top candidate for Labor's Troms region after Roger Ingebrigtsen, 46, admitted to an "inappropriate sexual relationship" with a then 17-year-old girl and withdrew his candidacy. The region's top two candidates are expected to be

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MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Christin Kristoffersen speaks at a city ceremony at Svalbard Museum earlier this year.



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Firefighters try to contain hotspots and prevent further damage at Longyearbyen's power plant Friday (Dec. 7) after a fire that ignited at about 6 a.m. destroyed part of the roof. The generators, in another area of the plant, were shut down indefinitely as the extent of damage to equipment is assessed.

Late-breaking news: Fire at power plant

City relying on diesel reserve for electricity after damage to roof forces shutdown of generators

**By MARK SABBATINI
Editor**

A fire damaged the roof and forced the indefinite shutdown of the generators at Longyearbyen's power plant Friday (Dec. 7),

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Santa's back on the 'nice' list

His Jolly Fatness remembers to collect his mail this year as the pace of holiday events picks up

**By MARK SABBATINI
Editor**

It didn't matter what kids asked Santa for last year, as they all likely got a lump of coal since his mailbox was missing. Call it a nice gift for Store Norske after their naughty year.

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MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Locals join for the traditional circular dance around Longyearbyen's Christmas tree Sunday.

Edvard Munch exhibit debuts Dec. 12 at Svalbard Museum – Page 2

Who's to blame and how to express your wrath

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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.

'Munch 150' exhibit debuts in Svalbard



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

Edvard Munch's "Self Portrait With Cigarette" begins a five-month tour of Norway at Svalbard Museum on Dec. 12 as part of a series of events celebrating the artist's 150th birthday. The exhibit also features the digital workshop "Get Munch," where youths can use an iPad to edit images based on Munch's artistic expressions. The oil-on-canvas piece, painted in 1895 when Munch was 31, depicts a "mysterious and contemporary artist," according to a description by the National Museum. His "face and hands appear almost luminous. This emphasis on the hand and the head is conspicuous, but for an artist it is precisely these limbs that are most important. The hand is placed on the chest, central image composition and of the heart. Contemplative, he directs his intense gaze toward the viewer, but he looks just as much into themselves into the outer world." The piece will be on display in Longyearbyen until Jan. 2.

Icesheet

Random bits of the week's weirdness:

The entertainment capital of the world has weighed in on Dark Season Blues and the verdict is, um, something you can extract great blurb quotes from. **James Breen of the Los Angeles Times was at this fall's blues festival and his just-published article combines a heavy mix of the usual gee-wiz observations (guns needed outside of town, etc.) with sometimes-backhanded praise for the landmark 10-year anniversary our biggest cultural event.** He ties the long polar night nicely into the festival ("they don't sing about it in Mississippi, but if their sun went down in October and didn't come up again until mid-February, they probably would"). But the festival itself made a lousy first impression ("there were a few boring speeches to start off, mostly in Norwegian with the odd word in English to thank the international performers"). He also stereotypes residents of the happiest nation on Earth as emotionally reserved ("the audience didn't move, they're Norwegian, thank you, but you could see on their faces they were delighted") ... If we had any readers, they'd know we're forced to write articles to fit a certain space by removing or adding rambling verbiage. If the latter, it helps if the text is in some way related. That bit of Journalism 101 is stretched rather far by David Scott of London's *Daily Express* in an article about a taxi driver who "cheated death" when a steel pipe being carried by a truck came loose and went through the taxi's windshield. **Scott notes the driver was hospitalized and then writes this bizarre transition: "It happened after Scotland's chilliest winter night so far this year – even colder than the closest settlement to the**



COURTESY OF CECILIE DENKINGER

It gets better: Alas, the preview of "As Long As I Want" is the worst cinematography of the movie.

North Pole – as the thermometer hit -12.9C at Braemar in Aberdeenshire. Ny-Alesund, on Norway's Arctic island of Svalbard, just 500 miles from the Pole, only fell to -8.5C. Terina Karoliussen, of Ny-Ålesund's Kings Bay Arctic research station, said: 'It is a big surprise Scotland is colder than us, as we are famous for being the most northerly place in the world.'" Unlike Scott, we're at a loss for words about this one ... Finally, for those looking for something besides "It's a Wonderful Life" and Disney cartoons to watch during the holidays, **one of this year's better and most obscure local documentaries is now at the library.** In fact, it's the only way we know of to see it since it's not available for sale and might never be since it was a graduate student project. "As Long As I Want" features the story of Anne Mæland, 80, an educator and artist in Longyearbyen for 44 years, who is dealing with an unwanted exit from Svalbard due to the mandate residents be self-sufficient. Although not a professionally polished film, it's one of the best portraits of everyday life here and certain harsh realities about it we've seen.



Dozens of Longyearbyen residents, top, carry torches from Huset toward the center of town during the annual beginning of Advent celebration Sunday. At bottom left, children stop by Santa's mailbox below Mine 2B to drop of letters. At bottom right, members of the Longyearbyen Storband play Christmas carols in the town center after the lighting of the tree. Photos by Mark Sabbatini / Icepeople.

Santa remembers mailbox this year

HOLIDAYS, from page 1

This year Santa, or his lackeys, remembered to put up the mailbox at the foot of the mountain below Mine 2B (his "real" workshop, where he wears his preferred blue instead of that red ceremonial costume, according to locals in the know). That was a welcome sight for dozens of children who dropped off their wish lists and greetings for (once again) Saint Nick during a torchlight procession Sunday celebrating the beginning of Advent.

The procession, beginning at Huset, made its way through comparatively mild temperatures to the town center, where the lighting of the Christmas tree was followed by the traditional circular dancing and singing around it.

The celebration is part of more than a month of Christmas events intended to bring

light and warmth during the polar night. At least for the most part, since activities such as a traditional youth swim gathering from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Saturday at Svalbardhallen might chill a few participants.

Another upcoming youth-oriented event is the St. Lucy's Day celebration at 11 a.m. Thursday at Longyearbyen Library, featuring a train procession followed by a story reading. Youths will also perform as the Polargospel choir during a holiday concert featuring various local musicians at 5 p.m. Dec. 16 at Svalbard Church.

Among the featured performing arts events is the play "Children of Abraham" by the visiting Det Norske Teatret at 7 p.m. Dec. 14 at Kulturhuset.

There's more! Visit www.icepeople.net for the complete story.

HEADLINES STOLEN FROM **SVALBARDPOSTEN** VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

City spends four million kr. on travel despite budget cuts

Longyearbyen's government will spend nearly four million kroner on travel this year despite widespread cuts being sought due to funding shortfalls. The total is apparently not known to many officials since travel expenses are tallied within departments. "It was discussed in the Administration Committee, but we did not look carefully at it," said City Manager Ivar Undheim. City officials were criticized several times for travel expenses during the past year, including when Bydrift employees went to Iceland in May. Undheim said the high costs are unavoidable because of Svalbard's isolation and need to work with officials on the mainland, and alternatives such as teleconferencing are not always sufficient.

Temps of -20C becoming a rarity in Longyearbyen

The average temperature at Svalbard Airport in November was minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, about average for the past decade. But the most frigid days are getting rarer as the low of minus 20.4 degrees on Nov. 24 was the first time the temperature has reached minus 20 or lower in nearly 20 months. Similarly, the temperature in Adventdalen dropped to minus 23 on Nov. 24 and minus 25 in late October, but the previous reading of minus 20 or lower was in April of 2011.

Gov.: More rules on polar bears, trappers not needed

Additional regulations to existing trapping and polar bear protection laws aren't needed, according to a letter from Svalbard's governor to Norway's environmental ministry. The new rules, part of a proposed revision to the Svalbard Environmental Protection Act, add extra requirements that aren't a practical improvement on existing language, the governor argues. Current law requires those traveling outside settlements to have sufficient knowledge of and protection against polar bears, for instance. The governor argues a separate regulation explaining what protection measures are necessary and appropriate would be difficult to formalize in way that covers a wide variety of situations.

Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. SE winds to 22 km/h. High -8C (-14C wind chill), low -10C (-15C wind chill).	Cloudy. S winds to 32 km/h. High -6C (-11C wind chill), low -8C (-14C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. S winds to 29 km/h. High -6C (-12C wind chill), low -8C (-13C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. SE winds to 29 km/h. High -8C (-13C wind chill), low -10C (-15C wind chill).
24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness	24-hour darkness
Extended forecast: Sunday, cloudy, -5C (-9C), -11C (-17C), light 0:00h; Monday, cloudy, -4C (-8C), -7C (-12C), light 0:00h; Tuesday, p. cloudy, -3C (-9C), -8C (-14C), light 0:00h; Wednesday, snow, 0C (-6C), -8C (-13C), light 0:00h			
Data provided by storm.no			



FACEBOOK



TROMS ARBEIDERSPARTIETS

A Facebook post by a 25-year-old woman cheers the candidacy of Martin Henriksen, above, as the leader of the Troms Labor Party one day before she claimed main rival Roger Ingebrigtsen, at left, had a sexual relationship with her when she was 17. Ingebrigtsen has admitted the relationship and withdrawn his candidacy, but the Henriksen's election to the regional party's top spot is anything but certain due to numerous ongoing accusations, including some who say he may have prompted the revelation.

Parliament for Kristoffersen?

ELECTION, from page 1

elected to Parliament in next year's national election.

But uncertainty, accusations and chaos are likely to continue until the Troms region's vote, with members now asking national party officials to allow until the end of January to compile a new candidate list.

"It's too soon to think about the nomination," Kristoffersen said. "We have to repair things in the Labor Party first."

"The first thing is taking care of the girl and the families."

Kristoffersen was listed 10th out of 12 candidates when the regional party made its preliminary recommendations in September, but ascended to fourth by mid-November, when the vote was originally scheduled. Controversy had arisen during the preliminary process, with some officials saying there was a deliberate effort to

remove Ingebrigtsen from the top spot, and Kristoffersen's name was among those mentioned as possible candidates for the position.

But the main rival was Martin Henriksen and the regional party's nominating chairman, Roald Linaker, told *VG* this week he still supports Henriksen as the strongest candidate. Some party members, however, are claiming Henriksen may have encouraged the woman, now 25, to disclose her relationship with Ingebrigtsen, although she and Henriksen deny it.

Kristoffersen, facing controversy herself due to her friendship with Ingebrigtsen, said she isn't aggressively campaigning for the top spot, but would accept it.

"I have the world's best job," she said. "If people need me to do something else, I will do that."

There's more! Visit www.icepeople.net for the complete story.

City has fuel for 18 days of power

FIRE, from page 1

with the city now relying on diesel reserves at the backup power station for electricity as damage is assessed.

The fire, reported by plant employees at about 6 a.m., apparently ignited when a safety valve that releases excess generator steam failed to close properly, according to officials with the city and governor's office. The constant release of steam through a pipe to the roof resulted in a heat buildup that caused water to leak from the walls and ceiling, starting the fire and causing yet unknown damage to the plants numerous electrical components.

"It is a field of 15 by 20 meters in the ceiling that is still burning, and I can see the flames," Inge Meløy, a police supervisor for the governor, told NRK Friday morning. He said firefighters were struggling because the fire broke out high under the layered roof, and kept flaring up in new spots as burning ones were extinguished.

The fire was contained within a small area

by about 10:30 a.m., but "shutdown and damage control ... will continue throughout the evening and night," the city announced in a prepared statement Friday evening.

It does not appear the structural damage is a danger to firefighters since "we have had a civil engineer here who has seen the drawings and seen that nothing can collapse," Meløy told *Svalbardposten*.

Byrdift has enough diesel to operate the backup power station for 18 days, according to Marianne Aasen, head of the city's infrastructure and utilities department. More fuel is also being sent to Longyearbyen by ship.

One serious impact for some residents is the shutdown of a boiler means heating for homes in Skjæringa is unavailable as sub-zero temperatures are expected to drop overnight.

"Work is therefore to provide alternative housing for those who want it," the city's statement noted. The number for help is 4152 0729.

There's more! Visit www.icepeople.net for the complete story.

What's up

Dec. 5

6 p.m.: Movie: "Rise of the Guardians" (3D), U.S. animated/fantasy, ages 7 and up. Kulturhuset.

Dec. 6

8 p.m.: Holiday concert by Vintermåne featuring Aasmund Nordstoga. Kulturhuset.

Dec. 8

2:30 p.m.: Christmas performance by swim group. Svalbardhallen.

Dec. 9

6 p.m.: Movie: "De Urørlige," French drama/comedy, ages 7 and up. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Palme," Swedish documentary, ages 7 and up. Kulturhuset.

Dec. 10

7 p.m.: Trivia quiz. Kulturhuset cafe.

Dec. 11

7 p.m.: Municipal Council meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

Dec. 12

6 p.m.: Bydrift board meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" (3D), New Zealand/U.S. adventure/fantasy, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

Dec. 13

11 a.m.: St. Lucy's Day celebration for youths. Longyearbyen Library.

Dec. 14

7 p.m.: Theater performance: "Children of Abraham" featuring Svein Tindberg and members of Det Norske Teatret. Kulturhuset.

Dec. 16

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey," New Zealand/U.S. adventure/fantasy, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Christmas concert by local musicians. Svalbard Church.

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:

- *Climate fix: Will up world spending 185%*
- *Gazprom tanker opens Arctic sea route*
- *Some look to Islam for climate solution*
- *Greenland's online poker tourney a rage*