



**POLAR BEARS INTERNATIONAL**

A polar bear wanders on an ice floe in Svalbard this summer. The Arctic sea ice, which provides a critical habitat for bears seeking prey, reached an all-time low in recorded history, according to scientists in Norway and elsewhere. The melt rate caught many researchers by surprise, since weather conditions were not as conducive for melting as during the previous record year of 2007.

# All-time low

*Arctic sea ice cover sets record, to much surprise and concern*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

Scientists can stop worrying about what happens if a worst-case scenario occurs.

It's here and the situation, which caught many by surprise, is now a present-tense concern as the Arctic sea cover reached an all-time low Monday. What's more, the summer

melting season has two weeks to go, according to the observations by NASA and the U.S. National Snow and Ice Data Center.

"What's befuddling about 2012, relative to (the previous record in) 2007, is that the Arctic has not seen the kind of ice-melting weather that 2007 did," wrote Neven Acropolis, at the

**See MELT, page 4**

# Oil, cargo relish hot prospects

*Norway, Russia and China hail groundbreaking explorations of new waters as sea ice vanishes*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

The natural response, so to speak, is mostly concern, either at the impacts or that environmentalists are scaremongering again. But for some playing the biggest roles in the drama, there's unbridled optimism.

This week's news about the Arctic sea ice reaching a record low is just one of numerous historic firsts announced in Svalbard and elsewhere. Oil and shipping entities are engaging in groundbreaking expeditions to research the commercial potential of the opening seas, and many see a future full of opportunity.

"Melting ice in the Arctic has prospects that the Northeast Passage north of Russia will be open for commercial traffic throughout the year," the Chinese news agency Xinhua declared after the country's *Xuelong* icebreaker reached a record latitude of 81 degrees north near Svalbard on Friday. "It will save you considerable time and money for those who rely on such transportation."

**See BENEFICIARIES, page 4**

## Inside

<b>Sold-out 'Kon-Tiki' gets encore</b>	Page 2
<b>Headlines from Svalbardposten</b>	
- No charges for two men in paragliding accident	
- Company gets 275,000 kroner for restaurant	
- Kayaker, rescuers free tiny seal trapped in net	Page 3
<b>Weather forecast</b>	Page 3
<b>Events calendar</b>	Page 4
<b>Help sought after burglary at Fruene</b>	Page 4

# Viljar: Right verdict, move on

*Utøya victim dismisses Breivik; peers write letters to future as film about tragedy debuts Friday*

**By MARK SABBATINI**  
Editor

Ideally, it'll be the last time he's in the news for 21 years, when it's announced he's not ready to be let out of prison.

That's the opinion of many affected by the attacks of Anders Behring Breivik, who was found guilty Friday of charges related to his killing of 77 people. Among the survivors expressing relief and a desire to move on is Viljar Hanssen, 18, a Longyearbyen resident now studying in Tromsø, where he and other targets

**See VERDICT, page 3**



TV2

Viljar Hanssen, who suffered critical injuries in last year's shooting at Utøya, expresses relief at the guilty verdict for Anders Behring Breivik during a television interview Friday in Tromsø.

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

### Editor

Mark Sabbatini

### Staff writer/photographer

Karla Paz

### Copy editor

Kristan Hutchison

### Psychiatrist

Irene Gallion

### Mailing address

*Icepeople*  
Vei 210 -2- 13  
Longyearbyen, Svalbard  
9170  
Norway

### Telephone

Norway: +47 41 51 46 38  
U.S. +1 (970) 673-4472

### E-mail

marksabbatini@yahoo.com

### Web site

www.icepeople.net

*Icepeople* is published weekly (or thereabouts) on Tuesdays (or thereabouts), with printed copies available free on a limited basis in Longyearbyen. Additional printed copies are available locally and by mail upon request. Charges are on an "at cost" basis.

## Copyright stuff

Original contents of this publication can be reproduced for non-commercial purposes free of charge if *Icepeople* is credited as the source. The original writers, photographers and other contributors retain their rights to all published works.

## 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.

## Mortal Kombat Unplugged, training mode



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Benjamin Alnres, 10, center, takes a practice kick at martial arts instructor Pietrele Jankowski during the annual activities fair today at Svalbardhallen. The event offers previews and signups for local groups resuming their schedules as summer ends. Among the activities offered for youths and adults are shooting, archery, rock climbing, gymnastics, kayaking, skiing, running, reading and chess. More information about the groups is available at [www.svalbardturn.no](http://www.svalbardturn.no).

## Icesheet

### Random bits of the week's weirdness:

While the world looks at Prince Harry's ass, we just look like asses after making the bold prediction pictures of His Royal Thighness here in Svalbard wouldn't be the default pick for every news article about him. Whoops. **We're still seeing lots of the Prince of Starkness in his most-dressed rather than least-dressed state in news articles, such as one where he's offered \$10 million to star in a porn film.** Apparently those massively blurry snapshots of him playing strip billiards in Las Vegas aren't doing much for some gossipmongers such as a TV station in the central U.S. that shows Harry getting ready to depart a flight to the Barneo ice camp in April of 2011. The adult film company Vivid Entertainment, is inviting the royal to star in the budget flick "The Trouble With Harry." "We assure you the sex will be well-scripted, and the crown jewels will not be 'minimized' in any way," Steve Hirsch, the company's owner, writes in a letter to the prince. Another article headlined "Facebook Users Salute Nude Prince Harry" describes people posing in various states of undress saluting the third-in-line to the throne, with 13,000 people signed up at page so far, according to *Hurriyet Daily News*, a Turkish newspaper. The photo accompanying the article is of Harry trying out an orange immersion suit during a polar ice dip as part of his training in Longyearbyen (which resulted in some choice words from the prince about the potential risk to those crown jewels). Meanwhile, the Lord of Likes has deleted his Facebook account ... The strange but far more heroic adventures of another guy exposing lots of skin are proving irresistible to locals. "**Kon-Tiki,**"



NORDISK FILM DISTRIBUTJON

**An unusual way to pack the house then and now** as "Kon-Tiki" became the first movie to sell out at Kulturhuset on Sunday. An encore screening is scheduled at 6 p.m. Sept. 5.

**featuring the true story of Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdahl's crossing the Pacific Ocean on a balsa wood raft in 1947, became the first movie to sell out at the 243-seat Kulturhuset theater since it opened nearly two years ago.** After a bit of negotiation by the city, an encore screening is scheduled at 6 p.m. Sept. 5. But unless it makes a threepeat it won't knock Longyearbyen's all-time box office champ from the throne, as *Titanic* attracted 800 to 900 people during "two or three" showings at Huset in 1997, according to The Local Paper of Records. We're willing to bet the price of a year's subscription to our inferior rag the sell-out will be matched Friday and maybe again Sunday during the two screenings of the youth political documentary "Til Ungdommen." Meanwhile, here a **plea for the Russians organizing their annual August film fest in Barentsburg to get their shit together so locals have more than three days' notice** about what's a very cool four-day road trip.



SANT & USANT

Norwegian youths are filmed during a boat ride for the documentary "Til Ungdommen," which follows their politically active lives from the summer of 2009 to the aftermath of the July 22, 2011, shooting at Utøya that killed 69 people. The film premieres at 6 p.m. Friday at Kulturhuset, with a second showing scheduled at 6 p.m. Sunday.

## After verdict, youths focus on future

### VERDICT, from page 1

of Breivik a live video feed of the court proceedings in Oslo.

"This was what we hoped for now, to put a full stop to this so that we can move on," he told TV2 afterwards. "Also, in relation to the great debate of whether he is sane or not this is important."

Hanssen was hospitalized for three months with life-threatening injuries after being shot five times by Breivik. Among those killed was Johannes Buø, 14, who was living in Longyearbyen with his family.

Breivik admitted to bombing a government building in Oslo and going on a shooting spree at a youth camp on an island at Utøya on July 22, 2011, calling his actions necessary to combat threats such as Islamic infiltration. He adamantly opposed a recommendation by prosecutors he be declared insane, perceiving a verdict of guilt as legal confirmation his political beliefs are justified.

Hanssen, along with 72 percent of Norwegians surveyed, wanted a guilty verdict even though it was what Breivik desired.

"To the extent that it may be a good judgment, this is as fair as it can be," Hanssen told TV2. "Containment rest of life is as fair as possible. But it's hard to call it a good judgment."

Breivik will serve a legal maximum sentence of 21 years, but that can be extended indefinitely if the court rules he is still a danger

to society. His cell has a computer and he says he intends to share future writings with followers, which prosecutors are seeking to deny.

A more celebratory occasion will occur two years before that unlikely release date, when "letters to the future" written this month by students in Longyearbyen and elsewhere are retrieved from time capsules that are part of a memorial sculpture.

Youths at Longyearbyen School wrote their letters Monday after watching a screening of "Til Ungdommen," a documentary following four politically active youths from the spring of 2009 until the fall of 2011. The film premieres at 6 p.m. Friday at Kulturhuset, with an encore showing at 6 p.m. Sunday.

"The movie was sad, but not just sad," said Aina Malerud, 16, in an interview with *Svalbardposten*. "It dealt not only about July 22, but about engaged youths."

Twenty schools received metal plates to store letters that will adorn a "Tidskapsel Til Ungdommen" sculpture until 2031. According to *Svalbardposten*, local students described how they experienced the July 22 tragedy, what is good and bad about Norway today, and what they would change if they could determine how Norway is in 2031.

Video previews and other information about the film are at <http://tilungdommen.com>.

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

## HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN

VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

### Company gets 275,000 NOK for Arctic-themed restaurant

Arctic Tapas has received 275,000 kroner from Innovation Norway to start a restaurant in Svalbard. "Longyearbyen has Thai food, pizza and spaghetti," said Bent Jonny Heggen Larsen, owner of Arctic Tapas. "My experience after having worked as a guide for Svalbard Maxi Taxi is that tourists miss Norwegian food. Therefore, we will only offer food that comes from the Arctic Circle: land, air or sea." He declined to specify the location of the restaurant, which he hopes to open next March. Gunnar Kvernenes, acting director of Innovation Norway, said the subsidy was awarded because the restaurant will enhance dining and tourism options in the city without replicating existing businesses.

### Case dropped again two men in illegal paragliding accident

Criminal charges are no longer being pursued against two men involved in a paragliding accident in March, according to the Svalbard governor's office. One of the men was seriously injured during the jump at dusk at Platåberget and had to be transported by air ambulance to Tromsø for treatment. Neither man has a certificate for such flights from the Norwegian Air Sports Federation and Arne Håkon Hillestad, head of the organization, said the dismissal of the case is a misunderstanding of the law. But Lt. Gov. Lars Erik Alheim said one of the men is licensed to fly paragliders in his home country and cited a section of the Criminal Procedure Act stating "prosecution may be omitted when the rules for sentencing on impact of multiple crimes or misdemeanors means that no or only a negligible penalty would apply."

### Kayaker, rescuers save tiny seal snagged in fishing net

A kayaker and rescuers from the Svalbard governor's office freed a small seal that was trapped in a fishing net Wednesday. The kayaker spotted the seal at Sjømrådet and notified officials, who "went out with the guard boat and got it eventually loose," said Dag Einar Aas, an officer for the governor. The animal was uninjured.

## Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Occasional rain. E winds to 15 km/h. High 9C (5C wind chill), low 5C (1C wind chill).	Rain ending. S winds to 18 km/h. High 10C (7C wind chill), low 6C (3C wind chill).	Cloudy. S winds to 22 km/h. High 8C (3C wind chill), low 5C (0C wind chill).	Cloudy. S winds to 15 km/h. High 6C (2C wind chill), low 3C (-1C wind chill).
Sunrise 3:04a; sunset 10:42p	Sunrise 3:17a; sunset 10:29p	Sunrise 3:28a; sunset 10:18p	Sunrise 3:39a; sunset 10:07p
<b>Extended forecast:</b> Sunday, cloudy, 5C (0C), 3C (-1C), light 18:06h; Monday, cloudy, 7C (2C), 5C (0C), light 17:46h; Tuesday, cloudy, 6C (1C), 5C (1C), light 17:27h; Wednesday, cloudy, 5C (2C), 4C (1C), light 17:08h			
Data provided by storm.no			

## Seeking help after burglary at Fruene



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Tove Eide, owner of Fruene, helps a customer today at the coffee shop in Lompensenteret that was burglarized between Sunday night and Monday morning. The culprit, apparently familiar with the cafe's operations and possibly possessing a key, entered without signs of force and took only the cash in a box containing the weekend's sales, according to the Svalbard governor's office. "To me it seems that the person knew exactly what he was going to take," Eide told *Svalbardposten*. The burglar apparently broke in through the main exterior entrance and exited by opening a metal barricade into the shopping center, but no thefts at other businesses were reported. The break-in occurred between the cafe's closing at 5 p.m. Sunday and 8 a.m. Monday when an employee discovered the box missing. Anyone with possible tips into the case are asked to contact the governor's office at 7902 4300 or firmapost@sysselmannen.no.

## Arctic sea ice reaches new low

### MELT, from page 1

Sea Ice Blog he authors at <http://neven1.typepad.com>. "I'm at a loss at this loss. The 2007 record that stunned everyone, gets shattered without 2007 weather conditions."

The Arctic sea ice reached a low of 4.1 million square kilometers, about 70,000 square kilometers less than previous record on Sept. 18, 2007, the U.S. agencies reported. The Arctic is losing about 155,000 square kilometers of ice annually.

"It used to be the Arctic ice cover was a kind of big block of ice. It would melt a little bit from the edges but it was pretty solid," said Walt Meier, a scientist at the National Snow

and Ice Data Center, in a conference call with journalists. "Now it's like crushed ice. At least parts of the Arctic have become like a giant slushie, and that's a lot easier to melt and melt more quickly."

The decline of sea ice has been blamed for numerous recent problems and ecological changes in Svalbard, including polar bears intruding on humans because prey can no longer be hunted from floes at sea. Also, organisms traditionally inhabiting the ocean floor have largely disappeared and invasive species of marine life are increasingly prevalent.

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

## Some see positives in vanishing ice

### BENEFICIARIES, from page 1

Cargo traffic through the Northeast Passage has been record-breaking during the past two years, said Sergey Balmasov, head of a Norwegian-Russian cooperative providing data about the area's maritime conditions, according to *Science & Environment*. He said longer periods of access are a primary reason.

Also making a record venture is Statoil, which in the summer of 2013 is scheduled to drill for oil farther north than ever on the Norwegian continental shelf, according to NRK. The world's 13th-largest oil company, which is two-thirds owned by Norway's government, will be drilling in areas of the Barents Sea where it expects year-round, ice-free conditions for the first time.

Other Norwegian oil companies are also engaged in a furious battle for rights to drill in the north, although that pales in comparison to the larger global battle for what may be a quarter of the world's remaining oil. While environmentalists are raising concerns about damage from commercial activity and accidents, the most substantive political battles are about issues such as territorial claims.

Some first-ever ecosystem surveys are now underway in Svalbard, including one that will eventually feature four ships (three Norwegian and one Russian). But even that is largely aimed at commercial activity, as it will play a key role in determining future fishing quotas.

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

## What's up

### Aug. 29

6 p.m.: Movie: "Ice Age: Continental Drift" (3D), U.S. animated/comedy, all ages. Kulturhuset.

### Aug. 31

6 p.m.: Movie: "Til Ungdommen," Norwegian documentary about youth activism in the summer of 2011, premier screening, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 1

8:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m.: Concert and tour of Pyramiden featuring Aggie Peterson of the duo Frost. Party with music at Svalbar at 10 p.m. More information at [www.frostpyramiden.net](http://www.frostpyramiden.net).

Noon: Quadrathlon race, featuring running, kayaking, bicycling and target shooting. Svalbard Sailing Club.

### Sept. 2

6 p.m.: Movie: "Til Ungdommen," Norwegian documentary about youth activism in the summer of 2011, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Albert Nobbs," U.S. drama/romance, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 5

6 p.m.: Movie: "Kon-Tiki," Norwegian drama, no age limit specified. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 7

9 a.m.: Board of Youth Enterprises meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

### Sept. 9

6 p.m.: Movie: "Brave" (3D), U.S. fantasy, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "The Expendables 2," U.S. action/thriller, no age limit determined. Kulturhuset.

### Sept. 10

11 a.m.: Environmental and Industrial Committee meeting. Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

## 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:

- 6.6 quake near Svalbard; no injuries
- Shell gets OK to start Arctic oil drilling
- World forced to go vegetarian by 2050?
- Climate causing polar bear impotence