



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Jeremiah Blankenship, left, serves hot dogs during an Aug. 16 concert in downtown Juneau, Alaska. He said he has heard of Svalbard, but doesn't know anything specific about it. A group in the city promoting Norway's culture and heritage bears Svalbard's name, but why is a mystery.

More land for us

New island discovered during mapping voyage this summer, along with 1,300 new shoals

By MARK SABBATINI
Editor

It's not like Svalbard's beaches were getting overcrowded, but at least now there's more of them if that ever becomes a problem.

A new island in northeast Svalbard was discovered this summer by Norwegian Mapping Authority researchers during a voyage to update marine navigation hazards. Sea charts throughout the archipelago will be getting extensive revisions, as about 1,300 new shoals were discovered as well.

The new island, at only 50 meters in diameter, probably won't become a resort attraction although it is in an area visited by tourist and fishing vessels. It is south of the island of Wahlbergøya in Hinlopen, where the German cruise ship *Hanseatic* had to be evacuated after running with 260 people in 1997, according to *Nordlys*.

The name of the island is still to be determined, said Einar Vallestad, the expedition

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SIBLING RAVELRY

A place in Alaska bears Svalbard's name, but what's the relation?

By MARK SABBATINI
Editor

There's a certain similarity in the DNA: Both are accessible only by boat or plane, are famous for their glaciers, see bears wander into town occasionally, and host huge crowds of

cruise ship tourists asking stupid questions.

But the main glacier in this "other" place is a drive-in attraction where buses unload hundreds of thousands of visitors each summer, rainforest dominates the landscape rather

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MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Several large cruise ships dock in downtown Juneau, a common occurrence daily during the summer.

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Remembering those who forget

Month of fundraising activities to supplement annual telethon will aid dementia research, treatment

By MARK SABBATINI
Editor

With Longyearbyen's biggest employer continuing to downsize, it's the simple things deserving emphasis when remembering to help the less fortunate this year. Such as the ability to remember.

Researching and treating dementia is the focus of a month of local fundraising activities

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MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Lene Villumsen, offers a lottery ticket to a resident Saturday at Svalbardbutikken as part of a series of fundraising events for dementia care.

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.

It gets better for a day in Longyearbyen



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

A rainbow touches down near Svalbard Church and the governor's office Saturday morning, when skies began clearing after a week of mostly stormy weather. Clear skies and moderate temperatures are forecast for this week, following Svalbard's wettest summer since 1976.

Icesheet

Random bits of the week's weirdness:

Both of our regular readers know we have something of an infatuation with polar science, or at least pretending we do by cribbing amusing factoids to impress people with at parties (h/t to mentalfloss.com). So we've been following **the *Oden*, an icebreaker belonging to the Swedish Polar Research Secretariat, during its two-week voyage from Longyearbyen to northeast Greenland and back. And basically we just thought the picture to the right was a seriously cool bit of polar science in action and wanted an excuse to run it.** If you actually want to read about the 33-member international team's escapades of ramming through icebergs and collecting sea ice data, it's at tinyurl.com/qateomr ... Then there's the other popular type of polar region journalism, known as prostituting yourself (a.k.a. travel writing). A high percentage of the breathless annual travelogues about Svalbard are by writers who absolutely, positively would never sell their souls by penning anything less than their honest opinion by accepting a "hosted" trip from a tour company. Usually the obligatory



JAN DURINCK / MARINE OBSERVERS

This is why you should pay attention in science class: Collecting some lab samples is definitely more exciting than others, if you've got the grades to get the job.

polar bear picture is used to attract readers, but ***The Age of Australia went for cheesecake by splashing a bikini photo of reporter Shaney Hudson taking a polar dip across its pages.*** Somehow, it seems like the perfect metaphor for the naked nobblery a cruise company (that we're definitely not naming here) will proposition to get exposure. In the interests of full disclosure, we've decided we'll go rent boy for a trip to the North Pole, if you're a company looking for a glowing writeup ... Finally, in the "not funny but definitely weird" category, **a man in his 60s has been fined 10,000 kroner and had his driver's license suspended for six months after getting busted at a DUI checkpoint in May with a BAC of .41,** according to the Svalbard governor's office. We'd say it seems he got off awfully light, but considering a typical driver's ed handbook describes the effects at that level of intoxication as "general lack of behavior, unconsciousness (and) possibility of death" he's got bigger things to be thankful for.



CHRIS VAN HOVE

This is why you should pay attention in flack class: You can make journalists look silly while getting lots of free publicity at the same time.



WIKICOMMONS



WIKICOMMONS



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

A park in downtown Juneau, top, is frequently packed with cruise ship tourists and tour group solicitors during the summer. At bottom left, the Mendenhall Glacier is the most famous attraction in Alaska's capital city. At bottom right, a sign advertising t-shirts and hats at a downtown shop is an increasingly common sight as budget-minded travelers are favoring such souvenirs instead of Native crafts.

Link to 'other' Svalbard a mystery

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than permafrost and the bears are the puny black variety that residents chase away from garbage cans like dogs.

So why is an entity in Alaska's capital city bearing Svalbard's family name? Nobody seems to know, other than a mysterious and unreachable group of its inhabitants.

In the midst of a harbor in downtown Juneau is the Sons of Norway Svalbard Lodge, which has about a dozen officers ranging from a president to a sports director, plus an unknown number of members. They frequently host events on holidays and celebrated their 75 anniversary in 2010, but their current status is an enigma, with calls and e-mails to several listed leaders going unanswered.

Their online archive of newsletters (www.juneausonsofnorway.com/newsletter) contains no references to Svalbard except in the organization's name. And while there are a couple of "sister city" relationships between towns in Norway and Alaska – including Tromsø and

the largest Alaska city of Anchorage – some vague non-club mentions of a possible such relationship between Longyearbyen and Juneau appear to have no official basis in fact.

Out of dozens of interviews with Juneau residents, only a few said they had heard of Svalbard. None knew anything about it.

At least one person living in Longyearbyen resident, Sara Cohen, 24, is a former resident of the Alaskan town with a population of about 32,000. But the scientific field technician at The University Centre in Svalbard said making a connection between the two is strange.

"I would say I guess there's people's love for the mountains," she said. Juneau also has an active snowmobiling crowd and a mining industry, although the presence of both are far smaller than in Longyearbyen.

Tourism, on the other hand, is a dominant industry in Juneau with more than a million cruise ship passenger arriving each summer.

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

HEADLINES STOLEN FROM SVALBARDPOSTEN

VERDENS NORDLIGSTE AVIS

Warm temps lead to wettest summer since at least 1976

This summer was the wettest in Longyearbyen since at least 1976, the year Svalbard Airport began taking measurements, according to officials. A total of 123 millimeters of precipitation fell between June 1 and Aug. 31, or 241 percent of normal, said Stein Kristiansen, lead consultant for the Meteorological Institute in Oslo. "We can't ignore the fact that the temperature has risen in general and with rising temperatures precipitation increases," he said. "It does not mean that the number of days with precipitation will increase, but there will be more (on those days)." But climate change isn't a guarantee of such precipitation, he added, noting Longyearbyen got 24.9 millimeters of precipitation two years ago, the driest year since 1998.

Hotel stays as of Aug. 31 nearly equal to all of 2012

Tourism-related companies are generally having a big year in Longyearbyen, with 82,381 hotel night stays as of the end of August nearly matching the 84,643 for all of 2012, according to Kjersti Norås, marketing coordinator for Svalbard Tourism. "We have been more aggressive this year and it has paid off," said Trygve Steen, head of Spitsbergen Travel, which owns several hotel and excursion operations in Longyearbyen. "In addition, it is because there are now two airlines offering travel here." He said overnight tourists also appear to have more money, based on a notable increase in expeditions in July and August.

Coal processing plant finally running smoothly at Svea

After months of frustration, coal processing operations are running smoothly at Svea due to numerous repairs and upgrades to equipment, according to Cato Lund, a technical manager for Store Norske. "We are cleaning around 400 tons per hour and are very happy with the way it is now," he said. A new processing facility that opened in 2011 operated smoothly for a few weeks, but then suffered a series of malfunctions resulting in shutdowns and accidents resulting in a 700,000 kroner fine for safety violations.

Weather forecast for Longyearbyen

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Partly cloudy. SE winds to 29 km/h. High 8C (4C wind chill), low 4C (0C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. SE winds to 32 km/h. High 7C (4C wind chill), low 4C (1C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. SE winds to 35 km/h. High 6C (2C wind chill), low 5C (0C wind chill).	Partly cloudy. SE winds to 35 km/h. High 7C (3C wind chill), low 5C (1C wind chill).
Sunrise: 6:00a, sunset: 7:39p	Sunrise: 6:07a, sunset: 7:31p	Sunrise: 6:14a, sunset: 7:23p	Sunrise: 6:22a, sunset: 7:15p
Extended forecast: Sunday, p. cloudy, 6C (1C), 4C (0C), light 12:39h; Monday, p. cloudy, 6C (2C), 4C (0C), light 12:24h; Tuesday, cloudy, 5C (0C), 4C (-1C), light 12:09h; Wednesday, cloudy, 4C (0C), 3C (0C), light 11:54h			

Data provided by storm.no



MARK SABBATINI / ICEPEOPLE

Mummies, surgeons and other misfits prepare to run the second annual relay race through the center of Longyearbyen on Saturday. Entry fees for the race are being donated to the annual NRK telethon.

Fundraiser relies on familiar events

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leading up to the annual NRK telethon on Oct. 20. Proceeds will go to Norway's National Association for Public Health, which previously was the beneficiary in 1987 when it used the funds for cardiovascular disease programs.

While the cause it not as headline grabbing as recent efforts such as one benefiting refugees in war zones, it is one most people have some kind of direct association with.

"Last year when I heard it was dementia I thought 'that's a tough one,'" said Lene Villumsen, a Store Norske administrator in charge of this year's activities in Longyearbyen. "But it's not. People are willing to help."

Svalbard residents generally donate the most per-person by a wide margin during the fundraisers. They donated 450.29 kroner per person in 2012, compared to 249.08 kroner for runner-up Utsira and the national average of

39.85 kroner. A total of 198.7 million kroner was raised nationwide.

Villumsen said she expects good results again this year, but she doesn't have a specific amount she hopes to raise since many families are struggling due to layoffs at Store Norske.

"It has an effect on the entire community," she said. "I don't want to set any goals that make people feel pressure."

Local events are the same as last year, highlighted by an Oct. 13 auction at the Radisson Blu Polar Hotel. Also popular is a raffle, with tickets sold at Svalbardbutikken on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Other upcoming events include a open day at the fire station Sept. 28, a government furniture auction on Oct. 3 and an open day at the Kullungen kindergarten climbing tower Oct. 13.

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

Svalbard's maps to get extensive update

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leader and captain of the *Hydrograf* mapping vessel, in an interview with the newspaper.

"We have not thought that far," he said. "That is not our responsibility. There are others who take care of it. It may well be that someone has discovered the island long ago. But it has not been plotted on nautical charts."

Mappers also discovered shoals just two meters below the water's surface in nearby Murchinsonfjorden, which large ships have been using to visit the former research station on Kinnvika Nordaustlandet, according to *Nordlys*.

"We have found more than 700 new shoals only here in Hinlopen area," Vallestad said.

The *Hydrograf* spent the latter part of the summer surveying the area from Claravågsundet to Brage Nordneset on Storstein Peninsula in Northern Austlandet. It is an area facing Hinlopen, the strait between eastern and northern main island of Spitsbergen.

Earlier this summer researchers took measurements in the range from Hotellneset in



NORWEGIAN POLAR INSTITUTE

A red dot at the top center of this map shows a newly discovered island about 50 meters in diameter south of the island of Wahlbergøya in Hinlopen. The red dot at the lower center of the map shows a new shoals in the lane used to reach a former research station in Kinnvika.

Longyearbyen to Barentsburg and Recherfjorden on the south side of the bell sound to Hornsund, both on the west side of Spitsbergen.

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

What's up

Sept. 18

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Smurfs 2" (3D), U.S. animated/family, all ages. Kulturhuset.

Sept. 19

7:30 p.m.: Concert by violinist Arve Tellefsen and pianist Sveinung Bjelland. Kulturhuset.

Sept. 21

6 p.m.: Cultural exchange performance from Barentsburg. Kulturhuset.

9 p.m.: Saturday Night Light blues concert by Blåmyra and Lucky. Huset.

Sept. 22

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

6 p.m.: Movie: "The Smurfs 2," U.S. animated/family, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "The Act of Killing," Danish/Norwegian/British documentary, ages 15 and up. Kulturhuset.

Sept. 23

8 p.m.: Trivia Quiz. Barentz Pub.

Sept. 24

6 p.m.: Photo marathon by the Longyearbyen Photo Club. Svalbard Church.

Sept. 25

6 p.m.: Movie: "Hokus Pokus Albert Åberg," Norwegian animated children's film, all ages. Kulturhuset.

Sept. 27

Noon: Board of Youth Activities meeting, Næringsbygget 3, Newtontoppen room.

Sept. 29

11 a.m.: Family Mass w/ baptism and Polargospel concert. Svalbard Church.

6 p.m.: Movie: "Turbo" (3D), U.S. animated family film, all ages. Kulturhuset.

8 p.m.: Movie: "Blue Jasmine," U.S. comedy, ages 7 and up. Kulturhuset.

Sept. 30

6 p.m.: Qualification contest for local team to participate in NRK trivia broadcast. Barents Pub.

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:

- *Russian navy back in Arctic permanently*
- *World giving up on protecting Antarctica?*
- *Watch: Climate effect on Native Alaskans*
- *Man evades polar bear with cell phone*