

November 2003

A Little in English

Search for South Pole Hero

For 75 years, Norwegians have wondered where the world-renowned Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen and the crew on board the plane "Latham" disappeared over the Arctic Ocean. Amundsen was the winner of the race for the South Pole in 1911 against Englishman Robert Scott. He disappeared over Bjørnøya south of Svalbard June 18, 1928, and the plane has never been recovered.

But now there's renewed hope of finding the plane in the ocean depth. A nautical chart from 1933 showing the exact position where a fishing boat caught a nine-foot long fragment before it slipped off the line and disappeared into the sea. Norwegian Fisheries Minister Svein Ludvigsen wants to work towards conducting a minisub search that could finally solve the 75-year-old mystery.

-Aftenposten



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Litt på norsk

Søk etter sydpolhelten

I 75 år har nordmenn lurt på hvor den verdensberømte norske polfareren Roald Amundsen og mannskapet om bord på flyet "Latham" forsvant over Nordishavet. Amundsen var den som vant kappløpet om Sydpolen i 1911 mot engelskmannen Robert Scott. Han forsvant over Bjørnøya sør for Svalbard 18. juni 1928, og flyet har aldri blitt funnet.

Men nå er det igjen håp om å finne flyet i havdypet. Et sjøkart fra 1933 som viser nøyaktig posisjon hvor en fiskebåt traff en tre meter lang gjenstand før den glapp fra lina og forsvant i havet. Fiskeriminister Svein Ludvigsen vil arbeide for å få i gang søk med miniubåt som kan endelig løse på den 75 år gamle gåten.

-Aftenposten

Oslo Gets Two Million Tourists in 2003

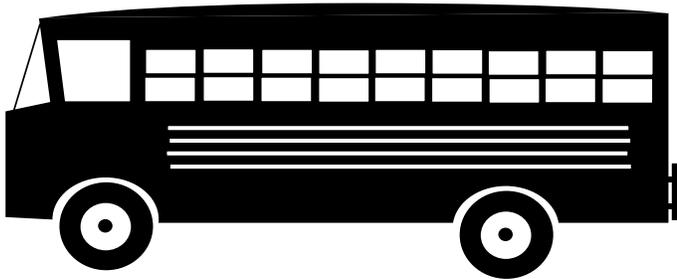
Fears of terrorism and the SARS scare in the spring resulted in a sharp decline in Americans traveling abroad. Hotels in Oslo saw a 9 percent decline in the number of Americans visiting in 2003, and a 15 percent drop in Japanese visitors. While Americans still were the largest group of tourists arriving in Oslo, the numbers of French, Spanish, Dutch and Russian visitors increased. Also, Norway hosted a record number of cruise ship calls in 2003. So while tourism worldwide has taken a downturn recently, Norway seems to be doing alright.

-Norway Times

Norwegian Geography Trivia

See if you can answer these trivia questions on some of Norway's well known geographical landmarks.

1. Norway has the deepest lake in Europe. What is its name?
2. What is the longest fjord in Norway?
3. "Mjøsa" is Norway's largest _____.
4. What is the name of Norway's, and Europe's, largest glacier?
5. What is the longest river in Norway?



Ole and Lena Jokes

Ole and Lena jokes have been around for a long time, especially in the Midwest. If you want to get some more, visit most Scandinavian gift stores carry books of Ole and Lena jokes. Here are a couple good jokes we've found:

Lena called airline information and asked, "How long does it take to fly from Minneapolis to Fargo?"

"Just a minute," said the busy clerk.
"Vell," said Lena, "if it has to go dat fast, I tink I'll yust take da bus."

One day Ole was flying a helicopter when suddenly it came tumbling down, landing with a thud. The men on the ground asked him what had happened.

Ole replied, "It got cool up der, so I turned off da fan."

Norway Smoking Ban Soon in Effect

Effective January 1, 2004, it will be illegal in Norway to smoke everywhere except in homes and outdoors. Before the new law was passed, Norway was already one of the most restrictive countries in the world regarding tobacco use.

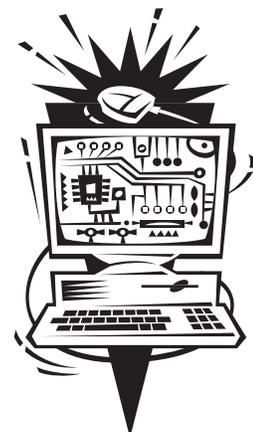
Smoking bans have long been in effect for offices and public buildings, and cigarettes are heavily taxed. But after much lobbying for restaurant workers' unions concerned for worker health, the government decided to ban indoor smoking altogether. But according the Statistics Norway, 26 percent of the Norwegian population were daily smokers in 2003, despite government restrictions.

-Scandinavian Press

Norway's Postal Service Takes on Junk Mail

Do you hate to get junk mail for cars and credit cards, but love all those offers for gardening supplies in the spring? Well, you're in luck, at least if you live in Norway. Posten Norge will soon be able to claim being the first postal service in the world to let customers select which advertising they want to receive, if any. This will allow those who have already blocked all advertising to receive ads they actually want. It should also prove helpful to marketers in better targeting their mailings.

-Nordic Reach



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A Little in English Short People Can Be Police Officers

Even though you may be short, you are now allowed to become a police officer in Norway. All applicants to the Police Academy in Oslo will from now on be reviewed no matter how high off the ground they stand. Previously, the height requirement for female applicants to the academy was 5 feet 5 inches and for men 5 feet 9 inches. Starting this year they have dropped this requirement entirely.

Some patrol squads say that out of consideration for a partner's safety, they do not want to use short police officers in times such as assignments to apprehend people. But the Police Academy now feels that in certain situations short stature can be an advantage.

-*Nettavisen*

Warning: Watch for Flying Moose

While driving through southern Norway, Leo and Else Henriksen expected beautiful scenery, but they did not expect the 770-pound moose that landed on their car. Hitting moose is a common road hazard for Norwegians, but the large animals don't usually appear out of thin air. The unfortunate moose apparently had slid down a mountain and became airborne before hitting the Henriksen's small car. Thankfully, the Henriksen's suffered only minor injuries from the broken windshield. And surprisingly, the moose was at first alright as well. He lay stunned by the side of the road for a few moments before he was struck and killed by another car.

-*Nordic Reach*

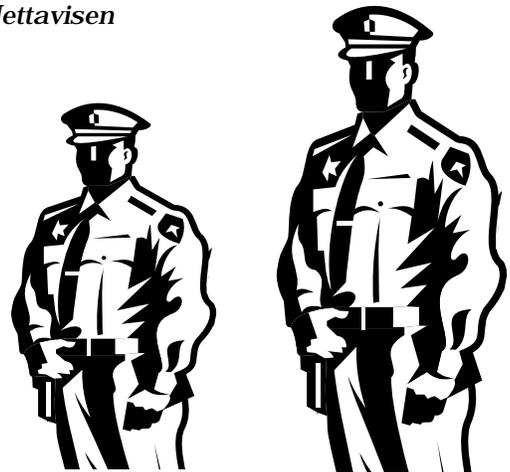
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Litt på norsk Kortvokste får lov å bli politi

Selv om du er kortvokst, kan du nå bli politi i Norge. Alle søkere til Politihøgskolen i Oslo skal heretter vurderes, uansett hvor høyt de rager over bakken. Før var høydekravet til kvinnelige søkere ved Politihøgskolen minst 1,65 meter (5' 5"), og menn minst 1,75 meter (5' 9"). Fra i år har de droppet høydekravet helt.

Noen ordensavdelinger sier de ikke vil bruke lave politifolk for eksempel på oppdrag hvor de skal pågripe folk, av hensyn til kollegaens sikkerhet. Men Politihøgskolen nå mener at i noen situasjoner kan lav høyde være en styrke.

-*Nettavisen*



Norway Polar Museum Gets a Boost

The Polar Museum in Tromsø in northern Norway experienced a 35 percent increase in the number of visitors during the first months of 2003 in comparison to the previous year. The reason for the boost, however, is a source of some embarrassment for the museum. The rise has been attributed to the popular travel guidebook series Lonely Planet, which called the museum's exhibition on the history of fishing the third worst attraction in Scandinavia.

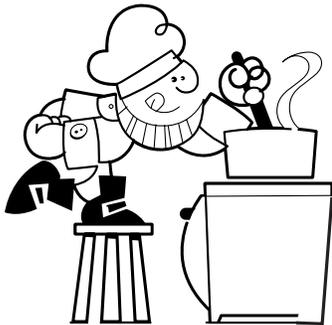
-*Scandinavian Press*

Norwegian Slimmest in the West

Norwegians are officially the slimmest people in the western world, according to a survey from OECD, an organization of the developed countries of the world. The statistics are based on surveys of the share of each population with a BMI, body mass index, above 30. The BMI is an international index of weight, defined as the body weight, divided by height multiplied by height. Six percent of Norwegians has a BMI over 30. Of all the OECD countries, the Japanese are the only people slimmer than the Norwegians.

Despite this, obesity is an increasing problem in Norway. Norwegians are traditionally more active in their daily lives, but they are falling prey to the same trends of inactivity seen in other developed countries. Some like to claim that Norwegians were just fine until McDonald's was introduced to their country.

-Norway Times



Norwegian Christmas Recipe

Rømmegrøt

This delightful and easy dish is a staple of the Norwegian holiday season.

- 2 sticks butter
- 1 cup flour
- 5 cups milk, preferably whole milk
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt

Melt butter in heavy kettle. Add flour. Cook and stir until well blended. Add milk. Cook and stir until thick. Add the sugar and salt. To serve, sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon and enjoy!

Norwegian Christmas Traditions The Christmas Goat

The Norwegian Christmas tradition involving the julebuk, or Christmas goat, stretches at least back to the Middle Ages, and perhaps even further. In the highly superstitious culture of Middle Ages Norway, julebukken was said to be the most frightening of the demonic spirits of Åsgårdsreien that would fly over Norwegian homes around Christmas time wreaking havoc upon families not keeping all the various taboos of the season. Groups of villagers would join together donning costumes of the members of Åsgårdsreien and go from house to house causing mischief. Villagers would often offer Christmas goodies to the characters to appease their "wrath."

The modern version of this tradition in Norway is somewhat tamer. To "go julebuk" now refers to Norwegian children dressing up in costumes and going door to door singing Christmas songs in return for goodies. Does that sound anything like a certain popular American holiday? Many Norwegian-Americans have even tried adding a little Norwegian twist to their Christmas caroling to make it a little more reminiscent of "going julebuk"

