

NORTHERN LIGHTS WELCOME PACKET



Home of the NATO Joint Warfare Center and the 426th Air Base Squadron

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BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

D-Number

You should start the process of obtaining a D-number before you move. The D-number is the Norwegian equivalent of a Social Security number. You have to have a D-number to open a bank account and obtaining the local road toll 'brick' for AutoPASS (similar to EZ-Pass). Your sponsor will begin processing it once they have your orders, but keep asking for it as it is critical. All members of your household will receive their own number.

Tourist Passport

While you may have an official passport for work purposes, it is strongly encouraged that all family members have a valid tourist passport. A passport is required for all travel into and out of Norway.

Housing

These agencies have Web sites with properties currently up for rental. Visit Reianes & Sømme (Relocation) www.relocation.no on the Web for more information and links. Also try www.finn.no (similar to Craigslist). To navigate this site, follow these steps:

1. Click on "Eiendom"
2. For rentals, click on "Leiemarkedet"
3. Click on the first line, "til leie" (for rent)
4. Select Stavanger as the area you wish to look in
5. You can then click further in specific neighborhoods
6. Search by area, square meter, price, etc.

Note that rental agencies are typically aware of U.S. military housing allowances and will show you available rentals that fit this price range. To have a good idea of where your home will be in relation to the base use <http://www.gulesider.no/kart> to map your address and use Eikesetveien 29,4032 Stavanger, (the Guard House) as the physical address for the 426th and JWC. Then you can get directions to and from the home. Gulesider is also good to look up personal telephone numbers and business addresses.

When working with a real estate agent, remember to be *very clear about your price range* and where you wish to live. Also, the agents in Norway tend not to be as aggressive in working on your behalf as those in the U.S. Stress the importance to your agent of looking at more than one or two houses in a day. These tips will make your home search more enjoyable and efficient.

Keep in mind that US personnel have the option of buying a home if they so choose. If you are interested in this option, contact 426thth/JA for information on how this works. Note that you cannot officially purchase a house until you have a D-number.

The 426th has the capability to temporarily loan out furniture, if you find a house and want to move in but your furniture has not yet arrived. They also loan out certain large appliances to personnel for the duration of their stay in Norway. These include washing machine, dryer, large freezer, full-size refrigerator, two large transformers (one if unaccompanied), and microwave. Mr. William Kolnes, whose office is on the first floor of the 426b Services building, can help you with these as well. His phone is: 5195 0577.

Common Housing-Related Words

Leie pr maned = rent per month
Kjokken = kitchen
Soverom = bedroom
Enebolig = single family home
Etasje = floor/level
Umoblert = unfurnished

Bilder = photos
Kjellerrom = cellar
Leilighet = apartment
Peis = fireplace
Moblert = furnished
Delvis moblert = partially furnished

Importation of Animals into Norway

Anyone wishing to bring pet animals into Norway should visit the following web page for information: www.mattilsynet.no. The requirements are quite strict, requiring considerable paperwork and medical testing prior to arrival. (If you have moved with pets before to the U.K., or to Hawaii, the procedures are similar). Norway is a rabies-free country. In order to avoid quarantine of your pet, plan ahead! You will need at least four months lead time in order to get your pet into Norway without quarantine. Your local veterinarian should be able to help you navigate the paperwork and requirements. Also, your Sponsor, if he/she does not have pets, can connect you with someone here who has gone through the process. Some families opt to leave their pets with family or friends in the U.S. for the duration of their stay here in Norway, or until they have met the importation requirements.

UPON ARRIVAL IN STAVANGER

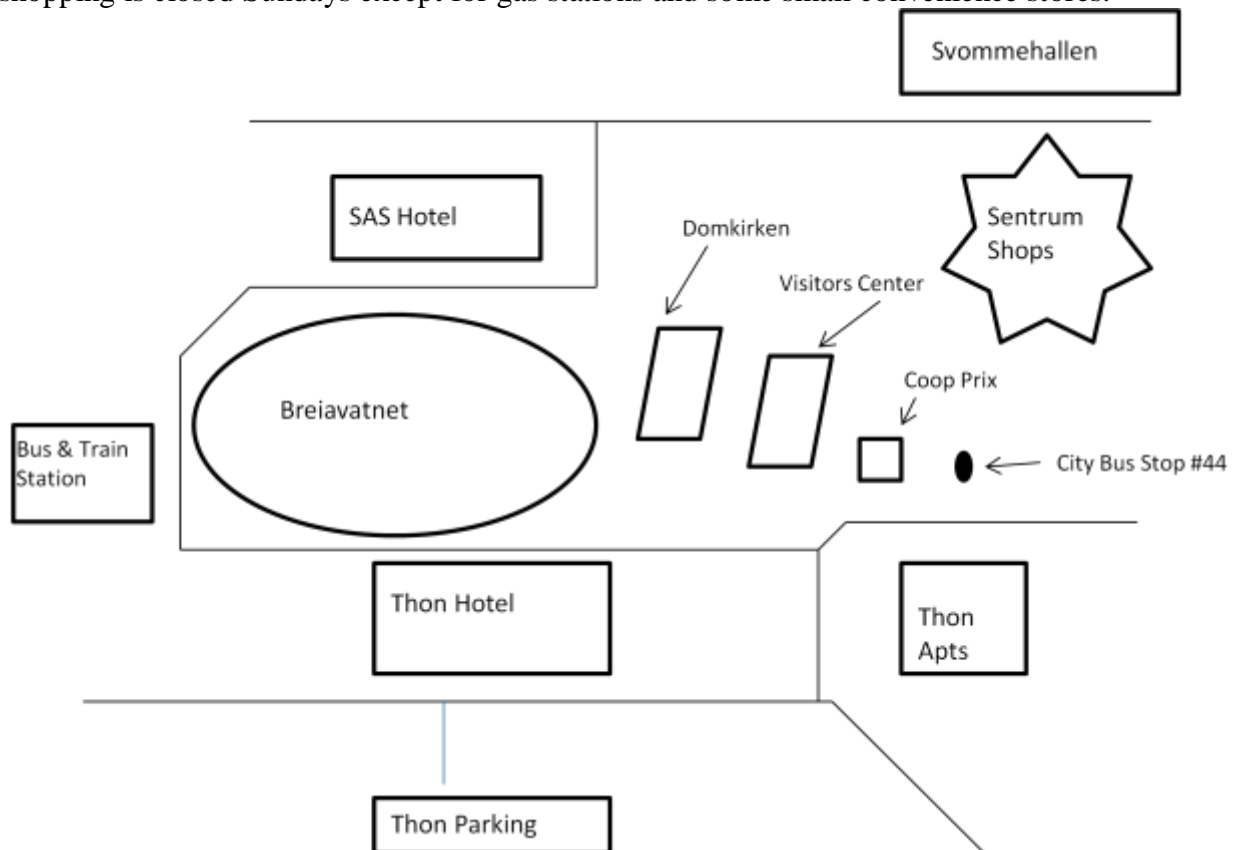
You will likely be staying at the Thon Apartments in Stavanger Sentrum (downtown Stavanger) until you find a permanent home. The downtown provides pretty much everything you will need during your stay there. The Thon Hotel should provide a packet in your room with information in both Norwegian and English to let you know about their facilities. Definitely take advantage of the complimentary breakfast daily. Hours are: M-F 0630-1000, Sat 0700-1100, and Sun 0800-1200. There is a maid service once a week. The elevator should have a schedule of what day the rooms on your floor are cleaned; if not, ask at the front desk. The dryer needs to have its built in water tank emptied (usually upper left corner of dryer) after each use or it won't work well. Garbage disposal is behind the apartments; there are dumpsters out the door on the second floor.

Internet is available via a single computer in the hotel lobby. For an extra (reasonable) fee, you can ask the front desk to make internet available in your room. Also available is free Web access for your laptop at the 426th Community Activity Center on the JATTA compound, and at the Library. The public library downtown also has Internet access.

If you already have a car or choose to rent a car (Community Services on the base has a few available to rent), the hotel does have parking, and a few spots are set aside for NATO personnel. Ask at the front desk and coordinate with the base housing manager, Mr. William Kolnes, on this. For complete information about registering your personal vehicle when it arrives, go to the 426 Services Web site at: www.426services.com/Newcomers.html

The Community Center also has American style washers and dryers available 24 hours for incoming and outprocessing personnel. Bring your own detergent, the door code is 2348. The phone number is 5195-0581

The nearest grocery store to the Thon Apartments is the Coop Prix. It is located on Klubbgata, basically between the apartments and the hotel. Note that you must pay a (very small) fee for plastic grocery bags. There are plenty of restaurants to choose from in the Sentrum Shopping (see downtown map below) area (including McDonalds, Burger King, and Subway), and almost all have menus in English. Most are expensive, but you can find a few that are reasonable. All shopping is closed Sundays except for gas stations and some small convenience stores.



While staying at the hotel, you might want to stop at the Stavanger Visitors' Center. There are pamphlets galore here—local attractions, events, parks, etc., and travel guides for throughout the country. The address for the visitors' center is Domkirkeplassen 3. It is on the plaza right across from the Domkirken (big cathedral). Information also can be found at www.regionstavanger.co .

The Thon Hotel has a small gym that you may use, however you will also receive a free membership to Elixia gyms. To get your membership card, go to the Sports Office in Gausel Magasine on the base to obtain your club card. The Sports Office also can give you a packet with hours and locations of the pools and gyms, plus additional information on discounts at local sports stores, etc. The Elixia Sports Club card that you receive from the base gives you access to the local pool system. You will need to swipe the Elixia card each time you go to the gym (any location). Each facility has exercise classes, cardiovascular equipment, and weightlifting equipment; how much of each of these varies from location to location. They also have child care during certain hours.

Bus Transportation

There is a free NATO bus that picks up in the morning (approximately 0700) and drops off in the afternoon (approximately 1600) at the Thon Hotel. Your sponsor should provide you with a schedule. As of February 2006, the local bus route #1B also goes past the base. This bus leaves from Stop #44 in the Sentrum right across from the Thon Apartments and the store Åhlens. It is 27 NOK each way to get to base (you are traveling in both Zones 1 and 2). Just get on the bus, tell the driver that you are going to NATO, and give him/her 27 NOK. The drivers do not stop at every bus stop, so, until you are familiar with the area, you want to start looking for the base as soon as the driver makes a right-hand turn at a grocery store called ICA in a big brick building. The base is on this street. You'll be on the bus for roughly 25 minutes total. For more information on the local bus system, go to www.kolumbus.no or stop at the central bus station in the Sentrum (on the end of the Breiavatnet). Pick up a Rutehefte for Nord-Jaeren (Routes for North Jaeren). There also are passes available for frequent bus users. Just ask at the bus station.

Once you are settled in your home, you may wish to use the NATO bus transportation for work. Here are the guidelines for using military transport.

Seatbelts:

If the bus you are traveling in is equipped with seat belts you are to wear these for security reasons and also due to Norwegian legislation.

Smoking:

Smoking is forbidden at all times, this applies for all the vehicles provided by the Transportation Branch.

Identification:

All bus passengers must show a valid military ID before they can use military transport.

What to look for? :

When you are waiting for your bus please look for one of these signs on the notice board placed at the top of the front panel of the bus:

1. TRANSPORTATION BRANCH
2. JWC
3. FOHK

In this way you will always be able to know which bus is military or not.

IMMEDIATE CONCERNS

Banking

You can cash US checks for NOK on base at the Cash Cage in the 426th (open M, W, and F from 1000-1400 and on Paydays from 1000-1500) or use a local bank's ATM/Minibank to obtain NOK with your US ATM card. Some communicate in Norwegian; however, there is usually an option for English. Note that there is a form for the military member to fill out during check-in to give dependents check-cashing privileges at the Cash Cage.

Once you are settled, you will need to open an account with a local bank to pay your local bills. Two that are used frequently are SpareBank and DnB NOR. You can also get an ATM card that works with this account; Norwegians use this card frequently as a debit card for purchases. Bill-paying is typically done online now, as is becoming popular in the US. The 426th can provide you with a translated version of the typical Norwegian bill format.

You may receive a bill at some point that cannot be paid online and must be paid at the bank using the giro system; this is similar to a check in the US, but you do not have a personal checkbook, it is all done at the bank. Go to your bank, and ask them to help you pay it using a giro. There is a small fee for processing of the giro.

An issue that most run into is how to get money from their US account to their Norwegian account. Unfortunately, there is no good solution for this at this point. Transfers from the US to a foreign account typically carry a fee, and Norwegians do not use the same system as the US for transfers, i.e., routing and account numbers. Most people withdraw money from their US account via ATM or cashing a check at the Cash Cage, then head to their Norwegian bank or ATM to deposit it. Some actually pay their rent in cash.

Cell Phones

To obtain a cell phone, simply visit a service store, as in the U.S. There are several in the town Sentrum, and also in local shopping malls. If you have a phone from the US, it may be compatible with the Norwegian service by changing out the SIM card, which can be purchased at a local cell phone store. You will receive a Norwegian phone number. Then, as in the US, you just need to find a service plan or purchase minutes that you can add to your phone. Note that the service Telenor can be programmed to communicate with you (for the most part) in English.

If you use a pay-as-you-use phone with Telenor or Netcom you can buy mobile phone time from the local Sparebank mini-banks, at local gas stations and at the Central Cellar on Base.

VAT

Norway is considerably more expensive than the U.S. and most European countries. Make sure you keep receipts from everything you buy that is not consumable. As a NATO member stationed in Norway, you can reclaim the value-added tax (VAT) on many purchases. Fill out the VAT form, which can be found at www.426thservices.com, and submit it to Community Services (there is a small processing fee that must be paid in US dollars). For more information on this, see Ms. C.J. Simonson in 426th Community Services on the base. If you are not sure if you can claim the VAT, just remember this simple rule: if you can take it with you when you move (furniture, clothes, etc.), then you can claim the tax.

ONCE YOU'RE SETTLED

Medical/Emergency Information

- Emergency Phone Numbers:
Police Department 112
Ambulance 113
Fire Department 110
- If you are extremely sick or have an accident that needs medical attention after hours you can visit the acute care clinic (Legevakt). You'll need to coordinate your visit with the 426th Medical Aid Station (office: 5195-0563, mobile: 9092-8030) or get a Guarantee of Payment through Tricare International SOS toll free: 800-13717. Use gulesider.no to map the address: Armauer Hansens vei 30, 4011 Stavanger, phone: 5151 0202.
- Stavanger University Hospital 51519216
- For regular doctor appointments, you will visit the Forus Akutten office. Our Medical Aid Station will help you obtain an appointment. For more information about the doctor's office, visit www.forusakutten.no/. Two locations are available:

Forus (near Ikea), Luramyrvæien 79, 4313 Sandnes
Stavanger Sentrum, Olav Vs gt 11, 4005 Stavanger

There are a number of pharmacies in the area, and they are known as “Apotek.” If you need to fill a prescription, any of the local Apoteks will be able to help you. There is a late-opening apotek in Stavanger, which is open until 2300 hrs. The address and telephone number is:

VITUS Apotek Løven
Olav Vs Gate 11
4005 Stavanger
Tel: 5191 0880

Trash & Recycling

You should get a trash and recycling calendar from your landlord when you move in, but if you need a new one after the New Year go to your kommune web page as follows:

For Sola go to: <http://www.sola.kommune.no/> then select: Nettstedskart (listings) then Tjenester (Services), then Kommunalteknikk (Technical Services), then Tommelkalender .pdf kopier gate overskit (Trash Calendar, pdf version, street overview). Look up your street name in the list at the bottom to find your rute (route) and then select the proper calendar for your route.

For Sandnes: cut and paste this link into your browser.

<http://www.sandnes.kommune.no/Fillager/Internett/resultatenheter/kommunalteknikk/tommelkalender.pdf>

For Stavanger: You may need to call #04005 to find out what route you are. Then cut and paste this link and print your calendar:

<http://www.stavanger.kommune.no/eservices/tjenester.nsf/svgrenovasjon!ReadForm&Start=1&Count=1000&Expand=7>.

Education

Most families choose to send their children to the International School of Stavanger (www.isstavanger.no) but several families each year either homeschool their children, or they attend the local Norwegian school. If you choose to homeschool, the military will reimburse you for your homeschooling materials since there is no DOD school here. To find more info about your local Norwegian school see your kommune homepage. All educational questions and choices should be coordinated with the 426th Commander’s Administrative Specialist. There are also two other English speaking pre-schools: Children’s House (www.the-childrens-house.no) and the British International School (www.biss.no).

[English-speaking Churches & other faith group contacts in the Stavanger area](#)

St. Svithuns Roman Catholic Church

Father Rolf Bowitz

Address: St. Svithuns gate 8, 4005 Stavanger, Norway

Office Phone: 51 51 70 20

E-mail: stavanger@katolsk.no

Office hours: Monday-Friday 09.00 - 14.00.

www.stavanger.katolsk.no/index_english.htm

North Sea Baptist Church

Pastor David Fresch

Address: Adventist Kirke (Seventh Day Adventist Church) Timoteiveien 13, Mariero, Stavanger

Office Phone: 92 82 63 83

E-mail: david.fresch@nsbc.no

www.nsb.no

Bethel Anglican Episcopal Church, Stavanger

Reverend Peter Hogarth

Address: Løkkeveien 59 (Stavanger)

Office Phone: 51 55 54 88

E-mail: revpastorpete@yahoo.co.uk

www.stavangeranglicans.net

Stavanger International Church

Rune Østerberg (Interim Pastor)

Address: Misjonsmarka 1 (Stavanger)

Office Phone: 51 51 61 12

E-mail: office@sic.no

www.sic.no

Galatia Pentecostal Church (Tau)

Pastor Sam Speer

Address: Bjørheimsbygd (Tau)

Office Phone: 51 74 92 44

E-mail: sspeer@online.no

Faith Baptist Church

Pastor James Turpin

Address: Ullandhaug Veien #133, 4021 Stavanger

Home Phone: 51 42 15 78

E-mail: pastor@fbcestavanger.com

www.fbcestavanger.com

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Branch President: Stian Sande
Address: Tonasveien 2, Stavanger
Home Phone: 51 88 08 07
E-mail: stiansande@gmail.com

Stavanger Islamic Mosque

Address: Store Skippergate 4, 4017 Stavanger
www.mosquenorway.com

BASE / COMPOUND INFORMATION

The first time you enter the base, you will need to be escorted and show some form of identification with photo. Then, your sponsor will show you where to obtain your base and NATO identification cards (two different offices). Subsequently, use your base identification card to enter the base. Note that your NATO identification card has a 4-digit number that you will use at the Shoppette and Central Cellar to keep track of rationed items (cigarettes, wine, and spirits).

Post Office

Your sponsor should already have informed the post office of your arrival and set up a box for you. Stop over there, and pick up two mailbox keys. The post office service window is open during the week, except holidays (US and Norwegian). You can pick up mail that fits in your box anytime, the door code is 1824. Pay with US dollars or credit card here.

AAFES Shoppette

The AAFES Shoppette provides frozen foods, dry goods, cleaning products, electronics, cards, seasonal items, beer, wine, and Norwegian souvenirs. *With the exception of dairy items, all fresh foods (vegetables, meats) must be purchased on the economy.* There also is a video rental section. The Shoppette can place orders on some food items and larger items such as baby furniture, TVs, etc. The BX is closed on Sundays. Pay with NOK, US dollars, or credit card here. The phone number is 5157-0992.

While many things can be bought at the Shoppette or on the economy, there are a few things you may wish to ship with your household goods, such as replacement car filters and wiper blades, prescription pet foods, all-weather/snow tires, etc. Your sponsor can find out if specific items are available locally; if not you can ship ahead, or easily buy items online.

Central Cellar/NATO (Duty-Free) Store

The International Welfare Fund operates a duty-free store for NATO personnel in the JWC complex. This store, commonly referred to as the Central Cellar, offers a limited selection of meats, frozen foods, candies, make-up, and dry goods. It also is one of the best sources for Norwegian gifts including glass, trolls, and pewter. It sells an exceptional and inexpensive selection of alcohol products. Also, they sell some clothing and shoes by Regatta and Norwegian sweaters by Dale, usually by order, just ask for a catalog. Finally, they have a send-out dry cleaning service available. The Central Cellar opens at 1100 during the week and is open a few hours on Saturdays. Pay with NOK or credit card here. The phone number is 5134-2290.

Thrift Shop

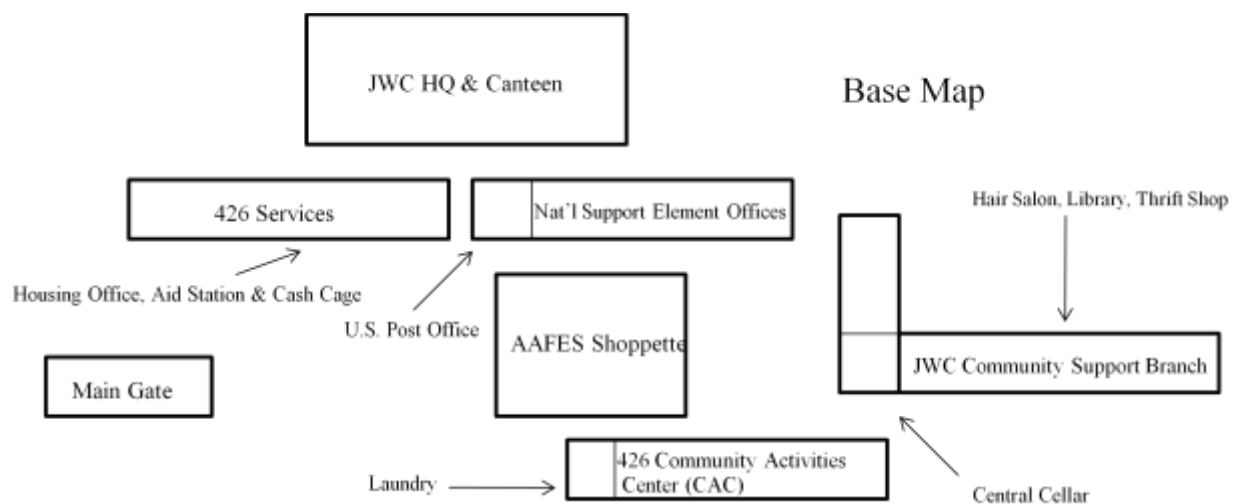
The JWC Thrift Shop is a great place to find incredible bargains. It sells used items such as mens', womens', kids', and baby clothes; toys; sports equipment; ornaments; books; electronics; and a lot more. The shop is located in the Gausel Magasine on the base. It is only open Thursdays 11-14:00. The phone number is 5134-2287.

Library

Located in the Gausel Magasine, the library has a nice selection of books and movies for borrowing. They are also able to order selections via Interlibrary Loan upon request. The phone number is 5134-2285.

426 Community Center

The Community Center offers a wide range of assistance. See www.426thservices.com. They have items for rent including sports equipment, camping equipment, electronics, vehicles, and heavy-duty cleaning equipment. They keep two computers online for anyone's use plus wireless web ability for your laptop. There is a party room that can be reserved and used free of charge, including dishes, linens, full kitchen, grills, etc. This is also where VAT forms are submitted. Community Services is open M-F 0900-1630. You can get on their "Activities & Happenings" weekly email update by giving your email address to one of the staff.



LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Too many to describe here, the activities in the region are multiple. From indoor tennis and aerobics classes, to hiking and boating, virtually every leisure and sporting activity is accessible. You will receive a free membership to the local gym, Elixia, which has several convenient locations in the area. There also is a small gym located on the Base. Here are a few Web links for further local information to get you started:

Swimming: www.svomming.com

Everything local: www.stavangertravel.com

Outdoor/sporting activities: www.regionstavanger.com

SPOUSE ORGANIZATIONS

Northern Lights

Northern Lights is a purely **social** group comprised of spouses of American active duty members and civilian contractors. As a spouse, you are automatically a part of this group, and will be added to the membership roster. The Northern Lights does not have a board of directors, has no membership fees, does not do any fundraising, etc. It is solely for fun. We meet once a month at a different person's house, or occasionally on Base. Gatherings are very informal and focus on some type of social event, such as Bunco or simply a dinner at another member's home. Northern Lights also is an information-sharing group. Members keep in touch usually via e-mail and pass on useful advice or information to make our lives here easier and more enjoyable.

Jatta International Women's Club (JIWC)

The JIWC is the official Joint Warfare Center (JWC) women's club. It consists of ladies of all nationalities that are stationed here in Stavanger either as military members or spouses of military members, as well as civilian contractors. The JIWC has a yearly membership fee (250 NOK) and a board of officers, which includes a representative from each country.

Once a month during the year (September – May), a different country hosts a JIWC meeting. These are primarily social events, each with a different and interesting theme, as each country infuses their culture into the event. In addition, smaller special-interest groups focus on particular activities, such as a travel group and a walking club. The JIWC publishes a monthly newsletter, distributed via email, with information on upcoming events, contact information, and any news from the club or the activity groups.

Internet Sites for Further Reference

426 Services: www.426services.com

Joint Warfare Centre: www.jwc.nato.int/

Local weather: www.yr.no/place/Norway/Rogaland/Stavanger/Stavanger/

Movie times/tickets: www.filmweb.no/kino1/

Local medical clinic (Forus Akutten): www.forusakutten.no/index.cfm?id=212218

All things Stavanger (travel, trips, resources): www.stavangertravel.com/index.cfm

Airport departure & arrival notice board: www.avinor.no/en/airport/stavanger

Local news in English: <http://theforeigner.no/pages/news/>

Elixia Gym: www.elixia.no/club.aspx?id=4535811