

Dear friends all over the world,

When the winter darkness comes and we Swedes hang Advent stars in the windows I put "Writing The Christmas Letter" in my calendar since it is an important part of my holiday preparations. It gives me a moment to reflect upon our lives and what happened during the past year, as well as being our way of keeping in touch with many friends around the world.

Some years it feels like we just keep doing the same things over and over again, and maybe that's true - many things are unchanged e.g. we are both still working at Danderyd hospital, for better or worse. The reorganization of my department has been tiresome and, as in many other places nowadays, money and budget seems to be more important than having good quality in care for patients. But I keep on doing many other things! I still work with the IT-people, trying to improve our electronic patient records, an almost hopeless but important job. I am also tutoring a PhD-student and we managed to publish an article this month in an excellent journal so I enjoy doing a little bit of research again. The small business that Anders and I started last year (LHHL Communication) made a small profit during its first year mainly because I've been giving lots of lectures and courses, taking time off from the hospital. My "scariest performance" was in a huge conference hall in Amsterdam this fall (1800 people in the audience), as I was one of the speakers at a pre-symposium of the EASD (European Association for the Study of Diabetes). My talk was very well received and it was interesting and fun to be a "VIP-person" of a pharmaceutical company for a couple of days. But it takes a lot of time and energy to be a good speaker and, since seeing patients regularly gives me an important input that I use in my lectures, quitting my job at the hospital doesn't seem like an option, at least not yet. Anders also gives a few lectures but he spends more time bedside teaching the medical students in our hospital, often being acknowledged as a great teacher. Anders still sings in Mikaeli Chamber Choir (www.mikaeli.se, click English and see a photo of Anders!) as well as being a devoted secretary of the choir. My main hobby continues to be genealogical research and when I have time, I help other people searching their roots as a part of our business. This spring Anders and I offered a half-day course for some colleagues entitled "How to start doing genealogy", lots of fun. We also started a home page but there is no English version yet - if you want to check it out anyway the address is: www.lhhl.se. I hope that we'll have time to update it and make an English version in January.

Our vacations/travels and other highlights this year: In **January** we had a relaxing week with a bit of skiing in Åre. It was very dark and cold but nice and I had time to read lots of books. In **March** we went up north again but this time with my whole family (mother, sister and brother with their families) to celebrate my mother's 75th birthday. We stayed in a nice hotel over the weekend and enjoyed some great dinners together before we moved to our small place for a week of skiing. My brother, who usually lives in Cape Town, South Africa, and his band were playing at the "After Ski" in one of the old ski hotels so we enjoyed seeing him and his family. In **April** Anders and I spent a fabulous "gourmet weekend" at a small hotel in Dale-Carlia and on **May 29** we celebrated our Silver 25th wedding anniversary! We invited Anna, Ida and Eva with boyfriends to stay in a beautiful old hotel with us. In **June** Anders traveled with his choir to Germany on a concert tour so we didn't have time to go to Crete this spring. One of the highlights this year was our vacation in **July**! My father's 1st cousin from California, Donald Landstedt, who never visited Sweden, came for a 2-week visit bringing his son, i.e. my 2nd cousin Jim, Jim's lovely wife Debbie and two of Jim's daughters, Teale and Demi. They stayed with us and we had a great time together, enjoying each other's company a lot. Besides sightseeing Stockholm and parts of northern Sweden we had two big family gatherings, one at our house in Sollentuna (about 25 Landstedt relatives) and one in Byske, 500 miles north of Stockholm, with more than 60 relatives joining us. A fantastic and moving experience in many ways! In **August** Anders and I decided we needed some sun (the weather in Sweden was quite bad this summer) so we went to Croatia, an interesting and sunny country along the Adriatic Sea, across from Italy. We had two relaxing weeks, spending time on the beach, reading books or listening to our iPod's (I use mine for listening to my favorite radio programs as podcasts). We also spent a couple of days driving around the northern parts of this beautiful country. Coming home, we had visitors from the US again, an old Glee Club-friend from Mount Holyoke College, Andrea Taber, with her family from NYC. They stayed in Stockholm but we had a nice family dinner on our new veranda in Norrsviken. Lots of fun and good talks!

The fall has been very hectic, lots of lectures/lots of work but in **October** we had another two weeks off (we work a lot of weekends/nights in the hospital to "pay" for those weeks off...) and we drove north again, spending a couple of days reading books in Åre, moving on to the genealogical research center for five days of exciting "digging in the archives". Next year we have more adventurous plans since we are going to Nepal in March 2008 with a group of colleagues to hike part of the Jomson Trek, which will be a very exciting trip!

A short "daughter update": **Anna**, 26, graduated in June and is now a licensed speech therapist and she really likes her job so far. This fall she has worked with dyslexic kids but in January she will start working with "voice patients" in a private clinic. Anna moved back to her old 1-bedroom apt. in Stockholm, switching apartments with Ida, and she recently started dating a new boyfriend, a guitarist... (I wonder why our daughters all seem to fall for men playing string instruments??) **Ida**, 23, and her Svante (a jazz bassist), now live together in Anna's old 3-room apt. south of Stockholm, being very happy together. Ida is in her 6th semester at the Karolinska Institute, studying Internal Medicine. She joined me to do the rounds one weekend, great fun to have a daughter as an "apprentice"! **Eva**, 21 today (!), started studying mathematics this fall in a university program to become a meteorologist doing climate research. It's been very hard work but she seems to like it and she obviously has a talent for math. Eva still lives together with her Carl who has abandoned his plans to become a professional guitarist and now tries hard to get in to Medical school (but it is very difficult).

Well, I hope You feel updated and not too bored with "The Adventures of Anders and Lena" (part 26 or 27?). And - as always we hope and wish that You all have a great and relaxing holiday with family and friends!

From All of Us to All of You - A Very Merry Christmas!