

To all our friends around the world,

Time flies, another year has passed so I sit down to give you an update of what's been going on in the Hallin family 2011. Around this time last year I had started my three months leave from the hospital which is in contrast to this fall when I've been working a lot, being on-call at least once a week. My ambition was to write this around Lucia day (Dec.13) but now I just pray you'll get it before New Year's eve... 2011 has given us many new experiences, mostly nice ones, so here we go!

Our trips have been really fantastic this year! As usual we spent two weeks (in January and March) in **Åre/Tegefjäll**, our place up north. I now hesitate to call it "skiing" vacations since we spend more time relaxing and reading in our cabin than we go skiing, especially as the weather wasn't so good this year. In February we went to **Tanzania** and **Kenya**, joining two groups with Intrepid travel. The first was "original style", traveling from Nairobi to Serengeti and Ngorongoro, having some amazing safari experiences e.g. we saw cheetahs hunting, had a huge old elephant male coming up real close to our jeep and a group of lions resting in the shadow of our jeep. We were nine people in the group, staying in tents that were quite comfortable (put up by the crew) and had nice, "home-cooked" food. After returning to Nairobi we joined a "basix style" trip, thinking we would be the oldest in the group but not so, since the span was 18 to 72! We learned how to put up and take down our (small) tents ourselves and helped with the chores according to a daily roster. Our guide was great - we visited an orphanage, took a canoe trip on Lake Naivasha, camped outside a Masai village, being guarded by their warriors during the night. We also did some more game drives in Masai Mara and got stuck in the mud, quite adventurous! Our weeks in Africa were truly incredible and, much to my own surprise, I enjoyed staying in the tents! However, in July we decided to try a more comfortable type of traveling (we're getting older) so we took a so-called "comfort" trip to **Turkey**, arranged by GAP (Great Adventures People). We took a night train from Istanbul to Ankara and then traveled with our own bus through the central parts of Turkey and Cappadocia, down to the coast, having a couple of relaxing days and boat tours before revisiting Pammukale and Ephesus (that we saw last summer), then flying back to Istanbul. We were lucky to have a great guide, Derya, who spoke perfect English and taught us lots about her country, its history, politics and culture. I've also done quite a few trips without Anders - it's hard for him to take time off nowadays (new job, see below!). In June I went with our dear friends Betty and John Park from Wisconsin to Gotland, a beautiful island in the Baltic sea and it's medieval city, Visby. In October Ida and I visited the Landstedt's in **San Diego**, staying and having a fantastic time with my 2nd cousin Sandy, meeting of our Californian family and celebrating the wedding between Teale Landstedt and her Justin. Such a beautiful day it was and so much fun! I've also had work-related trips, two short (Toronto and Barcelona) and two longer to big diabetes conferences (but not presenting i.e. less stressful), the EASD in Lisbon and IDF in Dubai. It is interesting to see new places and a nice change from working at the hospital, but it doesn't really feel like a vacation.

So, what's new about our jobs? Anders finally made the change he's been talking about so in March he left the hospital with the on-call nights and weekends and he is now working only weekdays in a clinic where he's the only specialist in urology. He sees outpatients four days of the week and performs small surgical procedures one day. He likes it so far and feels a lot more relaxed about his job - the only drawback is that it's a bit harder for him to take time off for longer trips. My job situation at Danderyd hospital have become more and more stressful, although a change of management in the beginning of the year was great and has made me stay on (so far). One problem is being on-call once a week in a situation when we have too few beds and the number of patients seeking care in the ER is constantly increasing and often exceeds what I think we can safely handle. Every time I am on-call it makes me wonder if I really should continue doing this. But I still really enjoy seeing my diabetes patients, if I only could do that I would be happy to stay. We'll see what happens...

This year's big family event, **Eva & Carl's wedding**, was to take place on June 18 and I had taken time off a week before to help with the preparations for the big dinner party the same evening. However, it turned out to be an unusual week for all of us since Carl had an accident on June 11 when his engagement ring got stuck on a nail and completely tore off half of his left ring finger. He was hospitalized a whole week after 12 hours of surgery to reattach the finger so we decided to cancel the party. But all is well that ends well! Carl was released the night before the wedding and we had the most beautiful and touching ceremony - albeit with the groom's left hand in a bandage - and a reception with champagne outside the medieval church where Anders and I also were married almost 30 years ago. We are now planning a big dinner party in April 2012, celebrating Eva and Carl's 10 years of being a couple! That was this year's dramatic family event!

Anna threw a big party for her 30th birthday in Stockholm before leaving for NYC. She continues her PhD studies at NYU and had a very busy fall with courses and research, presenting data at a conference in San Diego this fall. **Ida** and Svante moved to an apartment in Stockholm city and Ida just started her internship at a hospital in walking distance from their new home. They are expecting their first baby in May so we are becoming grandparents, exciting! **Eva** had a very busy schedule this fall and has just decided on a project for her Master's exam in meteorology 2012. She will use data from an Arctic expedition for environmental studies, sounds very interesting and important. And Carl, after quite a long "finger rehab", is now employed and works as a combined physiotherapist and activity coach for people in nursing homes.

Our hobbies are still the same. I continue to do genealogy since its a great way to relax and focus on something completely different from my job, I sometimes even do family trees for other people. This fall I've studied at Uppsala University, enrolled in a course called "Swedish history for genealogists", very interesting although I haven't had time to read as much as I wanted. However, choir singing is still the main hobby for our family. Anders has "downgraded" a bit and now sings in a choir in our next-door church, very convenient. This year we are also planning to form a family choir and sing on Christmas Eve at one of the old people's homes where Carl works, will be great fun and a good start of the holidays!

Well, it's time to end the 2011 chapter of the ongoing "Hallin story" here. And as usual - we want to say...

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

Eva & Anders