



Golden, Januar 2009

Hi there,

in the following a retrospective view on another turbulent year. No marriages and births to announce, but we still had quite some movement that was not really planned. In the meantime we accepted the prospect of a few more years full of turbulences, especially 2009. But let's start in the beginning.



Eva started working again shortly after Nina, Ecki, Björn Erik und Lars Arvid left in January and hence Benjamin began Kindercare. He settled very quickly and loves the action among so many kids.

We started our year by writing and sending countless applications for Reinhard for jobs in Switzerland and Germany, but since previous years were not really crowned with success in this respect we tried not to get up our hopes. Reinhard traveled to Japan for a week of workshop in mid-February, Eva and the boys were nervous to be on their own for the first time, but survived without any problems.

Despite being so busy we finally hit the slopes again, Loveland is only 45 Minutes away, the kids were in daycare and we were pretty nervous after several years of abstinence... It was fun! Benjamin learned to sit and to crawl in the space of a week and Samuel decided that he absolutely adores his green t-shirt and even mentioned it in his prayers in the evening. Besides that he was devastated when he realized that his dad had a beard and he didn't. "Mama beard, too?" Nooooo! And we celebrated his second birthday – with Kyra naturally!





Reinhard's Japan trip turned out not to be his last, some of his applications were successful and he was invited for three interviews, travel-date juggling on the highest level! And so he interviewed in April in Hamburg and in May in Dortmund and Zurich. These were not the only interviews, the Walliser Bote (local paper in the Valais) got wind of Reinhard's Nobel prize and he was interviewed by email for the WB extra (biweekly supplement). Eva has the impression to be married to a celebrity...

Without further delay Benjamin learned to stand right away and Samuel was in seventh heaven from mid April to the end of May, since Kyra had several sleepovers with us before and while her little sister Lilly was born. Eva had to fight back a few tears when Samuel got his first hair cut and was officially no baby anymore.



After the stressful spring we were glad to fly to Germany and Switzerland in mid June for our summer vacation. We arrived in time for Opa's 80th birthday and enjoyed Denkingen for two weeks. On June 28th we welcomed the Swiss delegation for Benjamin's christening. Everybody was spoiled with good weather and good food (and a flat lawn). The priest had to work hard to keep Benjamin in check.

On the Monday after the christening we left Denkingen in direction of the Valais, where we were also welcomed with good food (the weather was not always optimal) and a spectacular excursion to see the Matterhorn! After ten days Reinhard "had" to leave for Singapore for a conference and Eva and the boys stayed in Denkingen. Reinhard finally made it back after several difficulties and our stay in Europe was unfortunately already over. Benjamin decided just before leaving that he could walk...





We were barely back from our vacation when the “Joint Statistical Meetings” began in Denver, where more or less all statisticians of the US gather to discuss unbelievably exciting things... Use at your own risk! We invited all statistician-friends who are scattered over the US for a “geek” party and Samuel was allowed to stay up until the end!

Our next event was Benni’s first birthday, which we duly celebrated with Legos and a visit to Bumble Bounce’s House of Bounce. Shortly afterwards Benni started to build Lego towers, Reinhard and Samuel almost burst with pride! Samuel on his part changed to “I” when referring to himself (both in English and German), when we told him that the word “nein” didn’t exist for him, he said “no” and sometimes he said totally seriously “Oh my goodness”. Besides he became a very loud singer, preferably at breakfast. Benni still limited his talking to the essential: “Brrrr” when he played with cars and trucks.

In September we treated ourselves to a little trip to Colorado’s West to see the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. Samuel became a vacation enthusiast, he thanked for not going home on the first evening in our vacation home. We also had the occasion to pop a bottle of Champagne, since the council of the faculty of Science at the University of Zurich finally confirmed what we knew unofficially since May: Reinhard has been offered the job at the University of Zurich! Hooray!



With the news that we could finally go home to Switzerland we suddenly became excitedly active: there were still so many things to see and do. So we drove to Yellowstone for a long weekend, unfortunately



hitting the center of a winter storm in Wyoming. Although our plans couldn’t be realized letter by letter, we saw a ton of amazing things and the kids had a blast. Tears came only when we set out to go home again...





In October we listened a last time to the bugling Elks in Rocky Mountain National Park and experienced Halloween with the kids, Samuel went trick or treat with Kyra and had a blast. He even tried some of the candy... for a few seconds... His newest concern was that his Dad has blue eyes and he unfortunately doesn't...



For Thanksgiving we made another little trip, this time to Santa Fe, New Mexico, but hit bad weather again. That didn't prevent us from discovering Bandelier National Monument, Georgia O'Keeffe and the fabulous landscape of Northern New Mexico. Our holiday season was extremely hectic, Reinhard had to go to Zurich once again to negotiate about conditions of his contract. Lufthansa named him frequent flyer in the meantime... He came back a few days before Christmas with a truckload full of presents for the boys.

Reinhard's host family from his high school days in Iowa spent Christmas in Steamboat Springs and we spontaneously decided to visit them. Again a winter storm, how could it have been different, but this time Benni was sick on top of that and Reinhard had to spend the night in the emergency room with him. We could go home in the morning (with oxygen), but unfortunately only to go to the emergency room in Denver, this time just until 11:30pm. Long story short (and never ask Reinhard for the long version after he has had a few drinks), Benni had strep and influenza. Christmas was hence not really as planned. Samuel helped all of us to open all of us to open our presents nevertheless, Benni only wanted to open one present and then play with it... He is in the meantime dancing and able to say "woof" whenever he sees a dog and (almost) "truck" whenever he sees a slightly large vehicle. No consistent "Mama" or "Papa" yet, hmmm...



We finished our year together with the Warnekes, Kyra and Samuel couldn't hardly believe their luck that they could stay up so long and play, but almost better was the "kids wine" (Martinelli). We experienced the end of the year with mixed feelings, although we are very happy that we can soon return home, we are also sad to say good-bye to Colorado and the people here. For that we have a little more than 3 months: we booked our flight for April 29th... until then you can find us tangled in our now customary turbulences and after that we hope to see you in Zurich some day!

**Benjamin, Samuel, Eva & Reinhard**

