

ANNA AND THE KING

OR,

THE DAVISES GO TO STOCKHOLM FOR THE  
NOBEL PRIZE  
DECEMBER 5-14, 2002

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**Thursday, December 5:** We treated ourselves to some extra sleep and got up at 7:00 a.m. Roger made us a special breakfast of bacon and eggs on rolls. We took care of some last-minute preparations, then left home at 10:00 a.m. to drive to Roger's parents' home in Blue Point. Roger's sister Martha, her husband Roger Kumler, and their children Leslie and Katie were there, having driven down from Rochester yesterday. The limousine (bus, actually) arrived at the house at 11:00 and loaded all eleven of us and our luggage on board. We departed from Blue Point at 11:15 a.m. during the snowstorm.

We drove to Newark Airport, taking three and a half hours to do so. We missed one of the exits because it was poorly marked and snow-covered. We had to turn around, get on the turnpike again, and head north to get to the airport.

We were all inside the airport and all checked in by 3:15 p.m. We passed through security, where they confiscated Ray's Swiss Army knife, and went to gate 66. Anna and Ray had business class tickets, and that got them special privileges on Scandinavian Air (SAS). We were all invited to the SAS lounge, where we were treated to some free food (cheese and crackers, sliced veggies) and drinks (beer, soda, mineral water from Norway). Buying expensive tickets really pays off.

Ray's colleague Ken Lande from the University of Pennsylvania and his wife Gabriella joined us there, and were on our flight to Stockholm. The flight from St. Louis that Roger's sister Nancy, her husband George, and their children Anna, Marian, Ellen and Karl were on was delayed due to the snow, so they missed our outgoing flight. They were "missing in action" for another day.

Our 5:45 p.m. flight was delayed for the removal of a bag that did not match a passenger on the list (a good thing, I think) and for a 20-minute de-icing of the plane (another good thing). We took off about one hour late, with absolutely no problems. The runways were being kept clear of the eight inches of snow that eventually covered the ground everywhere else.

We were soon thereafter treated to a drink and dinner (a garden salad with a slice of salmon; a small block of cheese; manicotti with sauce; spinach; melon; and choice of wines, coffee and tea). After-dinner drinks were offered, too. If this is Swedish

food, I am going to have a good time for the next week and a half.

Our flight is due to take us to Stockholm in 7 hours. With the six-hour time difference, we will be there at 7:45 a.m. We cruised at 36,000 feet and made good 615 mph over the ground. The outside temperature was 67 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. What a way to travel – fast and warm! We were then given packets containing eyeshades, earplugs, toothbrush and toothpaste – all critical equipment on an overnight flight. One of the flight attendants announced that we had three Nobel Prize winners on our flight – one in physics, one in economics, and one in physiology or medicine. (All announcements were made first in Swedish, then in English. I was always impatient for the translation.) We could not see the Nobel laureates, though. We were in the economy class, and they were all in business class. We were very proud of them nonetheless.

I caught a four-hour nap on the plane, and woke up when they served breakfast. It was 1:00 a.m. New York time, but we would be landing soon, so it was time to eat and start our new day in the Old World. We had ham and cheese with lettuce; a roll, butter and jelly; water, orange juice; and yogurt.

**Friday, December 6:** Our flight landed on time – 7:47 a.m. As we were walking towards the baggage claim area, who should come up behind us but Roger's brother Andy and his wife Susan, who had just flown in from Chicago! I was amazed at the timing of their arrival.

Anna and Ray were met at the door of the plane by people from the Nobel Committee, who then whisked them away to customs, then into a limousine and to the hotel. The rest of us collected our luggage. Liz and I went to the ladies' room, where I noticed the walls went all the way down to the floor, the door was solid, and the lock on the door closed with a real solid "click." Very comforting. There was also a sink and soap inside each stall, as well as sinks, soap and paper towels outside the stalls, similar to our rest rooms. Very convenient.

Three men in long black wool coats greeted us at the gate. They looked like suspicious characters, but they held Nobel signs that said, "Davis Family," and offered us rides to the hotel, so we accepted. We walked outside, where I noticed that all the cars were

VWs, Volvos and Mercedes. The men loaded all our luggage into their three vehicles and drove us the 45 km to the center of Stockholm. They drove fast and they followed the cars in front of them very closely. That made me nervous.

On the way, we noticed that the Sun was about to rise. We asked the driver about the length of day here during this time of year, and he told us the Sun rises at about 8:30 a.m. and sets at 2:30 p.m. No wonder the Swedes love to decorate their windows with lots of Christmas lights.

We arrived at the Grand Hôtel, the best in Sweden, at 8:30 a.m. The doorman removed our luggage and brought it inside until such time as we could check in, which would be after noon. We met Agneta Casell, Ray and Anna's attaché from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Her job is to look after us while we are in Stockholm, but particularly to take care of Anna and Ray, and get them to their appointments on time.

Roger's brother Alan, his wife Anne, and their children Alex and Mara were there in the hotel, having arrived the day before we did. Anne came down to greet us. All our rooms are on the fifth floor, which is higher than the fifth floor in the United States. The lobby level is not numbered, but the second story up is numbered "1." So we were really on the sixth floor, American style.

We left our luggage in care of the hotel and went up to check out Alan and Anne's room. The "lift," or elevator, was kind of strange. You have to pull the door open and get into the elevator car. If you don't open the door, the lift leaves without you. This happened to me twice. While going up, we saw the inside of the elevator shaft going by. You could touch it (and, presumably, get your hands caught between it and the floor of the elevator. Sweden is not idiot-proof.). When you get to your floor, you must push the door open and exit. I spent many seconds waiting for the door to open by itself. Old habits die hard.

We looked out Alan and Anne's window at the city, which has no skyscrapers, and enjoyed the view of old five-story buildings. We all relaxed for a while, and wondered when Nancy and her family would arrive. Then we went to visit Anna and Ray in their "Nobel suite" (*their* room was ready for them!) and checked out their view. Their room was on the front of the hotel (see photo), facing south, overlooking the road in front of the hotel, the river, and the Royal Palace and Parliament building beyond. I couldn't wait to see what our room would overlook.

At about 11:00 a.m. we decided to go outside and look for a place to eat lunch. We all bundled up in what we had brought with us on the plane (no hats -

we had no hotel room and no access to our luggage yet) and walked around within several blocks of the hotel. One thing I noticed about these otherwise very polite Swedes – they bump into people and push their way through crowds without so much as an "excuse me." I thought they were rude, but hey - that's what they do here.

They also have audible clicks at the red lights at the crosswalks. When the clicks go fast, the light is green. We figured this was to help sight-impaired people cross the city streets.

Some eating places we found were too expensive; some had food that was too heavy for lunch. Finally, we found a café (*The Coffee Cup*) and had a light lunch. Back at the hotel, we checked in for real. Our luggage was in our room, which overlooked an office building. If we leaned out the window really far, we could catch a glimpse of the harbor. Roger and Liz and the boys took a rest while I unpacked and wrote out a few post cards. At 4:00 p.m. I felt the need for a nap, so I snoozed for 45 minutes.

The hotel room was very nice. I especially liked the heated marble floors in the bathroom and the cold, clean-tasting tap water that we got right out of the faucets.

At 5:00 p.m., there was a get-together upstairs in the hotel for the Nobel laureates, families and friends to meet each other. Drinks – beer, wine, fizz water – and hors d'oeuvres were served. I had a Swedish beer. It was pretty good. That sort of set the pattern for the week, since I cannot drink fizz water.

We were brought into an auditorium and shown a film from a past Nobel Prize Awards Ceremony. They wanted to teach us how to behave at the ceremony and at the banquet. Award recipients are not supposed to turn their backs on the King; people are not supposed to clink their glasses when they toast with a drink – you just look at the person next to you, nod your head, and raise your eyebrows. Repeat with the person on your other side. Culture shock.

Clinking glasses began as a way of discreetly sloshing your drink into another person's drink. If he has poisoned it, he will also get the poison. I guess the Swedes never used poison to kill anybody. Either that, or they *always* used poison to kill people.

After that, we had dinner with Andy and Susan at a Swedish restaurant that was located in an old building's wine cellar. The restaurant was called "The Five Houses." Roger had reindeer; I had char (fish); Jimmy and Liz had duck. Most restaurants have smoking sections and nonsmoking sections, but there are no dividers between the two. This place was so smoky that I could not wait for Susan to finish her last course. Instead, Liz, Mike and I walked back to the hotel by ourselves. As we passed the Royal Palace, we noticed the guards pacing back and

forth in front of it. Each carried a rifle with a bayonet attached. They looked pretty serious.

We got to bed at 9:30 and got a good night's rest.

**Saturday, December 7:** Today we all slept from 10:30 p.m. until 9:30 a.m. Can you say, "jet lag?" We got a buffet breakfast downstairs in the hotel, which was included in the room price. What a spread they had there every morning! You can start out with oatmeal or semolina with maple syrup, and then get strawberries, muskmelon or honeydew melon. Fish is at every meal, as well as cold cuts and cheese. Hot foods included beans, sausages, bacon, scrambled eggs, fried potatoes, pancakes with maple syrup, hard-boiled and soft-boiled eggs. Croissants, muffins, water, juices of all types, and coffee and tea rounded out the selections. This quickly became my favorite meal of the day.

We then found out that Nancy and her family had arrived at 11:00 p.m. the previous night. They had missed their connection in Newark because of the snow; missed that night's flight to Copenhagen; then caught another plane to Copenhagen the next day. This plane was delayed about three hours. Their next flight, from Copenhagen to Stockholm, was also delayed at least three hours. It took them 36 hours to get to Stockholm!

This morning Jimmy did not feel up to taking a walk, so he went back to bed and slept almost all day. Roger, Liz, Mike and I, along with Martha, Roger K. and Katie, and Nancy and her family walked to the next island to see Skansen, a restoration village much like Bethpage Village Restoration, only much bigger.

We looked in on the printer, who was printing leaflets in two different colors (one color at a time, of course), the bookbinder, the saddle maker, and the glass blower. Glass is fascinating the way it deforms so easily while it is hot. They mold it with metal rods, squeeze it, blow it into molds, attach pieces of different colors, and make an astonishing variety of glass objects (all of which were for sale in the gift shop, at high prices; most things are expensive here in Sweden).

Then we went to the cafeteria for lunch. (Meanwhile, Anna and Ray were attending a lunch given by the President of Stockholm University.) We all got sandwiches, soup, cookies and drinks. Lunch for the four of us cost 250 Kroner (about 28 dollars, but my heart almost stopped when I saw "250.00" on the cash register display!). We got cold, and so decided it was time to walk back to the hotel. By this time, Anna and Ray had been to an orientation session for the Nobel laureates, and were now at a press conference at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

We all dressed in business attire for our next official function – a reception at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for the physics and chemistry laureates. The Nobel laureates and their spouses got whisked away in their limousines with their attachés, so the families and friends had to take a bus to each event. But these were no ordinary buses. The Nobel Foundation supplied us with real coach buses that have several steps up to the passenger compartment, luggage space below, rest rooms, overhead lights – the works. Very comfortable transportation.

At the Royal Swedish Academy, we walked into the lobby, whose floor was covered with brown limestone with ammonite fossils in it. Long, straight-chambered animals were fossilized, sliced in half, and made into this floor. Pretty cool. A harpist and flutist were playing nice music for us. What a classy way to start a week of parties!

The reception room had hors d'oeuvres, red wine, white wine, and fizz water on the table, along with a hundred wine glasses. The "Nobel Prize in Physics 2002" poster was on display, along with a photomultiplier tube from the KamiokaNDE experiment and a mockup of AMANDA, the photodetectors that are buried in Antarctic ice. All three Nobel laureates in physics autographed the poster.

On our way out we were permitted to take some copies of the physics and chemistry posters, so I grabbed a bunch. I had the decoration of some particular class-rooms back in the USA in mind.

At 6:30 p.m., we took the bus back to the hotel. Anna and Ray got ready for their dinner given by the Secretary General at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. None of us left behind wanted to go out on a search of the town for food, so we got room service and ate dinner with Nancy and George as our children dined together in Nancy and George's room. We all went to bed early, as we had lots to do the next day.

**Sunday, December 8:** Up at 6:00, downstairs at breakfast by 7:00, which is when the hotel restaurant opens. Lots of food from which to choose; plenty of free tables; good service from the waiters. I like breakfast at 7:00 a.m.

At 8:15 a.m., we took the bus for family and friends back to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences to see the Nobel lectures for Physics. Each laureate is expected to make a 45-minute presentation about his prizewinning work. Roger's brother Andy gave the lecture for Ray, since it is difficult for Ray to keep his train of thought, and he would probably take too long to say everything he had to say. Andy is a scientist – he studies meteorites at the University of Chicago – and the oldest of the five children in the

family. Ray gave Andy all the information he was going to put into his talk, and Andy delivered the lecture using a PowerPoint presentation. I thought he was talking too quickly, but he had lots to say. He finished in 42 minutes flat, just two minutes after the five-minute warning. (For science teachers: See Appendix A, which is my notes on the content of this lecture.)

Andy's talk was followed by that of Masatoshi Koshihira, the Japanese scientist who also devised a way of capturing solar neutrinos (science teachers: see Appendix B.) The third lecture was delivered by Riccardo Giacconi, a pioneer in X-ray astronomy (science teachers: see Appendix C). Each lecture was 45 minutes long, strictly adhered to by the speakers, with the help of Nobel Foundation people who watched the clock for the speakers (and the audience).

After the physics lectures, Anna and Ray went to a press conference/luncheon. My brother-in-law George (a chemist for the Monsanto Chemical Company in St. Louis) and I decided to stay for the chemistry lectures, while everyone else went back to the hotel. We had to get lunch first, so we went to the Student Union building and found a cafeteria. Neither one of us was very hungry, so we split a ham, cheese, lettuce, cucumber and tomato hero sandwich and a bottle of water. This was the only reasonably-priced meal we bought the whole time we were in Sweden. Lunch cost 25 Kroner, or the equivalent of \$2.75. The bread here in Sweden is always fresh, and of home-baked quality. It makes even a plain sandwich a special treat.

The first speaker back at the lecture hall was John B. Fenn of the USA, who perfected a method for the mass spectrometry of proteins (see Appendix D). His talk was followed by those of Koichi Tanaka of Japan (Appendix E) and Kurt Wüthrich of Germany (Appendix F).

At 3:00 p.m. we took the bus back to the hotel and found our spouses and children. We decided to visit the Vasa Museum, which was built around a ship that sank in the harbor in the 1600s and was salvaged and raised in the 1960s. It was embarrassing to the Swedes because this ship was built very big, intimidating, fancy, armed to the gunwales with cannon, and was named after the King. It was supposed to scare all enemies into giving up. Unfortunately (for the Swedes), it also sank in the harbor a mere few minutes after having been launched. However, it is the only existing ship from this time period, so it gets historians salivating. Hence the museum.

Just after we got there, the museum closed (5 p.m.). We decided to come back another time. We took the bus back to the hotel to regroup. Anna and

Ray were going to dinner at AlbaNova University. We ordered room service for Martha's children, Nancy's children and our children. Martha and Roger, Nancy and George, and Roger and I went out to eat.

We walked to the old city and went to an Italian restaurant for dinner. The filet mignon was the same price as the fish (about \$20), so I ordered the filet mignon with asparagus and boiled potatoes. It was very good. It came with a sauce that was very tasty, as does every other main dish served in Sweden. We walked back to the hotel and went to bed at 10 p.m.

**Monday, December 9:** This morning we were treated to a private tour of the National Museum of Fine Arts, which is two doors down from the hotel. The staff gave us glögg (a special Christmas drink – hot, fruity and alcoholic) and gingerbread cookies when we got to the second floor of this magnificent marble building. The second-floor balcony is all set about with copies of famous statues from around the world. I took many photos here.

As we wandered from room to room during the next hour and a half, we viewed paintings by Rembrandt (1606-1669), Rubens (1577-1640), Gauguin (1848-1903), Monet (1840-1926), Manet (1832-1883), Pissarro (1830-1903), Cézanne (1839-1906), Renoir (1841-1919), and Van Gogh (1853-1890). Was I impressed? You bet I was! All I have ever seen before of these great masters is Van Gogh's *Starry Night* in the Museum of Modern (!) Art in New York City. To see so many great masterpieces all in the same building was mind-boggling.

Next up was a short bus tour of Stockholm. We drove past the Opera House, the Foreign Ministry Building, the Parliament Building, the House for Nobility (they still have noblemen here), City Hall (where the banquet will be held), and the Isle of Nobility. This is the only time we had Anna and Ray on the bus with us. Evidently, they do not have enough tour guides to put one into each of the 12 limousines!

Quick change of clothes and buses. The next bus took us to the American Embassy for lunch. Roger and I were assigned seats at different tables, which at first dismayed me. After the lunch, I realized that it was a very good way to seat people. Instead of all us Davises sitting together and chatting about family matters, we each got to meet people from all over the world. I sat between Michael Bradley, a student from the USA, and Keith Peterson, an American of Swedish parentage living in Sweden, working for the American Embassy, taking care of all the press releases and requests. Also at my table was Katie (my niece), a Swedish woman, another student, and

an American man who was part of the family of the winner of the Nobel Prize in economics.

Six out of seven of the Americans receiving Nobel prizes this year were here at this luncheon. Anna and Ray got to sit at the Ambassador's table. Missing was Jimmy Carter, who was in Oslo, Norway, to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. He will be coming to Stockholm after the awards ceremonies have been completed.

Nancy got to sit next to Riccardo Giacconi. I was so jealous! I wanted to talk to him about his work in X-ray astronomy. Oh, well. I will try to catch him later. The lunch was wonderful, but the dessert was the best – a white chocolate cup filled with dark chocolate mousse and topped with raspberries, lingon berries and blueberries, with a sweet sauce on the side. Wow!

At 2:00 p.m., it was time to take the bus back to the hotel. We stopped in the hotel gift shop to get Roger a Swedish tie bar because he had misplaced the tie bar I bought for him 22 years ago. I hope he finds it when we get home. It is made of genuine scrimshaw, and it's real nice. Now he has two.

I gathered some of the family together by the Christmas tree on the fifth floor for photographs. Then it was time to catch the 4:00 bus to the Nordic Museum for another reception. This building is also made of stone, about 150 years old, and has a main gallery about 75 feet wide, 300 feet long, and over 50 feet high. They sure know how to build impressive buildings in Sweden.

At this reception there was another musical group – harp, flute and cello. They also had a slide show set up that showed photos of all the Nobel Prizewinners for 2002. I photographed some of them. We met and chatted with the other Nobel Prizewinners, and many students were on hand asking for their autographs and photos with them. We were happy to oblige the students with photos of them with Ray, but we discouraged the autograph-signing. It just takes too long to get the darned name on paper, and we did not want Ray to have to spend the entire evening signing his name for kids. (One of them actually asked for, and got, an autograph. Ray does not deny any request. I could not get him to relinquish the pen and paper. I wonder how much this autograph is now worth on e-Bay?) There was white and red wine aplenty, and all kinds of (inedible to me) hors d'oeuvres. The children did not like the food either. Too much caviar, roe and liver. I am sure it was very fancy and delighted many a sophisticated palate.

At 6:30, it was time to catch the bus back to the hotel. We were glad to leave this reception and get something to eat! Anna and Ray were on their own for a meal for the first time during this trip, so they

were taken out to dinner by Nancy and George, Ken and Gabriella Lande, and Jim, who worked as a post-doctorate with Ray and his experiment in the mine in South Dakota. (Jim flew to Stockholm on his own to see Ray receive the Nobel Prize. Ray was his collaborator, mentor, and inspiration. It was obvious to us all just how highly he valued his friendship with Ray.)

The rest of us were in the mood for some American food (read: fast service) so we went to TGI Friday's with Martha, Roger, Leslie and Katie Kumler, Ellie and Karl so we could get out of the restaurant before bedtime. Swedish restaurants have slow service, because either they are understaffed, or they expect you to linger over your coffee and conversation for 45 minutes before receiving the check. Anyway, we had club sandwiches, chicken fingers, and French fries for dinner. I had another Swedish beer. We then went to a local 7-11 store and bought candy bars for dessert. It was great.

**Tuesday, December 10:** Today is the big day – Nobel Prize Day. We had free time until we had to leave for the ceremony at 4:00 p.m. I got up at 6:30 and discovered the CBS Evening News on television, broadcast from New York from 12:30-1:00 a.m. New York time. It was nice to keep up with the news and to hear from people back home.

I got to breakfast at seven, my favorite time, and filled my plate with all my favorite foods. Anna and Ray had to go to a rehearsal of the big event at the Stockholm Concert Hall. Roger and I and our children, along with Nancy and George and their children, walked to the old town to take pictures of the narrow, stone-paved streets, shops, and architectural details. Back at the hotel shortly – it was too cold to stay out for very long. Next, we took a bus to the Vasa Museum and got in for a real tour of the place. (Buses and museums are free with the Stockholm Cards the Nobel Committee gave us.) We saw the movie about how the ship was discovered, raised from the bottom, floated into this place, covered, preserved, and restored. It is truly an amazing museum. We then walked back to the hotel and arrived at 1:15 p.m. We had almost two hours to get ready for the bus that would take us to the prize ceremony.

Anna had a limit of 16 people she could bring to the ceremony and subsequent banquet, so Roger and I had to choose only one child to accompany us. We each thought Liz should go, since she already had a formal dress (although I wound up buying her another for the second formal affair), and does not go skiing with Roger and the boys and have a great deal of fun all winter. The boys were disappointed, but

they understood. They really love skiing, and always have a lot of fun all winter long.

At 3:00 p.m. we got on the bus, all dressed up in our finery. Roger wore white tie and tails; I wore a long, black, V-neck dress with a slit up the front of the skirt; and Liz wore a silver-sparkled, black backless dress. The buses followed the limousines through the city, where the Police were blocking off all the side streets. We slipped unencumbered through town – no traffic, no red lights. They take good care of us here. The buses brought us to the Stockholm Concert Hall for the prize awards ceremony. Each of us had to show our invitation and photo identification. The door number and seat number were printed on the invitations. We checked our coats at the door and found our seats – right in the front row! Anna gets us good seats.

Everything about the Nobel Awards is done in a certain order – physics first, then chemistry, medicine or physiology, literature, and economics. This is the order in which the categories were listed in the will of Alfred Nobel. Within each category, everything goes in order of decreasing age. So Ray, the oldest, and recipient of the physics prize, got tickets to the first group of seats. Lucky for us!

From the center aisle to the right side were four empty seats; then came Anna, Andy, Susan, Martha, Roger K., Leslie, Roger, me, Alan and four more empty seats. The second row was, from the center aisle to the right side: Anne, Katie, Liz, then a block of seats for Dr. Koshiba's family. Just before the ceremony began, four people came in and sat next to Alan. The woman next to him had a tiara (nobility?), and the man next to her had Nobel medals hung around his neck. Then in came four more people who sat in the seats to Anna's left. They had blue sashes and Swedish stars (medals?) and were probably the Prime Minister and his family.

The room was absolutely covered in flowers. Flowers lined the front of the stage, the railings of the balconies, and were attached to the walls. It must have taken a whole army of florists to decorate this auditorium today.

Then came the procession of academy dignitaries from center back stage onto the stage. They took their seats, stage left. Following them came the Nobel laureates, who took their seats on the other side, in front of previous Nobel Prizewinners. Ray was first again, and sat in the first seat, closest to the audience. Last came Prince Carl, Princess Madeleine, King Carl XVI Gustav, and Queen Silvia. Everybody rose. The rule is: stand when the King stands, and sit when the King sits. We continued to stand for the Swedish National Anthem, which was played by the orchestra in the balcony over the stage,

and sung heartily by many in the auditorium. Then it was time for the ceremony to begin.

A speech is made in Swedish by a person from the awarding institution (which is different for each of the categories); then the winner is addressed in his native language. He stands. He is told to step forward to receive his prize "from the hands of His Majesty the King." He does so. Trumpets play the Nobel tune. Very impressive.

Ray is getting kind of forgetful these days, and there is a routine that must be followed during the awarding of the prize. So, for the first time in history, the King broke with protocol and brought the prize to Ray instead. (The King is a nice guy.) He crossed the stage, chatted with Ray for a few seconds, handed him the prize, shook his hand, then stepped back and nodded. Ray bowed to him, to the dignitaries from the Nobel Foundation, and to his family, as expected, and then sat down. He did real well. All he had to do now was sit when the King sat and stand when the King stood.

Music was played by the orchestra between categories. The trumpets were fabulous, and the music was all famous tunes appropriate to the occasion. The entire ceremony lasted about two hours. At the end, the King, Queen, Prince and Princess rose (and so did everyone else) and left. That is when the families storm the stage, get a peek at the solid gold medal and the hand-made certificate, and take pictures of the laureates with their prizes.

Soon after, city Flexi-buses reserved just for Nobel families and friends took us to the banquet in the "Blue Hall" of City Hall. (This hall is built of beautiful red brick and must cover at least 30,000 square feet. The brick walls were so nice, they were never painted blue.) We alighted from the Flexi-bus, and crossed a courtyard, walking towards the water, then made a right into the building, moving through two lines of children (supervised by their parents) holding torches to light our way. That was neat. The Nobel Prize is a really big deal here in Sweden.

We entered City Hall, checked our coats, picked up a booklet with all 1300 guests' names and seating assignments and a room map in it, and found our seats. Once again, we were in the first seats at the first table, in great position to watch the entertainment. I was even facing the right way! Roger was on the other side of the table, so he had to turn his head to see. "Anna gets us good seats," I said. I took pictures of my place setting, and a few of the family. Then the battery in my camera died, so I got no photographs of the rest of the banquet. I will have to beg, borrow or steal some from other family members the next time they come to Blue Point for a visit.

Soon the music started - two trumpets and an organ. We all rose. The organ, which must have been built into the massive cornice along the ceiling by the right wall, absolutely filled this cavernous room, and the trumpet fanfare answered the organ. It was loud (it shook the rafters!), impressive, royal-sounding, fabulous. We knew we were in the presence of a King.

The King and Queen, Prince and Princess began the procession into the Blue Hall, escorting Nobel laureates and their spouses across the second-floor balcony, and down the limestone staircase. Hundreds of flashes from the cameras of the press illuminated the procession almost constantly. I never saw anything like it, except on the television news, when movie stars arrive for opening night at their movies or at the Oscars ceremony. They all walked to their places at the center table. When the King sat, we all sat. (Ray sat next to the Queen. What a lucky guy.) The Press was then chased outside, to be allowed back at only certain times for a few minutes at a time. What a classy operation this was.

The President of the Nobel Foundation offered a toast (with the champagne - Dom Perignon 1991. I was in heaven). All he said was, "Sköl!" which is the equivalent of our "Cheers!" I thought he would say more. We looked at one another and raised our eyebrows.

Then King Carl XVI Gustav toasted Alfred Nobel. He actually made a nice little speech. More Dom Perignon. Nancy doesn't drink. More Dom Perignon. Hope I don't get a headache. This champagne is good! Roger Kumler doesn't drink. More Dom Perignon. I really like this party!

The entertainment was fantastic. It was a Romeo and Juliet story interpreted by students from Sweden's circus college. Think Cirque Éloise (or Cirque de Soleil) with a love story - that's what it was like.

Fog started coming down the limestone staircase. Then came a big red doughnut-shaped costume with many heads (people inside the costume) surrounding a big bubble with a girl in it. The red circle sang, or chanted, actually; the girl did acrobatics inside the bubble. A boy in a bubble (from the waist up) came down the stairs, went completely inside his bubble, did some acrobatics, exited his bubble, and got into the girl's bubble. They embraced. They were surrounded by the big red thing again, which sang, and stood up, obscuring our view of the bubble. Then the big red doughnut collapsed, a small balloon rose up to the ceiling, and Romeo and Juliet were gone.

Our first course was a pastry cup filled with cheese and a red fruit glaze, with salad, shrimp and scallops. It was interesting to watch the army of 250 waiters

march two-by-two along the balcony, trays on their shoulders, and go down the staircase, into the banquet room, and arrange themselves around our tables. They then got a signal from the head waiter, and we were all served at the same time.

In came the entertainers again. They arranged themselves around the room and sang to us. They were dressed in very fancy clothes, and the men were in "drag." The song was strange and unrecognizable to us, since it was sung in Swedish.

The main course was sliced veal with lingon berries and a sauce, boiled potatoes, grilled autumn vegetables, and red wine. Very tasty. The waiters returned in formation again, stationing themselves at the tables. Upon the signal, they began picking up the plates, all at the same time. The "clink" of each plate being stacked upon another, heard hundreds of times throughout the hall, was something to behold and a great source of amusement to me after every course.

Entertainment after the main course was three people hanging by wires from the ceiling, along one short wall of the Blue Hall. Below, on the landing of the limestone staircase, was a pole with people climbing it and doing stunts on it. Others were arranged around the bottom of the pole and were singing. The three on the wires ran back and forth along the wall in perfect synchronization, from one window ledge to the other; then they added a flip to their little run; then double and triple flips. They then jumped out from the wall, increasing their distance each time, and arching backwards each time. They were about 40 feet above the marble staircase all the time.

Then it was time for dessert to be served. The waiters came down with their trays; each tray sported a red or gold helium-filled, heart-shaped balloon floating above it. After the waiters had arranged themselves around the tables as usual, a signal was given and each of them freed his or her balloon from the tray. All the balloons floated to the ceiling about 100 feet above us like a gaggle of bubbles floating to the surface of a swimming pool. Then patches of light were projected onto the ceiling. It looked like white clouds in the sky, with all those balloons lying a-against it. The mass of balloons against the cloudy sky stayed there all night.

For dessert, we each got a milk chocolate straw stuck into a dollop of peach champagne mousse on top of a three-layer vanilla and chocolate cake with caramel sauce on the side. It was really good! George did not want his, so I took it and split it with Andy. Muscatel was in the wine glasses. These Swedes sure know how to cook!

The entertainers came back again. Two people dressed as a bride and a groom dangled from the

wires this time. They were lowered to the staircase amidst a great deal of singing and dancing from the other people. Then they were raised up on their wires again, presumably wedded. A happy ending, unlike Shakespeare's version.

It was then time for the "thank-you" speeches, which are limited to one person per category, two minutes each. They keep it short and sweet. Student representatives of the colleges held their banners along the staircase and balcony, and raised and lowered them in a wave form as each of the laureates approached the podium. The laureates gave nice speeches. Most of them thanked the Nobel Foundation for their awards, recognized the contributions of their colleagues, and thanked everybody for their wonderful Swedish hospitality.

Then coffee and tea were served, along with a choice of Cognac or Cointreau. We finished dinner at 10:30 p.m. Tonight, I did not mind the long period of time it took for dinner to be completed.

After dinner, we all went upstairs to the Gold Hall, which is covered (walls and ceilings) in 16-18 million little gold tiles. Patterns in the tile depict important places and people in Swedish history, names and dates, mythological figures, and great cities of the world. I recognized skyscrapers, the Statue of Liberty, and the Eiffel Tower. The tiles positively glowed in the low, romantic lighting. This hall alone must cover about 5000 square feet. They had a band there playing American music, and there was dancing until midnight. Anna and Ray and the other Nobel laureates and their wives were chatting and taking photographs with the King, Queen, Prince and Princess. Andy and Susan, Nancy and George, Anna and Marian, Alan and Anne, and Roger and I danced, drank lots of water (or soda), and took pictures of one another until midnight. Anna and Ray went back to the hotel early to get some rest.

After the dancing was over, we were invited to the Stockholm School of Economics for the "nightcap," which is a party that runs 'til 5:00 a.m. Peter and Agneta took Roger and me in the Nobel limo, and Andy and Susan, Liz, Leslie, Katie, George and Marian took the bus. (The other revelers in our family went back to the hotel at this point.) As we walked onto campus, we were greeted by students serving rose hip soup and biscuits, and chemistry students with test tubes filled with pink liquids and blue liquids. I tried the pink one – it was good (probably cranberry juice and vodka). They also had acrobats, who were tumbling on mats and doing splits, and jugglers juggling lighted torches.

Then we checked our coats outside (!) and entered the Student Union building, where the students had created a "time machine." We were greeted by a court jester inside. Paper painted to look like stone

was hung on the walls; there were a king, queen, and knights in armor sitting in one corner; a flute player roamed the room. This was the year 1292.

We crossed the room and went up the stairs. On the stairs it was the year 1749, and we walked through a French court with people welcoming us in French. Finally, a foreign language I could understand! I liked this era.

In the room at the top of the stairs, it was 1881, and we were in a saloon in the Old American West. There was card-playing and fighting (the students scripted and acted out all the fights); old-time piano playing; and drinks being served. I really felt at home in this room.

Up the next flight of stairs was a room decorated to look like the Moulin Rouge of Paris, 1889. The room was very smoky, and there was a show going on onstage. Up a small flight of stairs from there was a casino from 1954 (Cuba, perhaps?). People were playing black jack, roulette, etc. Trays of food and drink were everywhere. I was still stuffed from the wonderful food we had had at the banquet, so I did not indulge further. Roger, however, got a bit peckish and began to snack.

The cigarette and cigar smoke became too much for me to handle. I had to get outside and get some air. Liz was not amused by the whole scene, and wanted to leave. So Liz, Roger and I went outside, retrieved our cold coats, got into the limousine, and Peter drove us back to the hotel. I showered and washed my hair to get rid of the stinky smoky smell, and jumped into bed by 2:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, December 11:** Today we slept until 8:00 a.m. It was sunny and cold – our first day so far with no light snow overnight. Soon it was time to go on a private tour of the Nobel Museum, over the bridge in Old Town. The 10:15 bus took us all, even though it would have been a five-minute walk.

We were greeted by the Director of the Museum, who then gave a short speech in honor of all the Nobel laureates who came today. Our tour would last until noon.

The main exhibit shows 100 years of Nobel history (the prizes were awarded beginning in 1901), and there are kiosks showing each decade's news and Nobel prizewinners. I read all the information at each one and viewed the short videos there. They were very interesting.

Some past winners in physics include famous names you may recognize: Chandrasekhar; Penzias & Wilson; Weinberg; Gell-Mann; Alvarez; Bethe; Schwinger; Feynman; Cherenkov; Bothe; Pauli; Stern; Fermi; Chadwick; Schrödinger; Dirac; Heisenberg; de Broglie; Herta; Millikan; Bohr; Einstein; Planck; van der Waals; Marconi;

Michelson; J.J. Thomson; Rayleigh; Becquerel; Curie; and Röntgen. There was also a kiosk for each of this year's prizewinning categories. Ray's picture is in the Physics kiosk. He is in good company.

This whole thing was designed to be a traveling exhibit, and will soon come to the United States. In the spring of 2005 it will come to the New York Hall of Science in Corona, Queens. The Director of the Museum will bring five curators and ten technicians to set up the exhibit, and he invited us to come and see him there. I wonder if he will remember us by then.

At the Nobel Museum, there is a café with wooden chairs, and it is customary for the Nobel Prize-winners to sign the bottom of one of the chairs. Ray signed the same chair as did Amartya Sen (Economics, 1998) and George Olah (Chemistry, 1994). Ray also signed the guest book.

At the gift shop I bought two magnets for the metal cabinet in my office. One is a portrait of Albert Einstein (one of my heroes), and the other is one of his quotes, written in Swedish. It says, "I never think about the future. It will come soon enough."

We left the Museum a little early because we heard there would be a changing of the guard at the Royal Palace, just steps away. It was cold and windy, but we braved the weather and watched very fancy lineups of army men, navy men, and marines go through their whole drill. There were dozens of men, guns and flags, and they actually did change the guard. It was very ceremonial, of course, and fun to watch. Then we walked back to the hotel.

This afternoon Anna and Ray took Andy and Susan to the individual visit to the office of the Nobel Foundation. That is where they give out the checks for the monetary part of the prize. That is, minus what Anna and Ray spent on airplane tickets and hotel rooms for this whole crowd. What a fabulous Christmas present we got this year!

We put on some more clothes, because we were underdressed for this crisp, windy day. Then Roger, Liz, Jimmy, Mike, Karl and I walked to a small shop to get salads and sandwiches for lunch. As we were going back to the hotel, Roger got the idea of walking out to the end of the chain of islands on which the hotel is located. I was really cold, I wanted to warm up, and I had already promised Liz I would take her to the Music Museum someday, so we parted ways. Roger took Mike on the walk (they got real cold), and the rest came with me to the Museum (we had a good time). We had to hurry, as it was scheduled to close at 4:00 p.m.

The museum was very interesting. There were many displays that were hands-on, including a harp, metallophone (metal xylophone), hammer dulcimer,

drums, electric and acoustic guitar, string bass, conga drums, accordion, xylophone, synthesizer, keyboard, and a microphone connected to an oscilloscope into which you could sing and watch your voice's wave functions on the screen. All three children had great fun in this part of the museum, and we spent most of our time here.

We then viewed their instrument collection, which included the synthesizer used by the singing group ABBA, and three of their gold records as well.

The exhibit on Swedish folk music was scary – little rooms all connected and dark; when you walk in, music starts to play; and the songs were all in Swedish (of course). The children cleared out of there pretty fast.

At closing time we left, in the pitch darkness, and walked to a camera store to buy AA batteries for Jimmy's digital camera and a battery for my automatic camera, which had died last night. Here in Sweden people use the 24-hour clock of the military. Roger says it is due to the short days and long nights. 4:00 p.m. looks just like 4:00 a.m., and you could not tell the difference if 4:00 p.m. were not listed as 16:00. I think he's right.

We got back to the hotel by 16:30, and ordered room service for dinner. I like room service because the food is good, it is served quickly, and nobody is smoking near me. My hotel room was my favorite place to eat for these reasons. It seems that everybody in Sweden smokes. I bet nobody smokes at Their Majesties the King and Queen's banquet, which is where Anna and Ray were dining this evening.

After dinner Roger took Jimmy, Liz and Mike, and Nancy's children Marian, Ellie and Karl skating on the ice rink surrounding the big statue in the square near the hotel. I wanted to check out the big NK department store, to see how it compares to those back home, but they were closed to all but special invitation-holders. So I walked around the corner to a book store, but left shortly thereafter. All the books were in Swedish. That's no fun. I walked back to the ice skating rink to take some pictures of Roger and the children. They had rented skates for one hour (cost: about \$3.00 per person per hour) and were having a great time skating and falling down with no knee pads, snow pants or gloves on. After the skating was over, we took everyone to the 7-11 store for candy bars. The children's favorite was the "Plop" bar, which is milk chocolate-covered caramel. We got back to the hotel by 9:00 p.m. and went to bed. Must catch up on our sleep!

**Thursday, December 12:** Today I got up at 6:00 and breakfasted at 7:00. I was going to the panel discussion for physics. Back in my room, I realized I

was too early for the bus, so I started to read and got drowsy. I set my alarm clock for 15 minutes and caught a little nap.

Then I caught the bus to the Royal Institute of Technology for the panel discussion on “Who is Looking Through These New Windows on the Universe?” (Science teachers: see Appendix G for proceedings.) In this building they had a jazz band (trumpet, clarinet, drums, bass, banjo) playing Dixieland jazz. “When the Saints Come Marching In” was played right in the lecture hall where the scientists were about to assemble. Finally, about 15 minutes late, everyone filed in and got started. The moderator asked questions; the four scientists (two of whom were Koshiba and Giacconi, and two of whom were from Universities nearby) answered those questions. Questions from the audience were then entertained.

The luncheon afterwards was to be held at the Student Union Building of the Royal Institute of Technology. I was on the right campus, but in the wrong building. There was no bus for family members to get to the luncheon, and I had no campus map. I did not know which building to go to, and I would not have been able to read the map anyway – they are all in Swedish. Looking around for a familiar face (or at least one over a Nobel identification tag), I spied a young attaché from the Foreign Ministry handing Dr. Giacconi his coat and ushering him to his limo. I asked her how to get to the luncheon, but she did not know. I told her who I was, and why I needed to get there. Seeing no bus for family members, she invited me to ride along with her in the Nobel limousine, which is exactly the response I was hoping for. I gratefully accepted. Dr. Giacconi and I had a nice little chat, then scheduling of his remaining time took up his attention. So many people want to interview him. I think he is getting tired of getting too much attention and not enough personal time.

The Student Union Building was only about a quarter of a mile away, so I could easily have walked there, had I known where to go. This is the only time I did not feel well taken care of by the Nobel Foundation. The rest of the trip was well-planned and executed.

At the luncheon, there were two long tables. The invited students had not yet arrived, so we were invited to sit down, spreading ourselves out so as to leave room for the students to sit next to the interesting people. Students soon arrived, and we introduced ourselves. Drinks on the table included fizz water and Swedish beer. (I drank the beer.)

We enjoyed a tasty lunch of salmon, potatoes, asparagus, and the ubiquitous sauce on the side that makes the fish taste really good. For dessert we had

a very light cheesecake with raspberries and chocolate drizzled over the top. Outstanding.

My conversation with surrounding students involved learning more about what it is like to live in Sweden. Higher education is free - all you have to do is pass all your classes in high school. The academic year is the same as it is for us here in the USA; however, Christmas vacation is no vacation if you have failed any of your exams. You must study, and then repeat your exams over the break. Housing seems to be pretty cheap for students (subsidized?). \$250.00 per month gets you an apartment in Stockholm, but there is a two-year waiting list. Some students decide which college they will attend, then get their names on a waiting list while they are still sophomores in high school. That way they are assured of finding a place to live when they actually get to college. There is a value-added tax on everything in Sweden that adds 25% to the cost of most items, and 12% to the cost of food. That is how they pay for their social programs.

Our 1:45 bus brought us back to the hotel. On the way, we noticed people stepping out into the street (into a crosswalk) right in front of the bus! The crosswalk was marked with signs telling drivers they had to stop for pedestrians, but a bus is a very heavy vehicle, and I thought those people were either very brave or very trusting (or very stupid) to step in front of a bus. We also saw the hotel where Ingrid Bergman and Greta Garbo used to live.

In the upstairs lobby of the hotel there were books of professional photographs taken during the Nobel Prize ceremony on display. We could order some reprints by leafing through the books and signing our names next to the photos we wanted. There were many books of photos, and it took about two hours for me to view all of them. Photos (and bills, of course) will be mailed to us late in January of 2003.

Then Peter and Agneta took Andy and Susan, Martha and Roger Kumler, Nancy and me shopping at a store that sells special china and glassware at this time of year. The Nobel banquet glassware was there – and it was all for sale! I did not dare price it. There are too many pieces per place setting, and I suspect it is coated in real gold. Just look at the photos I took of this beautiful stuff!

While I was gone, Roger took the children to the aquarium. That is another place we got into for free, using the Stockholm card. They had a rain forest, lots of sharks, and a manhole into the “sewer” you could climb down into.

Back to the hotel. At 4:00 p.m., there was a gathering of Nobel laureates only at the Nobel Foundation. Jimmy Carter was in town, and all the Nobel laureates for 2002 got together in one place for

one-half hour. I hope someone took photographs of this event!

I got Roger to come shopping with me because today is Alan and Anne's daughter's birthday. Mara is one year old today, and she is celebrating it in Stockholm. What a lucky child. We walked a short distance from the hotel, going back to the book store I went to yesterday. There we bought some little kiddy books about animals (some had the Swedish words for the animals in them; some were pictures only) for Mara, and a coloring book for Alex. I couldn't leave him out. He is only three years old.

Tonight was only the second night Anna and Ray were free for dinner, so we had asked Agneta several days ago if she knew of any restaurant we could go to that would accommodate all 28 of us – Anna and Ray, their 5 children, their 5 spouses, 11 grandchildren, Anne's sister Lynn, two Swedish girls Lynn stayed with as an exchange student, and Agneta and Peter. Not only did Agneta find a restaurant, she reserved a whole room for us. And the restaurant was the oldest continuously-run restaurant in Sweden, having been built in 1671. Not only that, but she and Peter arranged to have a bus for us – one of the big charter buses that have been taking the families to various places in Stockholm. In the window was a handwritten sign that read, "Dr. Davis" instead of the usual printed sign that read, "Nobel Museum" or "Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences." I thought that was great! Peter drove Anna and Ray, and Agneta rode with us. About a half hour into the trip, we got off the highway onto a smaller road, right where a McDonald's was located. Agneta quipped, "We are going to McDonald's for dinner," in her endearing Swedish accent. We all howled. We all hate McDonald's (except for the children, of course).

The owner of the restaurant came in, greeted us, and told us some of the history of the building, the restaurant (the oldest one in Sweden whose every owner and chef are known by name), and the name, "Lasse-Maya" (a robber in drag – hence the name is a female name and a male name). He also presented Anna and Ray with a little wooden box containing two special glasses – a larger one for Ray and a smaller one for Anna. The chef, whom he introduced to us, filled the glasses with schnapps. Ray was having a bit of trouble finishing his larger helping of schnapps, so I helped him out a little. It was really good.

Dinner was a real Swedish smorgasbord. The first course is always fish, and they had ten different varieties of herring. Raw, pickled, curried, in mustard sauce - any way you can imagine. The next course was the meat – sausage, mutton, smoked turkey and roast beef. There was a whole table for

cheese, crackers, and bread, and another for the Swedish meatballs and other hot foods, plus another table covered with sweets for dessert.

I had a Swedish beer. The children drank a special Swedish Christmas soda, sort of like spicy Coke. The others drank a special Swedish Christmas drink that was a mixture of dark beer, Madeira, and soda. It sounds disgusting, but it tasted pretty good.

Eva, the head server, was very nice to us, describing the drinks and food to us uninitiated Americans. She told us with great enthusiasm all about Swedish food and the "Christmas table." You get your fish course first, then go back for the other courses. While you are gone, your dirty dishes are cleared. She also picked up Mara and talked to her. Eva did not want to put her down. She loves little kids of that age. Mara had a good time, too. Evidently, she is past the "separation anxiety" stage of baby development.

At dessert time we celebrated Mara's birthday. We gave her presents, which she enjoyed opening, and cake. There was a choice of two kinds – one was chocolate cake, and the other had pineapple, kiwi, and other fruit on it, with whipped cream on top. Coffee and tea were served.

Then Peter stood up. After explaining that he was not a speech maker, he proceeded to make a short speech. Peter works for the limousine company, usually at a desk in the office, organizing all the drivers. This year, he asked if he could drive instead. He said we were his first "Nobel family," and the standard by which all his future families will be judged. He said we are all very nice, and he likes us very much. He will be sad to see us leave Stockholm. George piped up, "Hey, Anne! People are usually *glad* to see *us* leave!"

Then Andy got up and made a short speech. He thanked both Agneta and Peter for their hospitality and their good care of us while we were in Stockholm. We have all had a wonderful time. He gave them something to remember us by, although they may remember us as alcoholics: a magnum of Tattinger champagne each. He and Susan could not find the same champagne we had had at the Nobel Banquet, but they did find the same size bottle. Peter and Agneta gratefully accepted their gifts, and said they would drink them on New Year's Eve. I was really glad someone thought of buying them presents. Agneta and Peter are very nice people, and were very helpful to us. They enhanced our Stockholm experience immeasurably.

Finally, it was time to pay the bill and go back to the hotel. We got back at 11:30 p.m. and went right to bed.

**Friday, December 13:** We slept late today (7:00), and got down to breakfast at 8:00. The restaurant was crowded. Now I remember why I like going down early.

Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter were just finishing their breakfasts two tables away, and the Secret Service agents were sitting at the table next to ours. The road in front of the hotel was blocked off, and police cars were everywhere. Soon we saw them leave the restaurant, leave the hotel, get into their limousine, and drive away with a group of six police cars. Security was pretty tight. I was probably lucky to have gotten breakfast in the hotel at all that morning. We probably had our backgrounds checked out by security people several months ago.

I left Roger and Liz in the restaurant (they had come down later than I had) and saw the Lucia singers in the hotel lobby. December 13 is the longest, darkest night of the year, according to the old (Julian) calendar. Groups of singers dressed in white robes hold candles and sing Christmas carols. One singer is selected to wear a headdress containing several candles. These people are usually music students, so they sing beautifully in four-part harmony. I quickly ran up to my room to grab a camera while the Lucia singers filed into the restaurant, singing "Santa Lucia." I got back in time to photograph them filing out of the restaurant; then they turned the corner and went down the hall. Each of the Nobel laureates is sung to in his hotel room on this morning. They are celebrated for bringing us the light of knowledge. (One elderly Nobel laureate in the past was not aware of this custom, and told of his experience as thinking he had died and gone to heaven.)

Back upstairs, I packed up things I would not need again, as this was our last full day in Stockholm. Roger joined me, and we started to pack up some of the children's things, too. Then we had to catch the 9:30 bus to Uppsala for a tour of the University and lunch at the castle. The bus ride took about an hour. I was tired and wanted to take a little nap, but I also wanted to see the Swedish countryside. I just closed my eyes for a little while. I can always sleep later. ("I can always sleep later" is something I told myself almost every day on this trip. It is better to be awake and tired than to miss things I may never again get the chance to see.)

We arrived at the University of Uppsala, which is the oldest in Sweden (founded in 1477). This city used to be the capital of Sweden, so many old and important things are here.

We were ushered into a big dining room with a very long table, beautiful chandeliers, dark paneling, and paintings of Swedish Kings on the walls. Here we were offered glögg, coffee and tea, and

gingerbread cookies. The gingerbread cookies are delicious. I am glad it is Christmastime. Those delicious cookies make up for the lack of daylight.

Then we broke up into groups (ours was the largest, of course) and got guides for the next hour's tour of the University. Our guide, a historian employed by Uppsala University for this very purpose, was very knowledgeable and informative, but spoke very emphatically (his love of history was showing), and my children thought he was scary. But he was full of information, and I thought he was very interesting.

We started our tour in the building we were already in, the so-called "new building," which was built in 1877 for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University. Marble floors, vaulted ceilings, chandeliers, skylights, and statues were everywhere. The four statues outside the auditorium represent the four disciplines taught at the University (at least in olden times): theology, law, medicine, and dramatics. We took a peek inside, where another group dressed in white robes was rehearsing for their Lucia singing, probably scheduled for this evening.

We left this building and went across the square to a science building that is now a museum. The current exhibit is all about cats, and the whole family enjoyed the photos on display. Upstairs was the permanent exhibit hall, originally a classroom where Celsius, Linnaeus, and both Ångströms (father and son) taught. It now contains many treasures.

Roger's favorite was the large cabinet in the center showcase, touted as an interactive amusement center from the 17th century. It was given to one of the kings of Sweden as tribute, in hopes of avoiding an invasion. The Princess of Sweden played with it extensively. It was built in Germany; 50 men worked on it for five years in order to complete it and fill it with all the fantastic things that it still contains – a small player piano; a clock; a wooden model of a human heart; a yard of preserved human skin; a stretched-out picture that had to be viewed by using a special cylindrical reflecting device; all kinds of perfume, combs, and intricately-carved religious statues; and many other things that today are displayed in adjacent showcases.

My favorite displays were Linnaeus's original notebooks and Celsius's original thermometer. Celsius began his scale at 0 for the boiling point of water, and went to 100 for the freezing point. The scale was changed (turned upside-down) for our convenience in 1745.

This room had flash detectors in it, so I had to photograph everything with ambient light. Good thing I brought my good camera. I got some nice photos of rare objects. I leaned the camera against the glass cases and shot at 1/15 second.

Next, we entered the oldest classroom still in its original state in the country of Sweden, and one of the oldest in all of Europe. It was an anatomy classroom, and had a table in the center (for the body being dissected or the patient being operated on). Students had to climb very steep, ladder-like steps to get to the upper rows where they stood and observed the operation. The barriers are chest-high and close together, so if anyone fainted he would not fall to the floor. The walls were painted in pinkish splatter paint so vomit would not be visible. Students were advised to keep their hats on during class.

From there we went to the cathedral, built in honor of Eric, the patron saint of Sweden, killed right here by the Danes. (It seems the Swedes were always fighting the Danes in the past.) This is the largest cathedral in Scandinavia.

Measuring 390 feet by 390 feet, it was constructed over a period of 250 years, beginning in 1230. It was the ceremonial center of Sweden when Uppsala was its capital. As soon as we walked in, someone started playing sacred organ music. It was heavenly. I thought it was a private concert just for us, but it turned out to be the organist practicing. Our historian thought he would get into trouble for talking, as he had conducted many tours of the cathedral this week.

We paused in the center of the cross-shaped building for a little history lesson. I was told that I was standing in the very spot where all heads of state were crowned (up until 1721, when presumably the capital was moved to Stockholm). Then we viewed some of the burial places in the side chapels. Queen Katherina; King Johannes III; King Johannes Paulus II (in the gold box) died on this spot – how else? – fighting the Danes. One king had two queens, both of whom are buried beside him. Near the entrance we saw the grave of Caroli Linne (Carolo Linae) (Carolina Rediviva) – Carolus Linnaeus. He had many names. Standing on his marker, I got within six feet of him! (Or, rather, his remains.)

Time to go to lunch. We walked past the library where many old treasures are stored, including the famed “silver Bible.” On to the castle.

Inside the main hall, we were treated to a small glass of glög, either alcoholic or nonalcoholic – we had a choice. This time it had small nuts and raisins in it. While waiting to get into the State Hall, I chatted with Peter and learned a great deal about this castle and about Swedish history. We saw a bust of Christina, the only Swedish head of state ever to abdicate the throne.

Sweden was a protestant country because the King is above the Church, whereas in Catholicism, the Church is above the State. Swedish kings wanted all the riches for themselves, so they made Sweden Lutheran. The State was then above the Church, and

the King owned all the riches in the country previously owned by the Church. Christina abdicated to turn Catholic and move to Rome. I understand the plan did not work out well. I was told that she was shut up in the Vatican for the rest of her life and had no fun at all. She was, however, buried next to the Pope.

It was in this very same State Hall of Uppsala Castle, where Christina abdicated the throne in 1654, that we were treated to a wonderful luncheon of steak tartar of smoked reindeer on Kavring bread, topped with roe of bleak; poached halibut in white wine sauce, with Duchesse potatoes and asparagus wrapped in smoked Norwegian salmon; Gewürztraminer; coffee; and cake for dessert. Today our attaché and driver were invited also. A singing group came in and sang Swedish Christmas carols for us. The President of Uppsala University gave a speech.

This place is so steeped in history; I am amazed at almost every turn and every thing I find out about it.

It was dark outside and snowing when we finished this sumptuous feast. It was also late – this event ran to 3:30 instead of the projected 2:30 p.m. We got back to the hotel at about 4:30, and had to dress in formal attire again, get our pictures taken, and catch a 6:00 bus for the Lucia dinner.

Peter, Ray and Anna’s driver, is also a photographer. He volunteered to take pictures of the whole family formally dressed for dinner. I expected that Peter would arrange us all on a staircase in the hotel somewhere and we would pass our cameras over to him, but Peter had something different in mind. He procured a meeting room in the hotel and set it up with chairs, lights, reflectors, camera, and tripod – the whole setup a professional photographer would have. After several shots, we asked him to get into the picture, too. We “adopted” him into our family. After all, he was listed in the luncheon seating chart as “Driver Davis,” so that is what we called him from that point on. He sat cross-legged in front with the young boys. Anne’s sister Lynn released the shutter. We had a great time, but had to cut it short to catch the bus at 6:00 to the Lucia Dinner.

The Lucia Dinner was hosted by the Student Union of the University of Stockholm, and required formal dress. We checked our coats, then went into an anteroom to wait to be seated. There we met and chatted with one of the administrators of the University, who was a very interesting man. I asked him what the medals on his chest were for. (Almost everyone I have seen in formal dress has a bunch of medals on his chest.) The medals are not military honors, as I had thought, but rather local honors for

doing things for the University. That's why everyone has a whole bunch of them.

We went downstairs to the main dining hall, which was decorated for Christmas and set up for the large crowd that was dining here tonight. The tables were very pretty.

We sat down, and most of the Davises were at one table. The guests of honor, of course, were at the center table. We were interspersed among the students again, and met some very interesting people. Roger and I were across the table from one another. The young man next to me was the brother of the young lady next to Roger. After a few minutes of chatting about New York, where he worked for several years, he talked with his sister in Swedish for the rest of the evening.

Aida, The young lady on Roger's other side, was much more interesting. The main entertainment was provided by the University students (and was, for the most part, sophomoric). They provided us with booklets of drinking songs, which all the Swedes participated in with great gusto. We could not sing because we did not know the tunes, did not understand Swedish, and could not read such fine print in candle light! Aida translated the songs loosely for us, so we could understand what was so funny when everyone else was laughing. She also assured us that University students do not drink all the time – this was not typical behavior at all for them. Hard to believe, when the days are so short and there is little else to do until the Sun comes back. Everyone knew the songs, too. That is pretty incriminating evidence.

We were treated to a meal of raw, marinated halibut, crème de lemon and canapé of dark rye bread on a bed of lettuce; breast of duck with prune-stuffed rolls of Savoy cabbage, potato tartine, coffee and port sauce and Les Jamelles Merlot; and chocolate-mousse cupola with strawberries marinated in Grand Marnier.

The children did not appreciate the entertainment at all (or the food, either), so Peter and Agneta promised to take them back to the hotel after delivering Anna and Ray. They came back for all children who wanted to bail out, and they had a full limo. Nancy and George, Martha and Roger left, too. One of the student directors came over to Roger and me in a panic, asking us what he could do to make the evening a good one for us. I did not want to leave Nancy's children there alone, so Roger and I decided to stay. After everyone who wanted to go had left the building, the evening actually got better.

A group of Lucia singers came in and arranged themselves in a row across the front of the room. The candles on the tables were extinguished as we enjoyed their singing by the light from the candles

they held. After they sang several Christmas carols, the group broke into a rendition of Abba's "Dancing Queen," much to the delight of all, especially us Americans. The instrumental parts were played on a kazoo and brought much laughter.

After that, some of the students were awarded the "Supreme Order of the Ever-Jumping and Smiling Green Frog" for reasons unknown to us, in an elaborate ceremony conducted by black-hooded jesters with play swords made of wood. They were all acting so seriously for such a ridiculous award.

Then they invited all the Nobel laureates up on the stage to be a-warded the same thing! They called Ray's name, learned that he had gone back to the hotel, and asked if one of his sons was there. I tried to get Andy or Roger to go up on stage. "Or better yet, one of his daughters!" the leader said. Andy and Roger pointed at me. I tried to get Susan, Ray's other daughter-in-law, to come with me, but she would not go. So I went up on stage and told the guys that I was the only one brave enough to come up.

Koichi Tanaka and Daniel Kahnerman were on my right; Kurt Wüthrich, Riccardo Giacconi, and Vernon Smith were on my left. Each of us in turn was awarded the "Supreme Order of the Ever-Jumping and Smiling Green Frog" and had a heavy, painted metal green frog on a ribbon placed around our necks. There was much fake pomp and "knighting" with the wooden sword. I was made to promise not to tell Ray a thing about what went on tonight until one year later, a promise I broke on Christmas Day when I gave Ray his frog. There was much hopping around onstage, in which we were invited to participate, but which none of the award-winners joined. How could we, dressed in formal evening wear? We had fun watching the students jump around, though.

It was all good fun, and I am glad I decided to stay. The banquet ended at midnight, although there was another party that would go on until the wee hours of the morning. We had to get back to the hotel, get some sleep, and get ready to leave Sweden the next morning.

**Saturday, December 14:** Up at 6:00, breakfast at 7:00, as usual. We packed all our suitcases, made a final sweep of the children's rooms, and went downstairs at 8:00 for the ride to the airport. Peter and Agneta had gotten us another bus! The luggage went in the compartment underneath, and most of us (Andy and Susan; Martha, Roger, Leslie and Katie; Lynn; Nancy, George, Anna, Marian, Ellie and Karl; Roger, Jimmy, Liz, Mike and me) loaded onto the bus. Anna and Ray were in their limo; Alan, Anne, Alex and Mara were taking a later flight to Seattle.

We arrived at the airport at 8:40, two hours ahead of our 10:40 scheduled departure time. Andy and Susan, Lynn and Nancy, George, Anna, Marian, Ellie and Karl were flying to Chicago; Martha, Roger, Leslie and Katie were on our flight, along with Anna and Ray. The SAS desks for Chicago and Newark (pronounced “New York” by everyone in Sweden) were right next to one another, so we stood in the same line and chatted for the next hour. There was a booth at which Roger changed our money back into US dollars. Liz had her bag searched (I am sure it was a random search, although she claims it was my fault. She was using my suitcase, with my initials “LSD” embroidered on the outside).

Meanwhile, Anna and Ray got whisked away to a VIP room to relax and wait while their luggage was searched and their boarding passes were prepared. They really did not have to worry about a thing for the entire week and a half.

We showed our tickets, got our boarding passes, said “goodbye” to Andy and Susan, Nancy and her family, and Lynn, and were on our way to the gate. We breezed on at the last moment, apparently, though the plane was almost empty. We were asked if there were long queues at the ticket counter. We said yes, they could probably expect many more people on this flight.

Leslie had her father’s boarding pass, so she had to go back to find him. He also had his boarding pass, so they had to go back to the SAS desk to straighten out the mix-up. We found our seats on the plane and hoped they would make it back in time for the flight to Newark. They did.

We were pleasantly surprised to discover that we were in what appeared to be business class. There were six seats across instead of seven, and the seats had head and foot rests. These made the seats much more comfortable and easier to sleep in.

The flight took off on time, and landed in Newark on time nine hours later. We saw a movie, “Lilo and Stitch,” which the children enjoyed. I read my book, listened to classical music, and looked out Michael’s window and shot some photographs. We were right over the right wing, so it and the engine took up much of my field of view. The skies were fairly clear during the journey, so we got to see Norway (all snow and ice and mountains), Iceland, and northern Canada. (It was cloudy over Greenland, much to my disappointment.)

We were picked up at the airport by the same limo driver who brought us there nine days previously. He had given us his phone number when he dropped us off, and had driven to Newark Airport by 1:30 p.m. today. All we had to do was call his cell phone number and wait about a minute and a half for him to pull around to the terminal. He gave us a quick ride

back to Blue Point, where we got a good look at the Nobel gold medal and the certificate. Shortly thereafter, we said “goodbye” to Martha, Roger, Leslie, and Katie (who would be driving back to Rochester the following day), said, “thank you” to Anna and Ray, loaded our suitcases into the suburban, and headed for home.

Our wonderful, fantastic trip was over. It was the best trip and the best Christmas present we have ever had. Even the children agree. They also had a real good time in Stockholm, and it wasn’t only because they missed seven days of school.

