

Dear family and friends,

As the sun sets on the last day of 2010, our thoughts turn to the race we have run during this year, and to our Heavenly Father, who has accompanied us at every turn, and even carried us in a few places. Our traditional Valentine's letter (because we're usually at least 6 weeks behind) may make it out as a New Year's letter this year—that's progress!

This was a busy year for all of us; eventful in some ways, and yet surprisingly uneventful in others. Most of the year found our family divided over 3 continents, with Alex still working for "It Is Written" in California, Erik in Africa, completing his Senior year at Maxwell, Ron and Shawna still working at AIIAS, the Adventist Graduate School in the Philippines.

This year in October we said goodbye to our long-time friend, our Border Collie/Australian Shepherd mix, Tucker. He was 14½ years old, and had a long and wonderful life, with more stamps in his passport than many people ever get, having lived on 3 continents, and outlived 6 cats (Abby is still alive and well). In his youth, he was a champion Frisbee catcher and car-chaser. In his last year, he suffered with skin diseases and dizziness that made him uncomfortable, but he remained sweet and loving, with a healthy appetite, to the end. We miss him, but are glad he is at rest from his suffering. Rest in peace, Tucker!

Since our lives intersect but rarely, let me trace the lives of each family member over the last year, to update you on the basics of what has gone on since last we wrote. Last Christmas found us together as a foursome in Central Philippines, hanging out, and diving a little. From there, each person's year began its separate track.

Alex

There is nothing major to report in Alex's life. He continues to work as all-around IT solutions person at "It Is Written." Talking to his colleagues, the man can do no wrong, and is considered as ranking up there somewhere just below God in ability to fix things. He also won a few brownie points with colleagues also for baking pizza for everyone when the big brass went away to GC session meetings. He did make it to GC session for a weekend with



us, and then we went as a family to Berrien, and on to Argentina, for a family reunion. There was a memorable driving trip over some very slippery muddy roads in Iberá, as well as happy reunions with friends in the Villa, where Alex spent a number of years of his childhood. Unfortunately, this Christmas he had to stay home, in order to have vacation to spend on a trip to Kenya for Erik's graduation in June. Stay tuned: there's no telling exactly what will happen next in Alex's life.

Erik

Erik is a Senior this year at Maxwell, where he is Student Body president, Residence Hall Assistant, and in nearly every music group on campus. He officially doesn't have a girlfriend, though certain names do come more often than others... His plans for next year include college, probably at Andrews, with a major and or minors in something relating to



business, computing, physics, and music. Or something like that. Erik was home with us over the summer, or at least the part of the summer we were home for. He went with us to GC Session, Argentina and Chile (including skiing with friends in the mountains near Chillán), and then to Sri Lanka, so home was not a place we stayed very long this summer. He's been home now over Christmas, and we have really enjoyed working on projects, talking, playing trumpet with Dad, playing Rook, talking technology, and just hanging out.

We will miss him when he goes back—he's gotten to be pretty useful! But we did help him work out a plan to go back a few days early, to spend some time with his roommate's family (did I mention that his roommate also has a sister at Maxwell?) in Zambia and Malawi.



Ron

Ron has had a busy year, given that for much of it his official job responsibilities were for 1½ jobs. And, he may be big, and he may be fast, but still, doing more than a full time job gets old after a while. Fortunately, by now, he has trimmed back to just full time again. Ron teaches half time and directs the PhD in Business program. The good news with that is that the first 2 graduates from the PhD program should graduate now in March! This is exciting, as this has been his baby for several years now, and we are finally seeing the firstfruits! Ron's other half time is taken up with student recruiting. That has begun to improve, and he has spent a lot of time sorting out data relating to students and alumni, which has needed to be done for quite some time. He traveled to Argentina for recruiting, and the US twice (once for a conference, and once for consulting), as well as the other trips we did together that I'll share in my section.





Shawna

Shawna has had a very busy year professionally as well as personally. Publications ate up the first half of the year, and most of it since, actually. The results so far have to do with a full set of brochures for the General Conference meetings, the new Academic Bulletin for AIIAS, a Research Manual for the AIIAS campus, and the usual editions of the Research Journal. These things were done with a bit of teaching reduction, but not nearly enough, so I have a lot of things to make up to my patient husband, who wishes I didn't publish so much. I continue teaching and directing student research, which takes up a full time all its own. With two doctoral students trying to graduate in March as well as an issue of the journal and a major AIIAS research study coming out the end of January,

the near future doesn't look a lot better. Oh well—at least it is fun work!

Travels

Ron and Shawna sneaked away for a long weekend to Korea over Easter break, which was a place we had never been before. What a lovely country! In June, we worked at the AIIAS booth at GC session, briefly visited Berrien Springs in July, then attended a Vyhmeister family reunion in Argentina (at Iguazú Falls), followed by visits with friends and family in Argentina and Chile. In August, Ron and Shawna did a seminar for teachers in Sri Lanka, but Erik was the hero of that week, running errands, entering data, fixing computers, and just generally being great support for us.



The end of September found Ron & Shawna attending a conference on international education in Prague, Czech Republic. After a fascinating week of meetings, we spent another few days recruiting, doing some professional writing, and spending a few days of vacation. Since they didn't have the rental car we had reserved, they had to give us a BMW, which was just fine with Ron! We spent the time in Germany and the mountains in Austria, mainly, visiting famous places like Salzburg and Vienna, as well as Dachau, and Bogenhofen, and friends living in Germany. It was a lovely little "break" for us, ending in a short weekend (Friday and Sabbath) in Cairo on our way home, which was like the cherry on top. We stayed with an old friend from Rwanda days,



and saw just enough to whet our appetites for further Egyptian tourism. From Cairo, Shawna went back to work, but Ron went on to Doha, Qatar, where he taught an intensive before returning to AIIAS.

To round out the year, here we are with Ron, Shawna & Erik in Boracay, spending the end of the year together in a famous beach/party location. The weather hasn't been great and we've all had headcolds, but we managed one dive, and spent a little time on the beach. Since we had mixed writing leave with a couple of days of vacation, the rainy times we have just curled up and worked on data analysis for this big AIIAS online survey that we are working on. So, not a flashy



end to the year, but just how we would have wanted it (except for missing Alex!)—in a quiet place on the back side of the island, with our own kitchen where we can make potato soup and fried rice, and with an internet connection and a pool table. What more could my crew want? We're happy.

We pray that this year has brought you closer to your Lord and Saviour, and that the blessings and good health most of us have enjoyed will continue into the new year. We pray for those who have so little, and for those who don't know the Lord. We pray for AIIAS and its mission to serve the developing world. We pray that Christ's coming will be hastened, and that our lives will somehow make a difference toward helping those around us to be ready for that great day. God bless you and yours in 2011!

Love, Ron & Shawna, Alex & Erik

P.S. If you want to see the rest of the selection of pictures we put together from this year, click [here](#)!