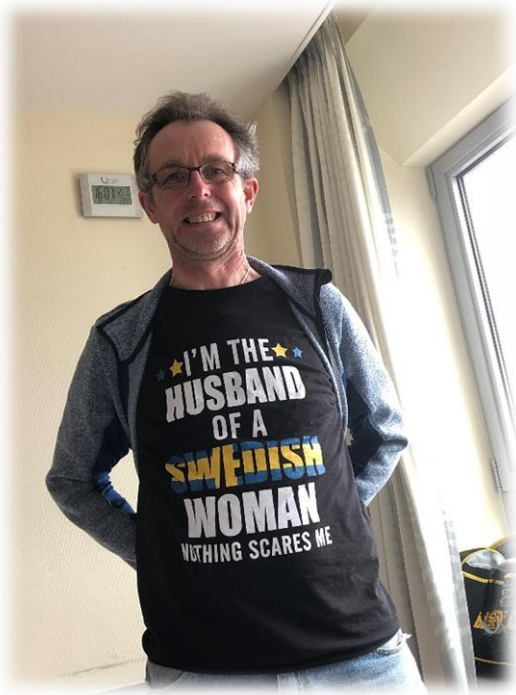


### Christmas 2019 and New Year 2020 Reflections.

Another year has passed. In 2018, I did not write a yearly Christmas letter, because I felt that 2018 had been hard and tough and did not feel like reflecting on it. I hoped that 2019 would turn around. Unfortunately, 2019 threw a curve ball at me. In the beginning of January, it was evident that my lovely little 11-year-old Sara, would not miraculously recover from the leukemia, and I let her sleep in, calmly at home, before suffering would become excessive. The house felt so empty and sterile, without cat.



In February, I took a short ride, before Marc and I were going to head to the Netherlands to listen to Melissa Etheridge, his favourite rock star. We never made it to the concert. I woke up in the hospital and was surprised to see my sister Susanne there. Why was I there? I did not know. I had been in an accident with a car and had been in delirium and not mentally present for 10 days. Pelvis fracture, brain bleeding, concussion and bodily trauma. Marc had cancelled all my work trips for the spring, and I was on full disability (forbidden to work) until the summer. After 3 months my pelvis break had healed so that I could move without crutches and the brain bleed had resolved. I could part-time work again, but it was not until November that I was allowed full-time work. Unfortunately, there are no disability compensations for sick independent workers, but considering the circumstances, that was not so important, because it was a miracle that I was still alive and recovering so well from the accident.



I think my Marc was not really thinking this when he came to the hospital



Once at home, I spend a lot of time resting, and my little Pavlo keep me company

Despite the disability, Marc and I still managed to get the vegetable garden in order and had a successful vegetable season and my freezer is now stocked with excess goodies. Then in May, I finally managed to find two kittens to invade our home. It was hard to find cats, because of new Belgian laws, but two one-month old kittens were rescued from a feral cat living at a horse-stable in Limburg. Lycka (Lucky) and Kurra (Spinning) have been the joys of my year, and provided much amusement, they are very sweet girls. The chickens have been doing well this year, but I have not had many chickens hatching. I have had one group of 10 auracana chicks this year, and they are all doing well.





In Bois des Halles to watch the hyacinths!  
This time not on bike, but on crutches



Lycka and Kurra, two super cute girls





We spent 10 days in Sweden in the end of July. On our 10-year wedding anniversary, we went to Simlångsdalen, and thereafter we headed to Stockholm. Two concerts by Gyllene Tider were parts of our highlights. We also spent some time at Elisabeth's new summer house in the archipelago of Stockholm.



The Church in Simlångsdalen, 10 years ago we were dressed nicer!



Picking some blueberries with Susanne, Isak and Jakob.

In October Marc went in for surgery for a torn tendon in the shoulder. He was told to immobilize the arm for 5 weeks, and after 5 weeks, he ended up with a frozen shoulder, which evidently take a long time to thaw. He is still at home on disability with a lot of shoulder pain. I run the house and garden full time and am hoping that Marc will be able to bike in the spring, as we are planning on climbing the Stelvio and Motirolo in August. I am back both running and biking and am happy that the accident did not impair my ability to do my favourite sports.

This year I have been going frequently to Para Daiza, our most fantastic zoological park and world culture park. My annual pass has been well used. This year they expanded the park with the 'Last Frontier' and this autumn I have enjoyed watching the brown bears and wolves roam in their large area. I got Marc to come along too in the autumn.

The autumn has been with several work trips and I enjoyed seeing Urtmurtia in Russia for the annual calf health school with Dairy News Russia. I have also been more actively involved in several raw milk projects in Europe, which I enjoy very much. Ton Baars and I are working together on projects of education and safe production of raw milk in Europe.





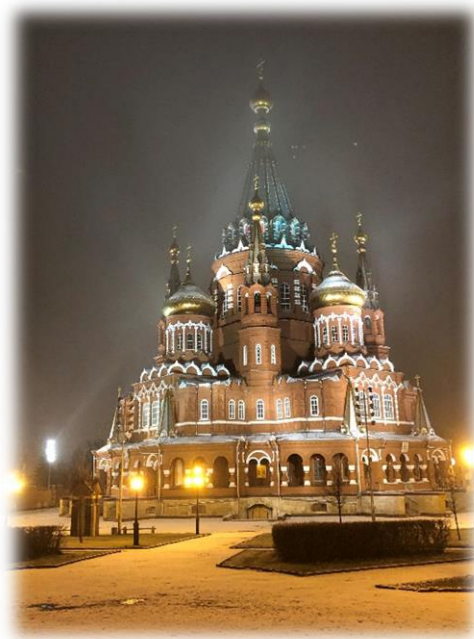
Snow leopard at Para Daiza



My man, with arm in Mitella, who does not like heights.... Was not smiling here 😊



Ton and I are teaching about raw milk, FACE network meeting in Valencia



Izhevsk in Urtmurtia was an interesting experience

This Christmas we have been calmly spending at home. No special food or events, just some Christmas music and decorations. Now we are cautiously expecting/hoping that 2020 will turn around for the better for us. However, it is important to realize that happiness is not dependent on the circumstances but comes from within. God clearly showed his protective wings around my life in this year, and I am grateful and blessed. Blessed with a good home, a good husband Marc, Lycka and Kurra, chickens, a wonderful surrounding, fantastic sisters with families, a good business with good clients, and good friends. God bless you and take good care dear friend! Cat.