

Looking back at 2016 (Vesna, Alisa, Charlie, Arnd)



(screenshots from the movie "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children")

Symbolic and poetic explanation of 2016: protecting baby squirrels together

A girl, lighter than air, floating towards a tree, having a view and a vision of distant possibilities, while keeping strict track of time; attached - by a rope - to the boy who is standing stably on the ground, holding and extending a rope that both anchors the girl to Earth, and allows her to fly freely to her lofty vistas. She puts a lost baby squirrel back to her nest. All in a time-loop, repeated forever... and then, there come monsters...

It is becoming a tradition to look back at the previous year, both to celebrate the achievements, and to learn from mistakes; both to compare with the years in the past, and with the plans that were made then; and of course - to make new plans, to make the Gods amused ;-)

Checking the plans that I had for 2016 (http://becha.home.xs4all.nl/2015_good_old_year.pdf) -- **ALL** of them have happened, and "then some":

> becoming a Born Again Vegetarian - - as a political statement!

This worked out quite well - - I was a "pescaterian", that is: still eating fish, so together with eating eggs and milk products I am not exactly boycotting "animals death industry", but being a vegetarian WAS and IS a good political statement, a conversation starter. It also works well as a personal challenge: I was tempted several times when there was meat I wanted to taste, but I enjoyed "suffering for my principles" and realizing that giving up some of my wishes and desires IS a viable option, tests the strength of my determination, and exercises my willpower. Plus it's making me healthier. I will continue doing this.

> - visiting Kathmandu - - dream destination from my adolescence

I did visit Nepal, for SANOG; Kathmandu was both magical and disappointing (could not live up to my expectations); however, now I have another dream destination: Jhnu Danda: hot-springs near Annapurna Sanctuary. I want to return there when I'm 86! (43+43)
Surprise of the year: Arnd and me have spent six days on the trekking trip to Annapurna Base Camp! 4200+ meters! Biggest achievement of my life!! (after childbirths, of course).

> - going on vacation to Slovenia in February

We stayed close to the Croatia border, alternated going sledging, and going to the spa.

> - organizing camping UnConference in Lika in August

Wow, **YES, we did it!!** 21 days, 7-30 people from 10 different countries, ages 2-72, huge success, fantastic! <https://wiki.techinc.nl/index.php/LikaCamp2016>

> - doing more for Women In Tech (FemHack? CyberFeminist?)

It is called “Hacking Feminism”: https://wiki.laglab.org/Hacking_Feminism We had 11 meet ups in 2016, & continuing in 2017. I also joined “increasing diversity” efforts in the RIPE community.

> - at work: moving office

Ah, yes... Well, we did move, finally: on 23rd December!! I was sad, because “Singel 258” was my most constant address in the previous 20 years (since my job interview in 1998): I moved countries, moved houses within Amsterdam, and the only stable address was - the RIPE NCC office. That part of the history is gone. New office is *IN* the building of Central Station!!

My job changed in other ways too: because I started working only 3 days a week in October 2015, in April 2016 I stopped being a manager, my department (Measurements Community Building) officially stopped existing in July, and I moved to the “Communications Department” to be (just a) Community Builder, not for RIPE Atlas nor for Measurements. Other things didn’t change much: I still organised two hackathons: in Copenhagen and Madrid, and had lots of fun. I tried to travel less, but all together I made 11 trips, for work & family vacations (5 flights, 3 long train trips, 3 long car trips), and 3 local conferences in Holland, by train. In 2017 I wish to travel even less!

Mix between hackers-scene & work: <https://labs.ripe.net/Members/becha/the-next-42-ripe-atlas-probes-at-hackerspaces> & <https://labs.ripe.net/Members/becha/six-years-of-hackerspaces-tours-during-ripe-meetings> & <http://labs.ripe.net/hackahtons>

> - further cultivating UnCivilization community & activities

Major achievements for UnCivilization community were: LikaCamp2016, meetups at SquatConf in Berlin, DE WAR in Amersfoort, at #33c3 in Hamburg, and cycling together from Amsterdam to Utrecht :) The year 2016 ended with ~2000 posts to the list, in total; 120+ people subscribed, and we also have a new web site & a wiki: <https://www.unciv.nl>

Here are some UnCiv-related proposals and presentations I prepared in 2016:

- October 2016: Post-Singularity of Mycelium : Speaker for Squirrels: https://becha.home.xs4all.nl/Speaker_for_Squirrels-GogBot-2016.pdf
- IdeaCamp proposal: <https://becha.home.xs4all.nl/idea-camp-lika-camp-repopulating-rewilded-lika.txt>

The most interesting books I’ve read in 2016:

- “To Our Friends” by The Invisible Committee & <https://tarnac9.wordpress.com/texts/the-coming-insurrection/>
- “Green Wizardry”, John Michael Grear
- “The Myth of Human Supremacy”, Derrick Jensen
- In Defense of Serendipity, Sebastian Olme
- Reinventing Collapse, Dmitry Orlov
- EVERYTHING from Peter Hoeg (Elephants’ Keeper Children, The Quiet Girl, The Woman and The Ape, Miss Smila’s Sense for Snow, Borderliners)

- Feral, by George Monbiot
- The Secret Lives of Trees, by Peter Wohlleben
- Fierce Invalids, Home from the Hot Climates, by Tom Robbins
- A Walk in the Woods, by Bill Bryson
- A Cave in the Snow, Tenzin Palmo's Quest for Enlightenment, by Vicki Mackenzie
- Three Cups of Tea, by Greg Mortenson
- Fragments of an anarchist anthropology, by David Greaber
- Catastrophism, disaster management (etc), Rene Reisel, Jaime Semprun
- “Generation A” & “Player One” by Douglas Coupland)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Years_of_Rice_and_Salt Kim Stanley Robinson

The most dramatic events in the context wider than my family-and-personal-sphere were:

- Brexit
- US elections being “won” by Trump
- #JakeGate
- Refugee crisis
- Climate crisis: hottest year ever

Kids: Alisa turned 13, and finished her first year in the high school, with more-less OK grades and many extra activities: theatre classes, school newspaper, and bass-guitar. Then she has chosen classical gymnasium: Latin and Ancient Greek, in addition to English, French and German! Charlie turned 11, he is in his final year of primary school, busy with choosing high school. He is reading lots of comic books and playing a trumpet. His health is OK - no asthma attacks in Lika, few small ones occasionally at home. Kids also got larger extended family: Camiel’s new girlfriend Paula has three children, and they all spend quite some time together!

In addition to reaching ABC (Annapurna Base Camp), Arnd and me climbed few more smaller mountains (Kokerna & Lisac), Lisac even twice in the same year, despite Heraclitus ;-)
 We celebrated five years of Techinc, went to our 6th CCC congress together (#33c3), enjoyed many saunas, bought a car together, and survived LikaCamp2016!



(Annapurna Base Camp,



Kokerna,



Lisac)

Health-wise, I continued to do yoga every day; to eat healthy - so I lost another 5 kg of fat, discovered a new sport: SUP-ing (Stand Up Pedaling) and enjoyed it a lot with the family; continued roller-skating and ice-skating, and going swimming as much as possible: last day outdoors swimming in 2016 was mid-October (compared to 27. October in 2015!). In addition to visiting my favorite dunes - Kennemerduinen - as often as possible, I also discovered Waterleidingsduinen, where the deer roam free, and so do we, often ;-)

Plans for 2017

Now it becomes tricky, because I know these plans will be reviewed in January next year...

Personal goals for 2017: lose another 10% of my current weight; eat fresh, whole, delicious food; continue doing yoga every day, and add meditation practice; climb 3 more mountains; spend even more time in connection with Nature. Things to DROP or decrease: stop following twitter, stop watching series, stop reading trash-books, stop collecting books. Wishes: practice NVC, go camping, go dancing, meet a shaman, decluter! Love more, judge less!

There are things that will go on:

- Community Building and organising – UnCivilization, events and list postings
- Hackers events I will attend, for two reasons: UnCiv & for work
 - FOSDEM, SquatConf (maybe), HackOn, SHA2017, BalCCon, 34c3
- There are trips that I will make for work:
 - RIPE meeting in Budapest
 - SEE meeting in Budva
 - Maybe one more, for a hackathon?
- And there are things that children will go through, with me:
 - Alisa's puberty – a new phase is about to start!
 - Charlie choosing & starting a high school
 - Vacations: Germany (with Nana), Texel, Croatia, maybe somewhere unexpected?

Long-term planning

Japan

Both Arnd and me would like to visit Japan again, and bring children with us. This requires for a lot of things to get aligned favourably, or many lucky coincidences, or hard work in organising and planning, or all of the above ;-). I'm dropping this here as a hint and as a wish, to see what kind of ripple-effect will it cause.

Lika

I have no concrete plans for going to Lika in 2017; I'm counting on serendipity to bring me there.

The house is available to friends for short stays, retreats, as a nomadic base, for "digital detox": **for free** (like free software: high-maintenance, steep learning curve, favors function over form, you are free to use it & modify it, but you also have a responsibility to contribute, and to share it with others – with dormouse, with extended family, and with the community of future users).

We might organise another LikaCamp in 2018: let me know if you are interested!

Even longer term, I would like to attract many people to come and live In Lika, in that area, with us – in a commune, or in a village, or in the little town; in the rural area, in the mountains, on the farms... It will take another 5-10 years to achieve this dream, do join if you like it too!

Much love,

Vesna, Arnd, Alisa, Charlie

<http://xs4all.nl/~becha>