

Dear friends and family,

Although the world at large faced some challenges, for us has 2023 been a beautiful, social, and creative year. We've captured our year in a [slideshow](#), but if you want, you can also read below about what 2023 brought us.

Work and Hobbies



We are actively involved in various associations. Both of us are on the board of MouvArt (the artists' association in Auxerre) and our choir (ArcyLadore). Hans continues to serve as the president of Compagnie d'Avigny, and Petra is on the board of Amis de la Chapelle d'Avigny. Through these activities, we have made many new friends, which is very enjoyable.

In October, we participated in an exhibition, and we remain busy with music. Our choir, led by the inspiring Claire, has been working on beautiful four-part songs and even

performed two concerts. Petra, in addition to playing the piano, collaborates with people worldwide through Musora.com, singing and sharing songs online. There's a weekly rotation where each participant suggests a song that others record and share. There was even a virtual choir singing [It's the most wonderful day of the year](#)

Hans, aside from handling various tasks on our large property, is engaged in electronic music. Now we eagerly await a collaborative musical project. To be continued...

Health

Petra's health has significantly improved after a challenging 2022, especially following cortisone injections in the spinal vertebrae. However, maintaining her well-being involves regular exercise and morning swims. Hans takes walks with Cato during this time, and his health is excellent.



Pets

Cato turned two this year and has become an affectionate and vigilant dog. She notices any changes on the property and alerts us. Since January, she attends the dog school in Mailly-le-Chateau every Sunday morning, where she learns various things alongside about 15 other dogs. Cato's weak point was her fear of other dogs, but through socialisation efforts, she has made significant progress.



Unfortunately, our brown chickens, Soof and Carmen, passed away this year. We acquired two new ones, Gerdi and Toos. The black chickens, Kasja and Purka, were not keen on the newcomers initially, but after about three weeks, they accepted the new additions.

Vacation and Visits

Despite enjoying life here, we went on vacation twice this year. We spent two weeks in the Morvan, about an hour away. We also visited the Netherlands twice. The first visit in May was for the funeral of my sister Carli's husband Jorge, who suddenly passed away after a brief illness. The second visit in November was for a pleasant reason. My youngest sister Marijcke's celebrated her 50th birthday, a High Tea at Castle Groeneveld.

We were also there to celebrate Carli's birthday in Rotterdam with Guido and Sammy. And we, of course, visited a lot of friends and other family in the Netherlands.



We also had the pleasure to host a lot of visitors this year. Therefore, the renovation of the small house was the focus of activities this year, turning it from a storage space into a guesthouse named Casa Rosa. It has been painted, received a new ceiling and floor, and a nice tile floor was added around it.

In light of the forecasted diesel shortage last year, we purchased an electric car, a green Dacia Spring, ideal for local trips. Very handy in combination with our solar panels. We've kept the other car for longer distances.

All in all we cherish all the beautiful moments and look forward to many more in 2024.

Wishing you a wonderful and healthy New Year.

Petra and Hans