

Robert's Highlights of 2011 Photo Album

January 2010

- 1) 1/20 Vandenberg AFB is 50 miles away, but when a rocket is launched, it can look pretty close! I just happened to look up while hiking and saw the launch of the Delta IV Heavy Launch Vehicle. The largest rocket ever to launch from the US West Coast.
- 2) A few minutes later

The People Are Waking Up and Fighting Back

- 3) 2/26: After the outrages of Wisconsin Governor Walker, people gathered here at the Los Angeles City Hall and around the country in solidarity with the Wisconsin workers. The start of a big year of protests and People Power!

Springtime in Santa Barbara County

- 4) 4/3 Figueroa Mountain Road was home to Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch. It is also a great place to see spring wildflowers!

Lucid Dream Workshop w/ Stephen LaBerge – Kalani Hawaii – Plus Kauai Visit – April

Have you ever had a dream where you knew you were dreaming? This is the definition of a Lucid Dream. It is the gateway to a number of insights into the nature of consciousness, which is one of my greatest passions. Last year I did a short workshop with Stephen LaBerge at the Tucson convention on consciousness. This year I was back for his full workshop at the remote Kalani retreat on the Big Island of Hawaii, along with people from around the world. For a week before the workshop I also went to Kauai for snorkeling, hiking and more.

- 5) 4/8: Upon arrival I went straight to Waimea Canyon "the Grand Canyon of the Pacific".
- 6) 4/9: I stayed at the opposite end of the road, at Hanalei. Reputedly the inspiration for the place name in "Puff the Magic Dragon". A tiny village with excellent snorkeling. Here is the famed Humuhumunukunukuāpua'a.
- 7) 4/10: Seeing a sea turtle is a great thrill. But this one saw me at a distance, swam straight toward me... and nuzzled up against my chest!
- 8) 4/11: The Allerton Garden is a spectacular botanical garden and part of the National Tropical Botanical Garden. This Moreton Bay Fig Tree was the site of dinosaur eggs in "Jurassic Park". We actually have such a tree right here in Santa Barbara!
- 9) 4/13: This is the Kalani Retreat. Perfect for Lucid Dreaming! Also a living laboratory of sustainable agriculture and energy. This area is largely off the grid due to active lava.
- 10) 4/13: The surf is rough at this end of Hawaii. These Kapoho Tide Pools are a refuge!
- 11) 4/13: More fish in the Kapoho Tide Pools.
- 12) 4/13: Can you spot the fish?
- 13) 4/14: Ali Suresky was the youngest participant at the Workshop, flying out from Atlanta. We took turns photographing each other and this amazing land/seascape.
- 14) 4/14: Ali photographed me on this lava moonscape.
- 15) 4/17: With Stephen LaBerge at the Kilauea Volcano/Hawaii Volcanoes National Park
- 16) 4/20: Melanie Zarth of Milwaukee was one of the star Lucid Dreamers at the Workshop. Her focus: Having dream encounters with Michael Jackson.
- 17) 4/20: The nearest town was Kalapana and it is mostly obliterated by lava.
- 18) 4/21: Back to Kilauea inside a lava tube. Spectacular!

May

- 19) 5/8: Mothers Day was a good chance for the family to get together in Sacramento where my parents live.

- 20) 5/8: L-R: My mother Eleanor, me, brother Larry, sister-in-law Krisztina, my father Emil.
- 21) 5/11: Liz, Don, Linda and I worked together at a small nanotechnology firm that was pretty wacky. We have each scattered, but enjoy meeting up for lunch sometimes!

May: Back to the Philippines!

There is always more to see in the Philippines! Nice people, good snorkeling, hiking and sightseeing, all at affordable prices. This time my traveling companion was Sofia, though we did meet up with Bianca in Manila. Bianca is off on endless travels of her own this year! Sofia is a high school biology teacher.

- 22) 5/24: We started our trip in Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Palawan claims to be an eco-preserve. But we had to travel for days on rough roads and boats to get to places that were more natural. El Nido "The Nest" was quite pleasant.
- 23) 5/26: It was an all-day boat trip to get to Coron, at the north end of Palawan. Well worth it for well-preserved corals and beautiful fish. Sofia spotted this one.
- 24) 5/26: More beautiful fish of Coron.
- 25) 5/26: More beautiful fish of Coron.
- 26) 5/26: Snorkeling means going out in small boats and trusting the boatmen. Toto got us to some very special places, including a hidden lagoon fed with hot springs. But at the farthest point from home, the engine oil pressure went to zero. And the sun was setting. We were able to flag down the last ferry of the day to tow us back. Very lucky!
- 27) 5/30: The Banaue Rice Terraces are sometimes called the Eighth Wonder of the World. They reminded me of my visit to Machu Picchu in Peru. These are about four times older. And still in use! Days of travel on very rough roads, but worth it. Hiking through them requires good balance and a good guide. We were glad to have the experience!
- 28) 6/2: From one other-worldly place to another! Upon US arrival, hiked in Hollywood!

June: Back in Santa Barbara – Solstice and More!

- 29) 6/5: Santa Barbara Summer Solstice. Helping in the Workshop is half of what Solstice is about! I finally learned to use the sewing machine to help in new ways. Here I am making bunches of bananas. The theme this year was "Jungle".
- 30) 6/16: Even with Solstice preparations, plenty else happening. Weird Al Yankovic gave a performance not to miss! He has boundless energy and creativity. And costumes!
- 31) 6/16: Kaptain Konstruct was Burning Man host for Bianca and me in 2009. Here he celebrates his 50th birthday at the Weird Al Yankovic event. With some close friends!
- 32) 6/19: Santa Barbara was a sleepy little town with a one room airport. Now we are a sleepy little town with a big airport and not many flights!
- 33) 6/21: Solstice has many fundraisers, this one at the India House with Belly Dancing. Friend Cathy Murillo was starting her campaign for SB City Council. She won! Yeah!
- 34) 6/25: Solstice Day! This young lady Danielle shows off the Jungle theme well! We worked together a lot building things and tearing things down afterwards.
- 35) 6/25: Some of us were positioned near the back of the parade. Which leaves time to hang out before the start!
- 36) 6/25: Danielle Peters and I worked together with the Central America Response Network back when Reagan was murdering people in Central America. We went on to work together at Digital Instruments. It was good to be working together again on the Steam Punk Safari ensemble in Solstice, along with her sons Jack and Seth!
- 37) 6/25: Finally, our turn in the parade. 90 minutes of unicycling for me!
- 38) 6/25: Christine Hartman is a creative artist and a skilled craftsperson and engineer of floats. Even after a demanding parade, she is glowing with energy!

July-August: Visitors and Travel North and More Activity at Home

July brought an interesting visitor Virginia to Santa Barbara. Like Bianca, she is a self-sufficient free spirit who picks up and travels on a whim.

- 39) 7/9: Virginia and I took my swing dancing friend Lyn and her friend Cristie up to Lizard's Mouth. A must see when you visit here! Photo by Virginia.
- 40) 7/20: Heading north, I met up with friend and former co-worker Pranab Ghosh in Sunnyvale. Pranab always offers a refreshing alternative view to our absurd life here!
- 41) 7/22: Swing dancing and biologist friend Nancy Sandburg now lives in Sacramento where my parents live. A chance to get together for the State Fair!
- 42) 7/26: Heading back south, a visit with the Seagal family in Marina, near Monterey. L-R: Kira, me, Tara, Paul, David. Paul, Kira and I were at UCSB together long ago!
- 43) 8/4: Fiesta is a week of "Old Spanish Days" events. The parade is not as interesting as Solstice, but these smaller events are colorful and enjoyable.
- 44) 8/6: Taking Virginia and her friends touring, they took my photo at UCSB Storke Tower.
- 45) 8/11: The Chumash Casino once again hosts music from the old days. The "Happy Together" tour brought us The Buckingham, The Grass Roots, The Association, Paul Revere & the Raiders and The Turtles all together. They seem to love their work!
- 46) 8/21: This is Virginia and her friend Marina visiting from the Bay Area. I took them on a challenging hike to the base of Tangerine Falls. Scrambling, but a beautiful spot!
- 47) 8/21: When I took this photo, I realized Marina was striking the pose of the Little Mermaid in Copenhagen. When I was a child we lived near this famous sculpture!
- 48) 8/27: Belly Dancing is happening a lot here, now! I am enjoying it!
- 49) 9/5: My neighbors Trevah and Adam have a new baby Evan in addition to daughter Marley! Upstairs neighbor Jonathan comes over to play!

September: Memorial for MIT Professor Jerry Lettvin

Jerry Lettvin ran the Concourse program "Mind, Matter and Machine" that I was a part of as student and employee at MIT. He was an MD, a psychiatrist, a neuroscientist and an electrical engineer. He was a pioneer of single-cell nerve recording and published a revolutionary paper "What the Frog's Eye Tells the Frog's Brain" in an obscure engineering journal.

Jerry was a wonderful story-teller who could make anything fascinating – even things that really are not, as another professor warned me! He had a long, good life, but finally passed this year at age 91. His wife Maggie was host of fitness show "Maggie and the Beautiful Machine" on PBS when I was a student and I took her fitness class. Quite a contrast to fat, smoking Jerry! But they loved each other dearly even as Maggie teased him on her show.

My friends and I converged in Boston for the memorial/reunion of Jerry's family, friends, colleagues, students, enemies, arch-enemies and victims, as the program proclaimed. Lettvin was also famed for debating Timothy Leary on national television and being the first to say "Bullshit" on TV in the process!

- 50) 9/23: Before the memorial I went to see the Blue Man Group perform at the cozy Charles Playhouse in Boston. Sitting front and center I was glad they gave me a poncho! Very messy, but very creative and enjoyable! And grateful for this photo with one of the stars!
- 51) 9/24: Here is my last photo of Maggie and Jerry together in 2005. Lovebirds!
- 52) 9/24: Friends Walter and Kim came from Pennsylvania while Genie hosted me.

October-November: More Santa Barbara Activism and Activities

- 53) 10/2: Liberian activist Leymah Gbowee gave a talk on her book "Mighty Be Our Powers: How Sisterhood, Prayer and Sex Changed a Nation at War." I felt especially honored to get prime seating for her delightful talk when she won the Nobel Prize a few days later! Creative activism can beat thugs and corruption! There is hope!
- 54) 10/8: Occupy Wall Street had been going just a short time before we had our own Occupy Santa Barbara events! "We are the 99%" captures the heart of the message.
- 55) 10/8: After speeches, Occupy took to the streets. And to the banks, to ask people to close their accounts at banks that are "too big to fail". The gatherings, teach-ins, General Assembly and marches continue!
- 56) 10/15: Clau Orona is one of the Solstice costume designer geniuses. She decided to create her own event in Solvang called Faerie Fest. Lots of good costumes!
- 57) 10/26: Tom Hayden continues his activism commitment. He was speaking against nuclear power. But he said the people have to take responsibility to rally FOR sustainable transportation, energy and agriculture and not just be against things!
- 58) 10/29: Van Jones was Obama's "Green Jobs Czar". He now spreads his positive win-win vision to revive the economy by putting people to work building sustainable transportation, energy and agriculture!
- 59) 11/12: The Alan Parsons Project was a studio music project that did not allow live performance. Until now! And who knew that Alan Parsons lives in my own little town of Goleta! He and his group did a superb performance of inventive studio favorites.
- 60) 11/19: It is not enough for Occupy to have an important message. Creativity is vital!

November: Thanksgiving/Birthday in the Bay Area

- 61) 11/24: My brother generously hosted Thanksgiving once again. And sister-in-law Krisztina made me a cake for my birthday the next day! Nephew Aaron brought us up to date on his college studies at Occidental and other activities.
- 62) 11/25: Occupy San Francisco is a mix of rugged street people and creative minds. Activist friend Steve Freedkin had an interesting insight on Occupy: It does not really matter that much if the Occupy people have any big ideas. The fact that they are there and not going away gives other people the chance to think about bigger ideas and strategies.
- 63) 11/26: Virginia picked me up at my hotel in Union Square to join her friends for a unique hike in hidden areas of Mt Tamalpais in Marin County.
- 64) 11/26: An enchanted mossy forest lies hidden on Mt Tam!
- 65) 11/26: The view toward San Francisco from the Marin Headlands is legendary!
- 66) 11/26: Union Square San Francisco has its own style of holiday celebration!