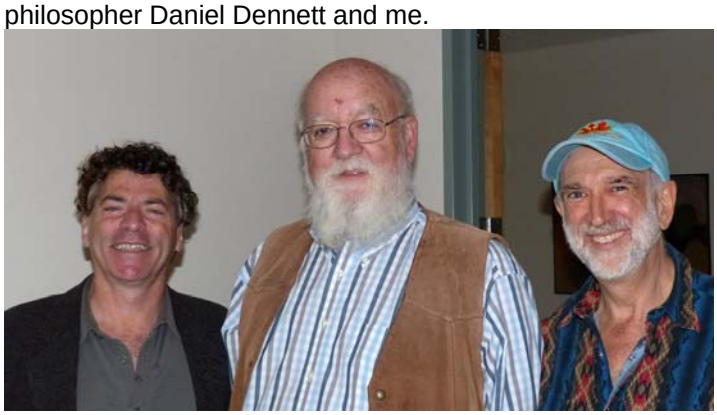
Robert's 2013 Highlights

My two big passions in life are to understand the nature of reality and to understand the nature of consciousness.

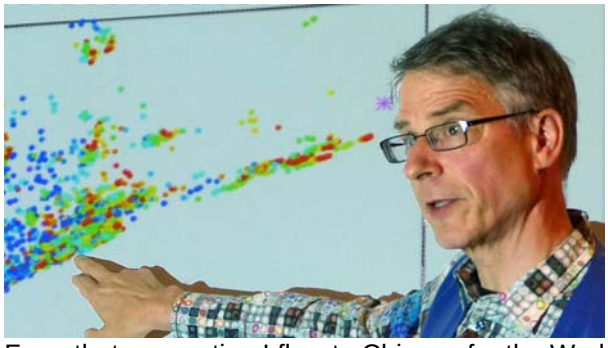
I am very grateful to Professor Jonathan Schooler at the UC Santa Barbara Psychology Department for giving me official status as a "visiting scholar". Below: Jonathan (L) with philosopher Daniel Dennett and me.



On the nature of reality front I was happy to meet physicist Brian Greene this year:



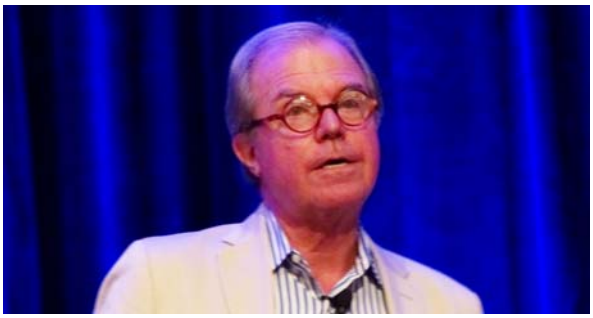
The main benefit of being a "visiting scholar" was the chance to attend the annual convention of the Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness. One of the stars there was Christof Koch:



From that convention I flew to Chicago for the World Future Society convention. It was refreshing to be around positive visionaries.

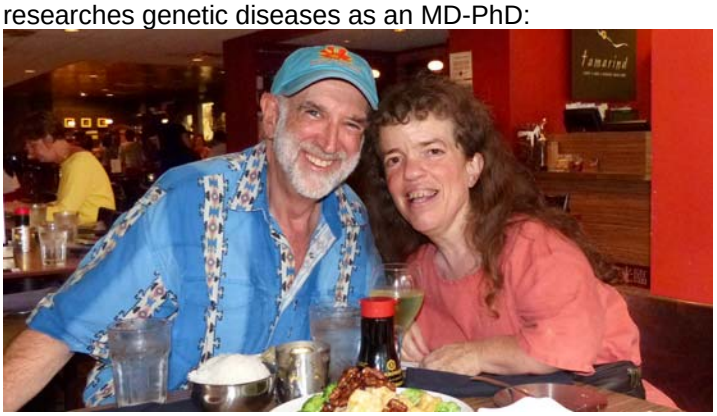
I started with a workshop on 3D printing which may change every aspect of society. It will decentralize manufacturing. My biggest question throughout the convention: What is the future economy in a world where less labor is needed?

The libertarians dismissed my question while more thoughtful people agreed it is a big challenge. That included keynote speaker Nicholas Negroponte of One Laptop Per Child fame:



But the speaker who impressed me most was author Ramez Naam who talked of the "failures of the market". Any good future vision has to solve these failures.

While in Chicago I met up with my friend Dr Judy Badner who I knew from Kennedy High School and MIT. She researches genetic diseases as an MD-PhD:



And of course I visited the Chicago Art Institute, one of the best art museums in the world:



I continue to serve on the Sierra Club Santa Barbara Executive Committee and lead Sierra Club hikes. On a recent hike I had record-setting 35 people!



My enjoyment of Swing Dancing continues and much of the credit goes to the best partners like Karen Weaver:



Nancy Roman continues to teach me English Flute (recorder) and is also a hiking & unicycling companion:



On the eve of my birthday I went unicycling with new-found friends of the UCSB Unicycle Club:



My big unicycling occasion is with Solstice! Artist Mary Price made me into a dinosaur! (Scott London Photo):



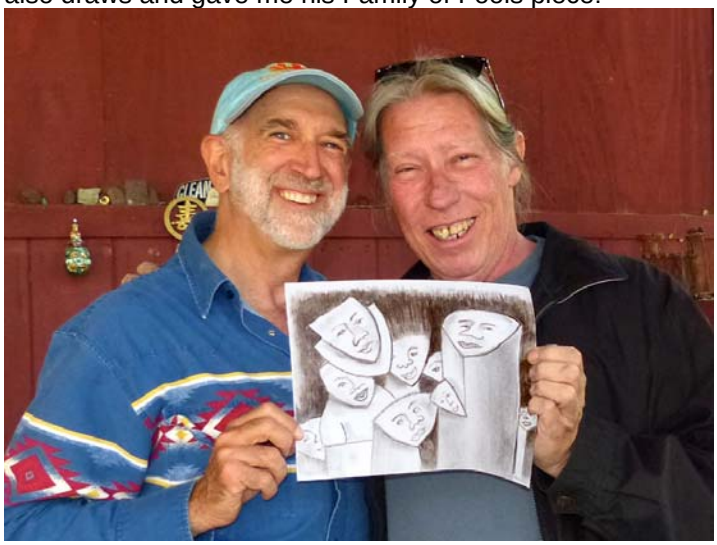
Here I am with Mary:



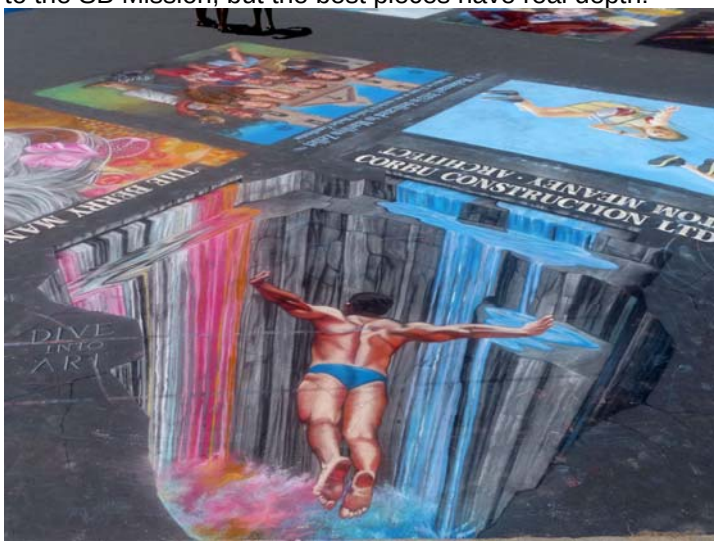
And artist friend Pali was at that same event:



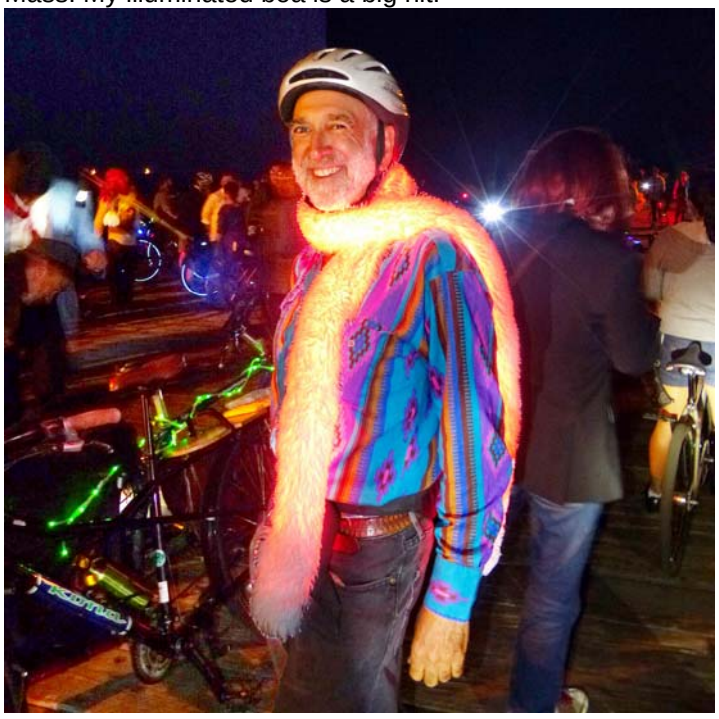
Dan Chrynko is famed for his beautiful tile mosaics, but he also draws and gave me his Family of Fools piece:



The I Madonnari Chalk Painting Festival brings stunning art to the SB Mission, but the best pieces have real depth:



Bike Moves is Santa Barbara's colorful version of Critical Mass. My illuminated boa is a big hit:



Blind Summit Theater brought minimalist puppetry from England to UCSB and then up close:



Bay to Breakers is a serious race in San Francisco, including African winners. But it is more famous for nudity and hilarious costumes. I also unicycled it!



Halloween is huge in Santa Barbara. A cast of hundreds performs Michael Jackson's Thriller including our Mayor:



And my neighbors Rosemary and MacKenzie:



Lois Capps is voted “nicest member of Congress” and she is ours. Here at our Labor Day celebration:



And Hannah-Beth Jackson is our tough State Senator:



But politics only works where there is activism. Local climate change activists called for sustainable energy and an end to the XL Pipeline which they mocked up:



Since 1998 I have shared my home with these White’s Tree Frogs:



Pot Shots creator Ashleigh Brilliant celebrated his 80th Birthday with wife Dorothy and friends at Franceschi Park:



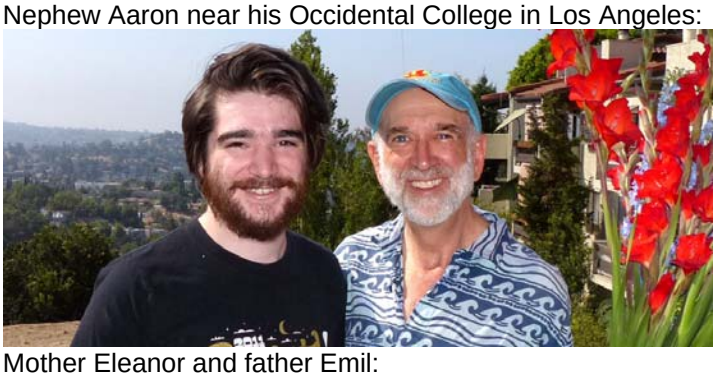
Shannon O’Reilly from Nicaragua to the Frog Shrine:



My brother Larry with daughter Hannah and wife Krisztina:



Nephew Aaron near his Occidental College in Los Angeles:



Mother Eleanor and father Emil:

