

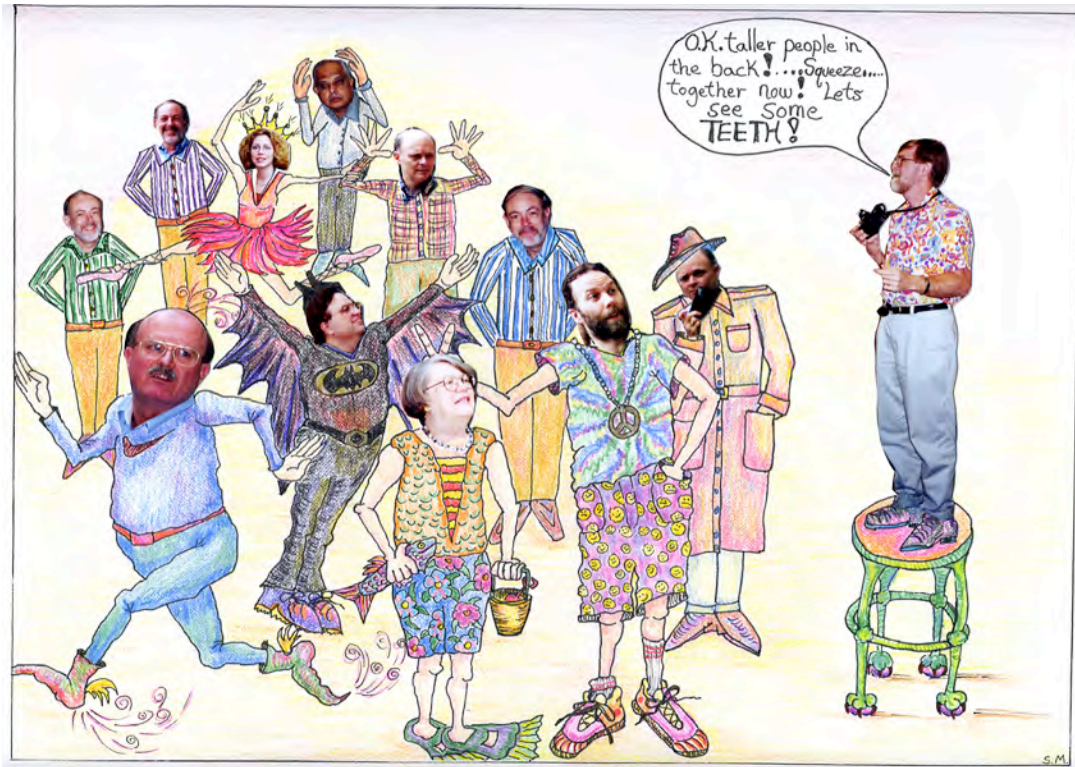
2001 Past President's Address Connie Rajnak

I've enjoyed these past three years on the Council a lot, and more than I expected to. I think this is because I have quite a soft spot for the ACA because of all my years of coming to meetings. Our meetings have always been scientifically inspiring, but beyond that they just seem to have a higher percentage of people I really like than any other.

In spite of all my meeting attendance, though, before my election to the Council, I had very little idea of what the Council actually does. So, when I cast about for a topic for this talk, it occurred to me that maybe some of you might also wonder about this. So, at our Council meeting in May I took some pictures. Now, I am not a gifted photographer, and consequently after the meeting I was beginning to really worry — in fact PANIC is probably a better description. But I happened to be visiting my daughter Stacey at the time, and she kindly offered to help me out — and she used my photographs to make some drawings.

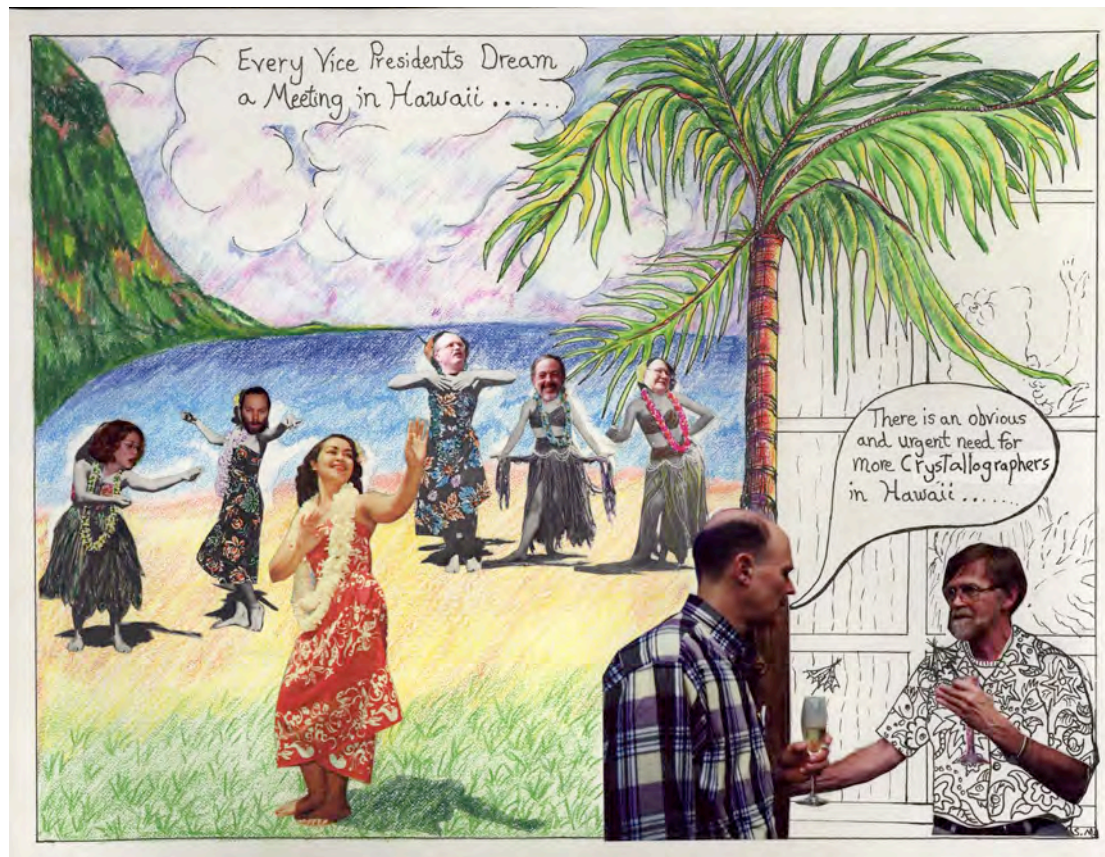


Stacey Morrison drawing (2012).



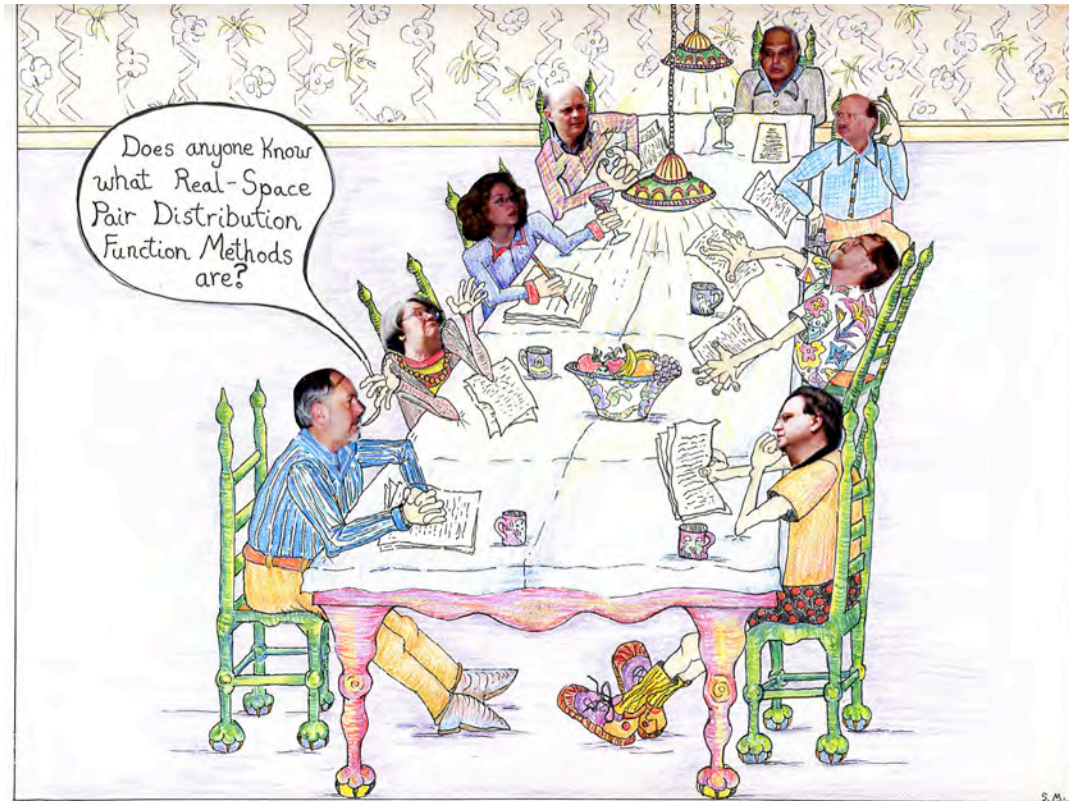
So — This first slide shows our primary responsibility at Council meetings, which naturally is to get the appropriate BILL DUAX photographs. (Bill Duax on stool; counterlockwise from 7:00: Louis Delbaere, Doug Ohlendorf, Jane Griffin, Lee Brammer, Charlie Carter, Bill Stallings, Charlie Carter, S. N. Rao, Marcia Colquhoun, Bill Stallings, Bill Stallings.)

Once this is accomplished, we get very serious, because a big part of the remaining work of the Council has to do with future meetings. Our survival and our success as an organization depend very much on our meetings. And successful meetings depend on, as in real estate, Location, Location, Location. We have a Meetings Committee that does a lot of the work scouting meeting sites and negotiating, but it's the job of the Vice President to line up enthusiastic and competent Local Chairs.



I think every Vice President must have the same reaction — It would be *so* nice if we had more crystallographers in Hawaii. (In front, Charlie Carter talking to Bill Duax. In back, left to right: Marcia Colquhoun, Lee Brammer, Louis Delbaere, Bill Stallings, Jane Griffin. Middle front: A real hula dancer.)

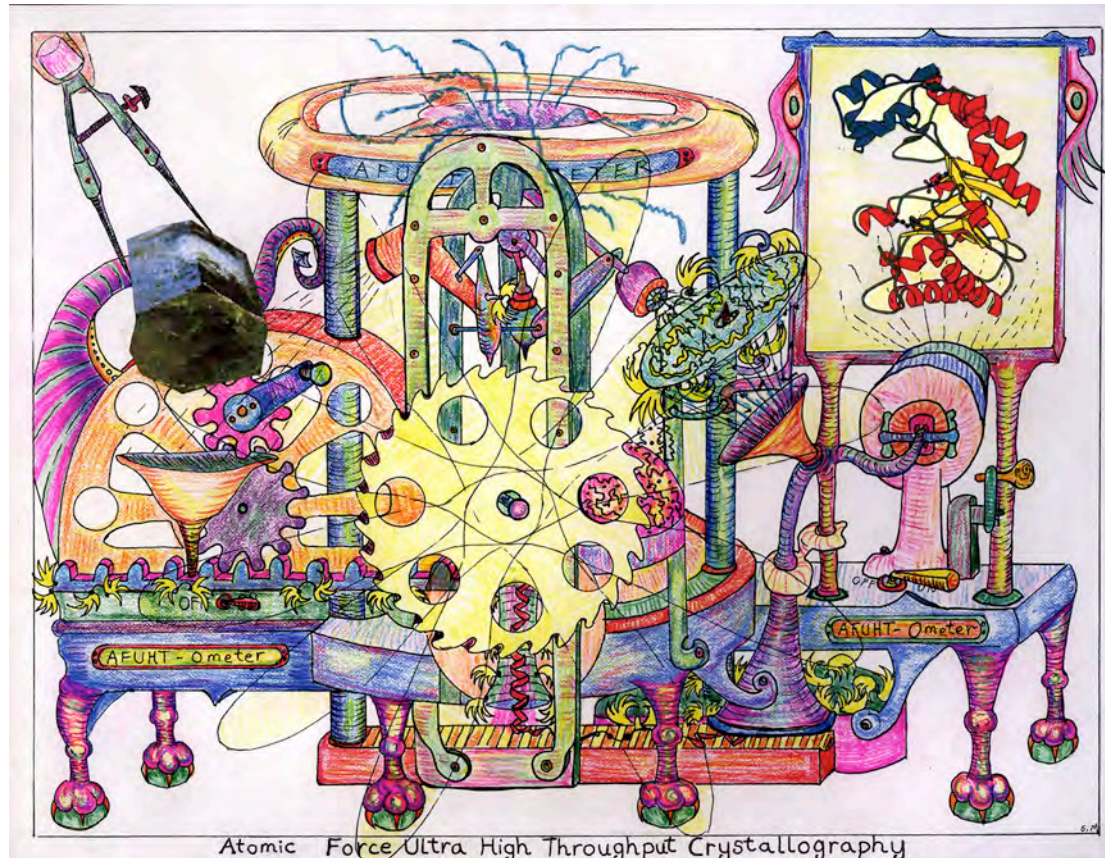
The main thing, of course is to have outstanding scientific programs. And here we have to always keep in mind that the ACA is an extremely diverse group. We have in common methods, and instruments, and software tools, and history, but beyond that our scientific interests and goals vary widely. This can make our meetings more interesting because it's fun to learn about what is going on in other areas of research — but it can also be something of a challenge to encourage a scientific program that can satisfy these diverse interests.



You might remember that there was a workshop last Saturday on Real Space Pair Distribution Function Methods, organized by Simon Billinge. By all accounts it was very successful, but it's probably just as well that no one on the Council was asked to explain it to anybody. (Bill Stallings speaking; clockwise from Bill: Jane Griffin, Marcia Colquhoun, Charlie Carter, S. N. Rao, Louis Delbaere, Bill Duax, Doug Ohlendorf)

More thoughts about meetings. Many of us who have been coming to ACA meetings for a long time tend to have a sentimental attachment for the ACA. This might be because we remember earlier meetings when the organization was smaller and everyone knew everyone and when you could count on many of the most important scientific developments to be reported at the meeting. Times change, of course, and now there are many competing meetings and most of them focus on more specific areas of interest. BUT, if we want to ensure that new generations of crystallographers will have the opportunities we had to make contacts, and to form lasting friendships; to present their work to an audience of crystallographers and in the same environment to hear leading crystallographers present their research — we must make sure that our meetings continue to be vital and interesting for both novice and experienced scientists.

AND, in order to do this — we have to accommodate to rapid changes in the science itself. Some of us remember when obtaining small molecule structures was not always easy. Many of us remember when macromolecular structures were so rare that any structure was a very big deal.



Who knows what the future will bring — soon we could even have something like this around and it will do all the tedious work.

I thought of asking Stacey for one more drawing, but I changed my mind because for this last thought you don't need any visual aids. I'm sure of that because there is one talent that our science has more or less forced us to develop, and that is the ability to recognize patterns. I think we all have this in common. So, knowing this, I am sure that you will all agree with me that L.A. is a most appropriate place for an ACA meeting. All anyone has to do to realize this is to think about: the L.A. freeway system; — the interior design of the Westin Bonaventure, — and ribbon drawings of crystal structures.

And in conclusion, I think we pattern recognizers have a great future. Thanks for listening.

Illustrations by Stacey Morrison, Cornville, AZ



Connie and Stacey (2012).



Stacey Morrison (2012).