



# OMNIOLORE NEWS

Volume 8 Issue 3

May 1999

## OMNIOLORE NEWS

A publication of OMNIOLORE, a Learning in Retirement Organization affiliated with The Division of Extended Education of California State University Dominguez Hills

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Omniole News is published six times annually. We welcome short feature articles and news stories. Contact any of the staff members with your contributions.

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## NEXT LUNCHEON FORUM TO BE HELD IN JUNE



Our first luncheon forum was an overwhelming success. We are now planing a second one on Tuesday, June 22 at the South Bay Grill, 23805 Hawthorne Boulevard, Torrance, Calif. A social hour at 11:15 will precede the luncheon.

Our guest speaker in June will be Chris Gantner, a professor of history at

U.C.L.A. Professor Gantner's topic will be "Who Owns History." Both a teacher and graduate researcher at the University of California, Los Angeles, Professor Gantner is currently completing a dissertation on the writings of Los Angeles attorney and journalist Carey McWilliams.

He will explore the intersection of academic history with public memory and commemoration. While history frequently appears to be a neutral discipline, recent "culture wars" (museum exhibitions, text books, etc.) demonstrate the highly political nature of historical knowledge. This talk grew from the seminars that Professor Gantner is currently teaching to history majors at U.C.L.A.

Cost of the luncheon will be \$10 including tax and tip. Luncheon guests may select either Red Snapper Vera Cruz or Teriyaki Chicken Breast as an entree. The restaurant is on Hawthorne just one block north of Pacific Coast Highway. Don't miss this chance to hear an interesting and stimulating speaker, have a good lunch and socialize with all those Omniorians that you haven't seen for a while.

The reservation form is on the last page of this newsletter. Either drop this form with your check made payable to "FRIENDS of OMNIOLORE" in the Treasurer's box or send it to: Edith Van Bellehem, 239 Paseo de Las Delicias, Redondo Beach, CA. 90277-6439.

**Bring a Friend to the Forum**

Use this opportunity to introduce a friend to Omniole. As you know, we are looking for a few more good people like you - people who like to learn new and fascinating things. The forum is a perfect opportunity for your friends to find out what we are all about.

### DON'T MISS — IN THIS ISSUE

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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Burt Cutler

In the belief that both new members and our "old hats" REALLY want to know more about the growing learning-in-retirement movement, here's some additional information.

To add a little fun we'll begin with a "quiz" to help you remember this deathly important stuff. If you don't "pass", read on anyway to learn about some of our nearby associate organizations.

So here's the hard part: What do the following acronyms stand for?

- |          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| 1. LIR?  | 2. ILR?     |
| 3. EIN ? | 4. ALIROW ? |

**LIR** stands for Learning-In-Retirement; that seems logical and easy to remember. But when the Elderhostel organization began to run with this growing movement in 1988, they, as organizations are wont to do, opted for their own terminology, "institute for Learning in Retirement", or **ILR**. It means the same, so sue me--or them. They also coined the name "Elderhostel Institute Network", or **EIN** to differentiate what they do from the rest of Elderhostel operations. And though I'm not thrilled by this LIR/ILR confusion, I have to admit EIN has done wonders kickstarting this national movement.... it's now actually become an international phenomenon which will very likely continue to expand throughout the world.... We in the west have our own smaller group called **ALIROW**, Association of Learning In Retirement Organizations in the West, formed in 1984.

Now four questions to test your number sense:... There are approximately how many

- |   |
|---|
| 5. LIRs in ALIROW ? A. 20 B. 30 C. 40 D. 50                                   |
| 6. ILRs in EIN ? A. 150 B. 250 C. 350 D. 450                                  |
| 7. Total participants in the U.S.? A. 50,000 B. 100,000 C. 150,000 D. 200,000 |
| 8. Members per ILR, on average ? A. 100 B. 200 C. 300 D. 400                  |

Answers are 5B (33), 6B ( 275), 7A ( 65,000 which is a stunningly high 25% of the yearly U.S. Elderhostel attendance of 250,000 !), and 8C (255. Omnimore currently has 145 ...we'll touch later on some of the reasons we have smaller membership than most).

Before I discuss other ILRs, you should know that the term "peer-led" means different things to different organizations. Usually it means they use their own members as instructors rather than university professors---there are also a few rotating-presenter/peer-led organizations (with emphasis on smaller classes and discussions) such as Omnimore and Plato, but we are rare. Here are some representative far-west LIRs:

\* CSU Chico. 11 years old, 350 members. Lecture type, 100% member-led. Big current events interest, people bring in news events, make brief presentations. They also hold monthly forums with guest speakers - advertised on radio. Attendance about 40%.

\* CSU Sacramento. 575 members. Some classes are held on the CSU campus, some in members' homes due to tight classroom space. They have a discussion session titled "Crisis of the Week" which is very well-attended.... They also bring in community leaders to give one-time lectures on the arts, symphony, opera, Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, etc.... And they do a number of "mini seminars", one-time presentations of special interest, by members.

\* "ALL" at Berkeley, California. 240 members. Unique in that there is no association with a college or university; they meet in a Berkeley area Sr. Center, for which they pay nothing. Their primary activity consists of monthly seminars averaging 35-40 attendees.

(President's Message Continued on page 6)

## Omnimore Rules and Procedures

Our Bylaws are the primary operating rules for Omnimore. The Board of Directors may propose changes; members must be given at least 30 days prior notice, and the modifications must then be approved by the majority of attendees at the Annual Meeting.

Omnimore's modus operandi is spelled out in the Omnimore Task Description Handbook and further clarified in the Procedures Handbook (currently in preparation).

These may be modified at any time by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Some specific rules and guidance have been established by Omnimore Boards of Directors:

1. Topic suggestions that do not draw a minimum of eight members do not qualify as an S/DG.
2. If topics are selected by 16 or more members, parallel S/DGs should be established. (Our experience is that when given a choice, members almost always tend to keep the status quo, and do not vote to divide large classes. This decreases significantly the opportunity for reticent or non-forceful members to express themselves. Since Omnimore is desirous of a fair discussion aura, we need a "policy push" to divide larger classes.)
3. Our standard S/DG format includes peer teaching and learning, and presentations by all S/DG members. There are several possible alternatives/exceptions:

3A. The Curriculum Committee may list a maximum of one topic description per trimester featuring an instructor-led format.

3B. Each trimester the Curriculum Committee may accept one or two topic descriptions that suggest no presentations. For example, this may occur because the person writes up a topic based upon a core reading with a huge reading content and the topic suggestor

(Omnimore Rules: Continued on page 6)

**Summer Study/Discussion Groups Set**

Omnilore members have selected the following ten S/D Groups which will begin the first week of May and run to the end of August. You should have already received your S/D Group confirmation in the mail. If you have any questions about the curriculum or your registration please contact Jim O'Neill at (310) 539-0415.

Name	Coordinators/Time	
AMERICAN PAINTING - FROM THE 17TH CENTURY	Ed Rea Ralph Brown  1st & 3rd Tuesday p.m.	This will include the 17th century "winners", including Copley, West, Church, Audubon, Bingham, Catun, Mary Cassatt, Whistler, Sargent, Homer, Man Ray, Wyeth and OKeefe. No Core Text.
THE CREATORS: HISTORY OF HEROES OF IMAGINATION	Dean Dwyer Ruth Cohen  2nd & 4th Thursday p.m.	Based on Daniel Boorstin's book, The Creators, this course will explore what intellectual and inventive personalities have in common that made them outstanding in literature, science, art, music, social sciences, history, etc.
SLEUTHING THE AMERICAN DETECTIVE (SHORT) STORY	Diana Cutler Blanche Herring  1st & 3rd Monday a.m.	Using the Oxford Book of American Detective Stories, this group will analyze, among other things, whether the authors were chiefly interested in why a crime has been committed, or merely used the sleuthing to draw the reader into a world they wanted to explore!
WORLD ECONOMICS	Ross Harrington Emil Raulin  1st & 3rd Monday p.m.	This S/D group, using the core text "The Commanding Heights" by Daniel Yergin and Joseph Stanislow will discuss what kind of world policies or institutions are needed to prevent global melt down in our current world markets.
ANCIENT INVENTIONS	Les Berg  2nd & 4th Wednesday p.m.	The ancient past is just the present but with many of the modern conveniences left out. Using the core text Ancient Inventions, by Peter James, this group will look at the wonderful contraptions of mankind invented before the 16th Century that reveal man's ingenuity for inventing and designing objects..
IMPACT OF PHYSICS ON CIVILIZATION	Daniel Blatt Gordon Kehmeier  1st & 3rd Thursday p.m.	This S/D group will research the history and developments of key ideas in physics and their impact on our lives.
HOW PROUST CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE	Alfred Bernstein James O'Neill  1st & 3rd Friday a.m.	Marcel Proust, arguably one of the most significant novelists of recent time, has for some proven challenging to read. Now Alain de Botton has written How Proust Can Change Your Life which discusses Proust's major philosophical premises in an easy-to-read format. This S/D group will use this text to explore various areas of interest.
POTPOURRI	Michael Grinde  1st & 3rd Tuesday a.m.	Members of this group will pick an area of peak interest to share.
UNDERSTANDING THE STOCK MARKET	Terry Savage  2nd & 4th Monday p.m.	This course is concerned with improving our knowledge of the workings of the stock market. How prices are set, how corporate profits are determined, why some companies succeed and other fail. In addition, they will study the relations among stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and other investment vehicles.
CREATIVE WRITING	Coleen Welch  2nd & 4th Tuesday p.m.	This is a creative writing group. Each member will give a presentation of a genre, literary example or leading author in the genre. Members will write, present and discuss examples of each form studied. Members will be asked to submit their own literary product for constructive evaluation by other group members.

**We Want To Know!**

We want to know if you know of any member in our midst who is having difficulty of any kind. Omnilore members want to respond with offers of help, transportation, a phone call, flowers or whatever. Please notify Rose Shields, at (310) 537-1437.



**KEYS**

Please, please, please, if you are no longer a coordinator or co-coordinator, please contact Gloria Jacobs, 378-3206, to arrange for returning your keys and receiving your \$10 deposit back. Others need the keys.



**OmniLore News**

Comments and input can be sent to



**OMNIOLORE CSUDH**  
**P.O. Box 7000-236**  
**Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277**  
**Phone (310) 540-6011**

## OMNIOLORE PROFILE

### Ronnie Saunders, Chairman Communications Committee

Over the last fifty plus years Ronnie has worn many hats in the field of journalism. She has been a copy girl, a reporter, an editor, the Information Coordinator for the Torrance Schools, a FEMA<sup>1</sup> information specialist, the public relations coordinator for various groups and finally the editor of the Omnilore News. She has covered both Presidents Kennedy and Carter in the course of her duties and written a history of Torrance .

Ronnie was born in 1926 in Brooklyn and lived there for the first 19 years of her life. She was first published at age 8 in the Brooklyn Eagle with poems and stories on the children's page. She entered Penn State at 16 and graduated at 19. On entering college, she had a bit of a dilemma choosing a major. "I just wanted to write" she said, but she had to choose between English Lit and Journalism and finally choose the latter.

Right after graduating from college, in 1945, she met Bob, married him in April, 1946 and spent the next four years supporting him while he pursued his education.

Her first job was at the Brooklyn Eagle as a copy girl. She was considered too young to be a reporter (she was not yet 21). Ronnie stated that "This was an exciting time to be starting in the newspaper business; during this period Roosevelt died, the war ended and the country was changing."

Ronnie's next job was with the French Government Council as a "French typist". In 1946, with Bob enrolled in college, they moved to Plattsburg, N.Y. where she worked for two years as a reporter at the Plattsburg Press Republican. When Bob moved to Syracuse to complete college, Ronnie was unable to get work at the local papers (They only hired Syracuse University students) and took a turn at writing advertising copy for a local department store.

After Bob's graduation they moved to Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio where Ronnie became pregnant with their first son Bobby. Ronnie became a stay-at-home mom but kept her hand in the business, writing an occasional column for the Cuyahoga Falls News. Shortly before they left for San Diego in 1954 she became pregnant with her second son, Randy. Ronnie commented that this son was the first native born Californian that she had known.

Relocating to the Los Angeles area and settling in Torrance in 1958, Ronnie worked for the Torrance Herald for over a year. She retired again in 1960 to raise her children. At this time she became very active in the League of Women Voters doing PR for the local league. This activity led to many other jobs including some temporary stints on the Breeze and as the Torrance Press Women's Editor. In 1963 she wrote the History of Torrance.

In 1964, all of this led to her dream job as the Information Coordinator for the Torrance Unified School System. She ended up there for 19 years and "loved her job". She retired again in 1983.

After that Ronnie did freelance PR work for the Little Company of Mary and served as a reservist for FEMA functioning on their disaster site PR staff disseminating information on relief services available. The job with FEMA was exciting and demanding and Ronnie covered floods in West Virginia and in 29 communities in Northern California. Ronnie became involved with Omnilore in 1991. Since joining she has functioned as Chair of the Communications committee and editor of the newsletter. She has also served as a coordinator for many classes.

She loves Omnilore because of the research, the people and the feeling she gets that she is back in college. Ronnie has been quoted as saying that while "an Elderhostel is like a


summer romance. Omnilore is an ongoing love affair."

In her spare time, Ronnie loves to read and play Scrabble. She and Bob love to travel, have attended a number of Elderhostels and she just spent her 73rd birthday in Prague and Budapest.

Her sons live in Louisville, Kentucky and in Orange County, and she has two grandchildren. The gene pool in the family is definitely evident as her 9 year old granddaughter Lea just sent her 37 pages of her first novel.

The only thing that Ronnie appears to be unsuccessful at in her 50+ year career is retiring from journalism. We at Omnilore hope that continues.

## IN MEMORIAM



OMNIOLORE was saddened to learn of the death of member Betty Hill. Those of you who attended the same study groups with Betty remember her as a dedicated and enthusiastic participant. An accomplished artist, she lived a long and adventurous life. Omnilore wishes to offer condolences to her family and friends.

There will be a memorial service held for Betty in May at her home in Inglewood. If you are interested in attending contact Rose Shields at (310) 537-1437 for details.

### Editors' Note:

To anyone preparing information for the newsletter, if your article is composed on an IBM compatible computer it would be greatly appreciated if you would submit it on a 3 1/2 disk with a notation as to software used or even easier e-mail it to me at Engstro@lbn.net. If you have any questions please call Ginger Engstrom (310) 832-7333.



<sup>1</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency

**Membership Update  
Omnilore Needs You - And Your Friends**

**Bring a Friend to Omnilore**

A brief note from the membership committee to thank our Omnilore members for the very positive response to our "Bring a Friend to an Omnilore Class" plea. We continue to work to get new members allowing us to have additional classes and more choices of class topics. Of course, "Bring a Friend to an Omnilore Class" is an ongoing project, but we are emphasizing it during April-May. We would also like to suggest that in June you "Bring a Friend to the Forum Luncheon." Where else can you hear a great speaker, enjoy a delicious luncheon in attractive surroundings with intelligent and wonderful companions - all for only \$10 ? Check out the article on that event in this issue for the details.

Perhaps some of you have noticed the Omnilore information blurbs running on the public access bulletin board in Torrance. Thanks to Bob Saunders we are getting our name out to the public. You might call the attention of friends to the TV notice.

On April 15 we held an Open House Orientation Meeting at the Torrance main library to introduce more people to Omnilore. Forty people heard who we are, what we do and got information on how to join Omnilore. We're moving ahead, but we still depend on you, the members, to bring in those special people who are your friends and will find Omnilore as rich an experience as you do. Keep up the good work. Thanks again.

*Merte Culbert, Membership Chair*

**MUSEUMS BRIEFS**

**Omnilore Group Enjoys  
Beethoven Exhibit**

Eleven Omnilore members traveled to the Bowers Museum in Santa Ana on 12 March to see the Beethoven exhibit.



The group saw a variety of ancient musical instruments on loan from the University of South Dakota including a Stradivarius known as the "Harrison,"

On display were first editions of all of Beethoven's symphonies provided by San Jose State University along with personal effects from their collection of Beethoven-related historiana. The exhibit was part of a seven-month festival presented by the Philharmonic Society of Orange County.

The Omnilorians also took time to see the rest of the museum which houses a collection of cultural artifacts from all over the world.

Members attending were: Burt and Diane Cutler, Les Berg, Anita Fox, Irma Cohen, Rosemarie Kirk, Helen Leven, Eileen Rifman, Nancy Wells, Greg Vore and Ellen Bradford.

**Coming Tour  
George Washington  
at the Huntington, May 14**

For a chance to see up close and personal many of the memorabilia of George Washington's life, the Omnilore Museum Explorer's group will go to the Huntington Library in San Marino on Friday, May 14.



The remarkable exhibit contains not only his papers, maps and other writings, but also many artifacts from his life as surveyor, farmer, soldier, founder of the republic, and president.

Anyone interested in joining the group is welcome. There will be car pooling, so call Lindie Banks at 316-6681 or Ellen Bradford at 791-0391 if you would care to go. We leave at noon -- after lunch - and return about 4:30 p.m. There is a charge of seven dollars for admission.

**What Makes a Successful  
S/D Group?**

*Editor's note: All of us have been in a study/discussion group that has just "clicked" and become just a little more special than normal. Have you been in such a class?*

*In the November issue, Bette Henning shared with us a description of one such class "The Drama of the American Jewish Experience." Following is an analysis of another outstanding S/D group "Lessons of History". We would like to make this a regular column.*

*If you have had a similar experience, please share it with us! Maybe we can figure out how to make all of our S/D groups outstanding.*



**Lessons of History**

*by Ginger Engstrom*

What makes a S/D group work? Is it the core reading, the coordinators, the members of the group? The answer in this case was YES, all of the above.

This S/D Group was based on the book **Lessons of History** by Will & Ariel Durant. Unlike much of their work this book is a mere 100 pages filled with history and philosophy as only the Durants can write it. The book was short and well written with thought provoking comments in almost every paragraph. The style and length of the book invited multiple re-readings and endless discussions. In addition the thirteen chapters lent themselves perfectly to individual research and presentations.

Our two coordinators, John Taber and Coleen Welch together combined much of what is desirable in a coordinator. Because of the book, the initial planning and assignment of topics was somewhat simplified. However, the modus operandi and expectations were well established up front. On an ongoing basis, Colleen did an excellent job of tactfully facilitating the discussions and time keeping. No one person dominated the discussions. We all had a chance to expound on our many, many opinions.

And, last but not least, the members of the group did an excellent job at researching and presenting their varied topics. I believe, because each session was lively and stimulating, everyone made a point of doing their homework and being prepared.

**President's Message***(Continued from page 2)*

\* "CLIR", U.C. Berkeley. Formed in 1972, 375 members. Almost all lecture format. Many classes (led by a member) have longevity of many years, such as physics, watercolor painting, play acting, etc. They have an active reader's theater which has presented performances, skits from selected plays, etc. **(Michael Grinde take notice.)**

\* EXCELL, Las Vegas Univ. 9 years old. They're unhappy that few members are willing to do research and make presentations, which was their original format. The Omnimore part of their program is now less than 40% heading downward. **(As our Michael Scordan has warned, "Beware the slippery slope"!)**

\* U.C. Riverside. 7 years old, 130 members. Primarily they hold weekly discussions utilizing outside speakers.

\* U.C. Irvine. In less than a year they grew from the founding 50 to over 400 members. Mostly college professors lecture format.

\* CSU Fullerton. 900 members. They utilized a retired fund-raiser guru to collect several million dollars and built their own facility on the Fullerton campus. A wide variety of courses are offered from Byzantine History to how-to classes in bridge, painting, and computer training. College professors from 8

local colleges lecture without pay. They also offer a small number of rotating-presentation/peer-led S/DGs.

\* U.C. San Diego. 25 years old, helped start ALIROW. 340 members. Lecture format plus five book discussion groups, each with its own personality. One long running group is Great Books; another focuses only on the works of Marcel Proust.

\* CSU Bakersfield. 360 members. A volunteer group actively involved with service to the university.

\* CSU Palm Desert. Two years old, 135 members. Peer instructors, current events and cinema.

\* PLATO, U.C.L.A. 400 members. Omnimore's original vision. They do membership "interviews" to impress potential new members with the Plato objectives. Contrary to rumor, Plato has almost never in 15 years rejected anyone, although some correctly conclude that this tough work is not what they had in mind.

\* SAGE, CSU Northridge. 175 members, an offshoot of Plato, very similar to Omnimore. Their classes are held in church rooms, across the street from the university.

Omnimore membership is limited by geography - for example, we have few potential members who live to the west of us, i.e. in the Pacific Ocean! Also, we are the rare LIR that has no classrooms on, or im-

**Omnimore Rules***(Continued from page 2)*

feels that the group really needs the entire period to discuss the book. However, part of Coordinator Training should emphasize that a no-presentation S/DG should exist only if the topic write-up so states. It is not appropriate for a group to change the otherwise clear and normal operating procedures, creating ill-will of members who properly planned and wish to follow normal procedures.

3C. Coordinators may excuse a member from preparing a presentation if the member is under severe stress due to a temporary physical or mental hardship.

4. Members are asked to not request articles or notices in the newsletter that do not pertain directly to Omnimore business or functions.

mediately adjacent to, our sponsoring university. But we are making substantial efforts this year to increase membership, because we see strong benefits of a wider variety of choices for all members come topic selection times.

I hope, dear associates, that the above gives you a little better appreciation as to our relative position in this great and growing retirement movement.

**OMNIOLORE CALENDAR 1999**



May	3	Summer Session Begins
	3	Deadline for Submitting Fall S/D Topic Suggestions
	13	Board of Directors' Meeting
	28	Fall S/D Registration Forms Distributed
	31	Memorial Day
June	10	Board of Directors' Meeting & Appointment of Nominating Committee
	15	Deadline for Return of Fall S/D group Registration Forms
	15	Deadline for July Newsletter
	17	Fall S/D Group Schedules mailed to membership
July	22	Summer Forum
	8	Board of Directors' Meeting

**IMPORTANT**

Please Note: All changes and additions to the Omnimore Calendar must be cleared with the Vice President, Administration, Gloria Jacobs (310) 378-3206 in order to avoid conflicts in scheduling or use of rooms.

## OMNIOLORE LUNCHEON FORUM

WHEN: Tuesday, June 22, 1999 @ 11:15am  
WHERE: South Bay Grill  
23805 Hawthorne Boulevard  
Torrance, Ca. 90505

Reservations are required by June 1, please!

Reservation for June 22 Luncheon Forum

Please make \_\_\_\_\_ reservations for the Omnilore Luncheon and Forum

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Luncheon Entree Selection: Red Snapper \_\_\_\_\_ Teriyaki Chicken \_\_\_\_\_

Please make out checks to Friends of Omnilore and put in the Treasurer's Box or

Send to: Edith Van Bellehem  
239 Paseo de las Delicias  
Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277-6439



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