



OMNILORE NEWS

Volume 11 Issue 6

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OMNILORE NEWS

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

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Appointees

Edith Garvey	New Member Liaison
Bob Grove	Registrar
Bob Saunders	Archivist

Omnilore News is published six times annually. We welcome short feature articles and news stories. Please contact the editor with your contributions.

Editor	Ronnie Saunders
Staff Members	Diana Cutler Peggy Houghton

OFFICERS ELECTED AT ANNUAL MEETING

George Clark was elected president of *Omnilore* at the annual meeting held October 31st at the Marriott Hotel in Torrance.

Named to serve with him were: **Nancy Shannon-Sinclair**, Vice President, Academics; **Carol Johnson**, Vice President, Administration; **Kathleen Fitzgerald**, Recording Secretary; **Gordon Kehmeier**, Treasurer; and **Myron Pullen**, **Christine Rhodes** and **John Stevens**, Members at Large.

Committee chairmen appointed by the new president include: **Ralph Brown**, Membership; **Rose Shields** and **Burt Cutler**, Curriculum; **Diana Cutler**, Forum; **Ronnie Saunders**, Communications and **Emil Raulin**, Head Coordinator. Other appointees are **Bob Grove**, Registrar, and **Bob Saunders**, Archivist.

Guest speaker at the luncheon meeting following the election was **Jim Jimirro**, world-recognized entertainment executive and popular music historian. His lecture schedule can be obtained through email requests at jjimirro@yahoo.com.

The Foresighted Ben Franklin



By Edith Garvey

I've been reading *Angel in the Whirlwind* by Benson Bobrick about the

American Revolution. In describing how Benjamin Franklin started creating a library system, the author says:

"The first subscription library in America emerged out of a 'club for mutual improvement' formed by Benjamin Franklin which met every Friday evening. 'The rules that I drew up,' Franklin tells us, 'required that every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morals, Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discussed by the company, and once in three months produce and ready an essay of his own writing on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory.'"

Doesn't this sound like *Omnilore*? We know Franklin had vision, but peering into our organization almost 270 years later? Wow!

Computer & Technology Special Interest Group Forms

A special interest group has been formed for *Omnilorians* interested in enhancing their computer skills, more effectively utilizing their computers, and keeping abreast of new electronic/digital products brought to market.

Meetings will be held every first and third Wednesday afternoon from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Franklin Center. Participants (whose levels of expertise will vary) will teach one another. Although the group is not part of planned *Omnilore* curriculum, participants are required to be members of *Omnilore*. The group will meet as long as the sessions continue to meet the needs of the group.

If you are interested, contact **Arlene Kaye** at 547-3698/akaye@cox.net

In addition, the group is compiling an "SOS List" of resource people willing to receive calls from members with "SOS...Help, how do I...?" problems. If you have special knowledge or experience in the area of computers and would be willing to be on such a list, please contact **Carol Johnson** at 372-8535/cnordj@sprynet.com.

DON'T MISS - IN THIS ISSUE

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

By George Clark

I want to thank all of you for your confidence in me. **Blanche Herring** has done an outstanding job as president in the past year, particularly in making *Omnilore* an even friendlier organization. The increase in attendance at our Forums this past year is a pleasing sign of growth in the social aspect of *Omnilore*. These luncheons give us an

opportunity to mingle with members we may not happen to meet in our Study/ Discussion Groups.

At the first meeting of the new Board of Directors, on November 14th, we will take stock of where *Omnilore* is and where we would like to go. Board meetings are open to all and suggestions are welcome. My initial goals are progress in two areas: more volunteerism among members and better

presentations in our classes.

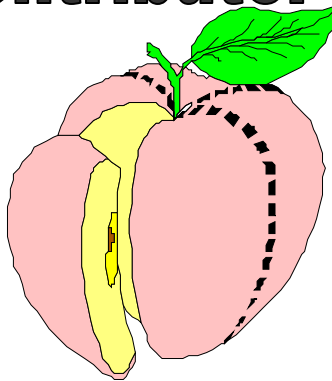
Volunteers might be encouraged by streamlining the jobs, spreading the work so that no one is overloaded, and reminding everyone of the fun of working together.



Better presentations might result from a continuation of the training program begun in the past year and some new equipment. Let's do both!

Contributor's

ORNER



Editor's Note: Estelle Feinstein's memories of September 11, submitted to the Digital Archive of the Smithsonian, recently appeared in the Stories of September 11 on the web.

It Was Going To Be A Beautiful Day

By Estelle Feinstein

As I went to bed that evening, I looked forward to the next day. It was going to be a beautiful day, a special day. A beautiful day weather-wise; a special day because we were going to celebrate our 53rd wedding anniversary.

That next morning, I slept in as was my habit. "Sleeping in" for me, the night owl, meant I would get up about 8 a.m. Although my husband had risen earlier, as was his usual habit, he always rose quietly and left the bedroom, closing the door so as not to disturb me. While I slept, he enjoyed the relative peace and read the newspaper while sitting in his armchair. Such is his routine.

I was therefore surprised to find him leaning over the bed and gently kissing me awake. Upon opening my eyes I could see that despite the fact that the

blinds were still closed, the sunlight leaked through the louvers. Another blessed day which was a special day for us and that was why he was waking me. Was there a surprise in store?

He was saying that our daughter had called and said something that I had difficulty focusing on. Planes had hit the World Trade Center towers. My mind and heart raced and before I raised my head from the pillow, I burst into tears. Actually, I bawled because of the memories that flooded in. Memories of our last visit to New York City during which we spent five days studying the history of lower Manhattan. During that visit, the Marriott Millennium Hotel was our home. It nestled between the soaring 110-storied towers almost like a sleeping puppy between its master's feet. And, each morning, as we exited the lobby of the hotel, we walked in the open plaza between the Towers en route to our rendezvous with our guide and fellow classmates. As we walked, the contra flow of people streaming towards and into the Towers seemed to be like the march of many foot soldiers of a modern army posed for the day to be combatants for their daily bread.

We, too, were foot soldiers as we went about our explorations of Lower Manhattan and visited sites of its early history. Wall Street, known world-wide as the center of finance, got its name because there was a wall that defined and protected the original Dutch colony. A subway ride to Brooklyn enabled us to stand on the promenade at Brooklyn Heights and imagine General Washington's troops battling the Redcoats to regain a foothold on Manhattan Island. The experience of walking back to Manhattan via the Brooklyn Bridge was an

experience to be savored. And always en route, the experience of the architecture and street art excited me who had once been an urban planner.

And thus each evening footsore and weary, we returned to the plaza between the Towers en route to our hotel. Again, we met the contra flow of some of the thousands of people exiting from the buildings en route to their places of rest and comfort. But, on September 11, 2001 that was not to be.

For those who were lost and not found, and for those whose mortal remains have not been found, nor ever will be, I ask where is their rest and solace? And for those they loved and those that loved them, will there ever be a satisfactory closure of the wounds that pierced their hearts much like the piercing of the Towers by the planes flown into them? And again, a lament from the past is heard. A voice raised in anguish hoarsely screams, "Oh the humanity."

(Said of the Hindenburg tragedy, May 6, 1937)

An Uncommon Occurrence

By Roger Debelak

The early morning of August 13, 2002 began literally with a bang. A tremendous blast in west Torrance rocked the locality with a loud, horrible sound that shattered the calm of this usually staid area. The next few seconds produced sounds of splintering glass, a shudder or two of the house's foundation, a dusty haze in the emerging daylight along with a distinct smell of smoke and then an eerie silence. Electricity was off; there was no way to determine what had happened.

My first thoughts were that a plane had crashed nearby or an earthquake was in

Continued on page 3

OMNIOLORE PROFILE – MANUELA MATUTE

Manuela Matute believes she has two claims to fame in **Omniole**. At 89 she believes she is the oldest member; and although she was born in New Mexico, she believes she has the distinction of being **Omniole's** only Mexican member.

Before she was born her parents had lived in a little mining village in Mexico where her father worked for the railroad. After he was recruited to work for the railroad in this country they settled in a little village in New Mexico where all the neighbors hailed from the same village.

As a child Manuela attended elementary school in a Kansas City suburb called Argentine—where she lived on the wrong side of the tracks and attended a segregated school, the Clara Barton School. She learned rapidly in English and from elementary school right through college had teachers and mentors who encouraged her to pursue her education. One of her mentors was a college professor who left her money to travel to Russia.

Manuela was the first Mexican to

graduate from Claremont High School in 1931. While attending Pomona College she worked at the Padua Hills Theatre in Claremont where she waited on tables, sang, danced and acted in plays based on early California history and Mexican folklore. Materials about the theatrical group are featured at the Pomona library in Pomona.

She met the man she was later to marry while she was in college. A native of Guadalajara, he was an outstanding photographer. Many of his photos on the history of theatre are deposited in the Pomona city library and are included in an exhibit which is still on display there.

Manuela received her secondary teaching credential in social studies in 1936, taught in Norwalk in 1937 and was married in 1939.

In the early 1940s Manuela and her husband, who worked for Mexicana Airlines, went to Mexico to live, but found that they were too American to adjust to the Mexican lifestyle. They returned to the States where he went to work for Pan American Airways at the Los Angeles Airport and he became

traffic manager.

The Matutes had three children in the 1940s. As a stay-at-home mom, Manuela enrolled at USC and got a general elementary degree.

She returned to teaching in the early 1950s and taught for the Los Angeles Unified School District for 26 years. In 1992 her husband died following a lengthy bout with Alzheimer's disease.

Before joining **Omniole** four years ago, Manuela made the trip to Cal State Long Beach on two busses to take courses. In addition, she has filled her retirement with languages—belonging to a French cénacle which reads books in French and discusses them in French, and studying Italian at Torrance Adult School. In addition she swims three times a week at the Torrance YMCA.

In looking back on her life, Manuela states that all that she has now was made possible by those who helped her along the way - teachers, professors and mentors. "To me," she states, "schooling and libraries have been the most important things in my life. I feel I'm home when I am in a library."

An Uncommon Occurrence *Continued from page 2*

progress. Assuring ourselves that we were at least physically all right, although shaken by the experience, my wife and I tried to find the cause of this frightening disaster. We immediately saw a huge ball of orange and red flames issuing from an area four houses to the south. A neighbor appeared at our damaged doorway frantically inquiring as to our well-being; she hastily related that they were OK, but had extensive damage done to their property. People began to emerge from their houses, gather in front yards and on the street, all at a loss to explain the previous few minutes. For a moment the scene was surreal with persons wondering and wandering. At this point, a truth seemed to form, which pointed to an explosion that emanated from a near-by house.

About ten minutes later Torrance and Redondo Beach fire fighting units arrived and the wail of police sirens permeated the still hazy air. A Torrance police command post was established and security measures were beginning to be enforced. At this time it was further learned that the house in question had been tented for termites the day before, and gas seepage of some sort had combined with chemicals used in the procedure in some way to set off the blast. As the morning's murkiness gradually cleared, it was apparent that the entire area underwent considerable damage. Ashes, sparks and soot still floated in the heavy air, pieces of wood and concrete were strewn everywhere, foundation impairments were clearly obvious, and lawns were littered with debris. Fortunately, our house was buffered somewhat from the shock wave of the blast by the houses between the explosion and our location, but it still suffered considerable structural damage. However, easily seen were the countless broken windows and patio doors of the apartments and homes at the top of the ravine on the Redondo Beach side of the city border.

Although about a dozen or so people were hospitalized for short periods of time, it is amazing that this catastrophe, with its size and force, did not produce any fatalities. Psychological distress is another matter, as the owner of the home next to the explosion (completely destroyed) has described so poignantly to me. It has been estimated that the blast impacted about 120 homes. There will be many months of repair, both mental and physical, for people in this area to resume their normal ways of life.

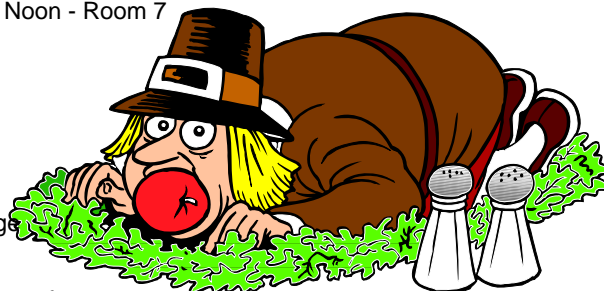
On that Tuesday, I was preparing to attend two **Omniole** classes, one in which I was to lead a discussion topic. Of course, area security prevented any such endeavor. But the unhesitating help and encouragement of **Omniole** members at the time contributed greatly to an easing of the prevailing anguish and the anxiety of complications to come. I thank them again and hope such calamities will not hereafter be experienced in any of our lives.

Roster insert replaces page 8 of the Membership Roster.

OMNIOLORE
CALENDAR

2002

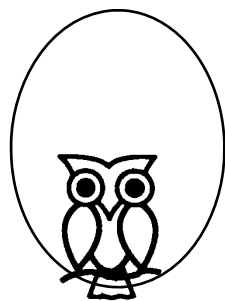
November	5	Election Day
	7	Brown-Bag Science (BBS) Series - 12-1:00 p.m. - Room 7 <i>Einstein's Special Theory of Reliability</i> - Dan Stern
	11	Veteran's Day
	11	Forum Committee Meeting - 11 a.m. - Room 7
	12	Membership Committee Meeting - 12:15 p.m. - Room 7
	14	Board of Directors Meeting - 12:00 Noon to 2 - Room 7
	22	Hiking Group - 10 a.m.
	28	Thanksgiving
December	2	Forum Committee Meeting - 11 a.m. - Room 7
	5	Brown-Bag Science (BBS) Series - 12-1:00 p.m. - Room 7 <i>The Evolution of Earth's Continents and Life Forms</i> - George Clark
	7	Pearl Harbor Day
	10	Membership Committee Meeting - 12:15 p.m. - Room 7
	12	Board of Directors Meeting - 12:00 Noon to 2 - Room 7
	13	Curriculum Committee Meeting - 12:00 Noon - Room 7
	15	Input Deadline for January Newsletter
	20	Hiking Group - 10 a.m.
	25	Christmas Day
	31	New Year's Eve
January	2	Brown-Bag Science (BBS) Series - 12-1:00 p.m. - Room 7 <i>Modern Linguistic Theory</i> - Terry Savage

**IMPORTANT**

Please Note: Calendar changes and additions may be made in one of two ways:

Either phone Carol Johnson to reserve a room, or mark the corkboard calendar in Room 7 and notify Carol Johnson via e-mail.

Carol Johnson's contact information: (310) 372-8535 – cnordj@sprynet.com



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