

OMNILORE NEWS

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OMNILORE NEWS

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

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

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Dean Marge Gordon (center) presented new *Omnilore* President, **Dick Johnson** (far left) with a plaque commemorating *Omnilore's* 15th anniversary. Sharing the occasion were all past presidents attending the function. From the left after Dick: **Emil Raulin**, **Burt Cutler**, **Blanche Herring**, **John Taber**, **Whit Wilson**, and **Patricia Edie**.

Both Rhyme and Reason for This Halloween Season

by Carol Kerster

Phantoms and Lobster and Witches and Magic, Characters comic and characters tragic, So many choices, made with aplomb By stalwart Omniloreans, who decided to come (To our Annual Meeting.) They came to acknowledge, to praise and respect Those fearless leaders, who last year did select

Those fearless leaders, who last year did select The classes, the events that kept us enthralled, And organized, balanced, and truly, "did it all." We were lucky to meet the enthusiastic crew, Who'll be doing it this year, for me and for you.

(Hooray for the new officers.) AND THERE WAS MORE

There was ART, oh, what ART, it flashed on the screen. We thought we knew "modern," 'cuz we know what we've seen. But a lesson was learned. Art's not always what we thought,

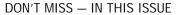
Because the Artist decides what he or she hath wrought!

("I'm an artist and I can do what I want, and since there are Museums of Modern Art, I have a place to show my work,

and that is what makes Modern Art Modern.")

Thus did it end, Halloween '05,

NOT the Omnilore saga . . . may that always survive!



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT by Richard Johnson

i Everyone! For those of you who **⊥** do not know me, or can't remember me, and the few who I have been fortunate enough to get to know; I must say that I was just as surprised as you are to find myself nominated to be your next president. My history at Omnilore has been limited to one course a semester over the last four years. The topics I have taken reflect my educational background which included majors in electrical engineering and economics with a minor in government. Consequently, I have taken courses in history, government, foreign affairs, economics, and science as well as interesting miscellany. Those of you who have mainly taken courses in literature, the arts, writing, and philosophy have probably not run across me yet. As I struggle with this letter I wish I had taken at least one course in writing.

Beach constantly busy Monday through Friday.

There has been a cadre of old guard volunteers who have been running this organization with fabulous results for a long time. Let me say right now that no one can take the place of Patricia Edie who guided us so successfully through the last year. She had strong help from marvelous committee chairmen, many of whom are returning and deserve our heartfelt thanks. We rely on them to continue to bring us a great selection of courses with good coordinators, excellent Forum meetings, and a smooth-running organization while continuing to increase our membership. We should also express our thanks to those members who have volunteered to become new committee chairmen and Board members. Some of the "Old Guard" say it is time for newer members to step in and volunteer to take some responsibility. Approached in this manner, with all that **Omnilore** has meant to me, how could I say no to accepting this nomination to be your president, which is an honor that I am looking forward to.



We still need more volunteers. When a committee chairman asks you to be on his or her committee, think "yes" rather than reasons why you can't. My own experience to date has been very satisfying, with the members I have asked to take on critical committee chairs doing so willingly. Many of you have filled out our questionnaires stating the areas in which you are willing to help. This will be very useful for the committee chairmen in getting members for their committees. We thank those who have done so and ask all those who have not to please get a form, fill it out and hand it in.

I am really looking forward to working with all of you in another great year of this wonderful organization.

Happy 15th Anniversary Omnilore!



Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute College of Extended and International Education, CSUDH

I'm sitting here at my desk looking at the 15th anniversary plaque that will be awarded to Omnilore at the Oct. 31 Annual Meeting. I find out more about Omnilore's history as time passes. I didn't know that Omnilore started with only 9 members who first met in members' homes in January 1990.

Jim Bouchard As most of you know, Omnilore formed its relationship with the College of Extended & International Education at CSUDH in 1992. Since that time Omnilore has grown to a membership of nearly 250. ParticipatIon is year-round which is a

level of activity that keeps the two classrooms at the Franklin Center in Redondo

Many dedicated Omniloreans have volunteered their time as elected officers to keep the organization functioning so that members can pursue what they love most - teaching what they learn, and learning from other members. They are to be commended for their service, since they are taking time away from the lifelong learning activities that they enjoy to make it possible for others to pursue learning. Congratulations to all. I'm looking forward to a great meeting on Halloween, and to the creative costumes that I am sure to see.

P.S. The spring 2006 lecture series/ OLLIonline broadcast series will be "American Law and Law Enforcement as Portrayed in Cinema and Television". It should be another great series!



Our new board members: (1) Dick Johnson, President; (2) Joe Carrier, Vice President, Administration; (3) Merle Culbert, Vice President, Academics; (4) Tom Vincent, Treasurer; (5) Dorothy Riley, Recording Secretary (6) Gemma Scharfenberger, Member-at-Large; (7) Grace Tanaka, Member-at-Large.

Holiday Walk

Those who haven¹t been aware of the recent renovations along the waterfront in San Pedro are missing a fascinating experience. Here's a chance to catch up. Omnilore¹s walking group is planning a special outing for all interested Omnilore members, their spouses and friends. The outing involves a ride on a Big Red Car, a no-host dinner and about a mile of level walking along the recently completed path between Ports Of Call and the Cruise Ship Terminal. You will be impressed with the beauty that has been added in vegetation, monuments, lights and items of interest.

We will meet Friday afternoon December 2, 2005 at 4:30 p.m. at the north end of the Big Red Car line near the Cruise ship terminal. There is free parking in the ride share parking lot on Beacon St. near its intersection with Harbor Blvd. or you can pay to park in the lot under the Vincent Thomas Bridge. We will catch a car (they stop running a little before 6:00 pm) and get off at Sixth St. We will walk a short distance to one of several restaurants in the northern vicinity of Ports of Call. After dinner we will walk along the new path back to our starting point enjoying the beauty that the new lighting brings out. You can expect to be back at your car by about 7:00 p.m.

People are invited to share any part of the experience. If you plan to join us for dinner, please call **John Taber** at (310) 831-4768 to be included in the reservation we make. If you would like to join us at another place, please let John know so we can be looking for you. The event will be rescheduled if it is raining.

OMNILORE PROFILE - CHUCK HERRING

by Frances Roberts

harles "Chuck" Herring grew up in Southern California, first beside the Bay in San Diego where he developed what turned out to be a lifelong attraction for the sea, then in Santa Ana through high school.

He graduated from Cal State Long Beach, and earned his MA degree in Psychology from Pepperdine at a time when psychology was trying to establish itself as a scientific study. As a result, most of his courses were laboratory work and statistics, but it was a fascinating field.

A brief stint as a Naval Officer in the early 60s, aboard a warship in the Pacific is mostly remembered as the time he discovered the literature of the sea. He read Melville and Conrad during his off hours while the ship was at sea, and was captivated. He joined the Melville Society then and is still a member.

Chuck felt his professional career was full of interesting experiences. He began work at IBM as a systems engineer and later, with other companies, spent about half his working career marketing and the other half in corporate administration. He retired from the Aerospace Corporation, El Segundo, in 1994. In

hindsight, Chuck believes the most interesting stint of all was with a small computer company that was purchased by the Xerox Corporation. It ended up being described in the book *Famous Financial Fiascos* by John Train.

Volunteering has been an important part of his life. While at Xerox he was selected as one of ten employees to be given a year's sabbatical leave at a "social service project" of their own choice. He spent the year at SCROC (Southern California Regional Occupational Center) in Torrance doing planning and marketing. He was able to alter the program SCROC used to attract students so that it significantly changed the make-up of their student body. He was also able to write and publish the academic research that supported his marketing approach. He was a weekend naturalist on whale-watch boats for the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in San Pedro. Later he did week-end work at the Spastic Children's Foundation residence in Sylmar, where he helped a lifelong resident move out on her own to start an independent life.

Chuck said that the week he retired he reported as a volunteer aboard the tugboat "Angels Gate" which belongs to the LA Maritime Museum in San Pedro, and he remains on the crew. He was also able to serve as the Chairman of Maritime Museum Tour Guides for five years, which allowed his interests in the maritime world to blossom more fully.

Of his family, he says, "Blanche and I have two daughters, one near Reno and the other in L.A., working as a producer of TV documentaries, so we get to see her work when it airs and then discuss it with her."

Chuck's major hobby has been sailing whenever he can. He remembers most living out a dream to sail from San Francisco out under the Golden Gate Bridge, spending five days on a 47' ketch traversing the Farallon Islands and sailing the Northern California coast. A few years ago he capped his sailing experiences by sailing across the North Atlantic with one partner on a 50' sloop. "One of many thrills of a busy life," he says. "I loved it."

He has enjoyed *Omnilore* classes since 2001, and enjoyed doing research for the S/DG on the "Tipping Point" when he inter-viewed an author in England and was able to quote his source from direct contact - his information received through e-mail.

The Sounding Board Echo Echo Echo

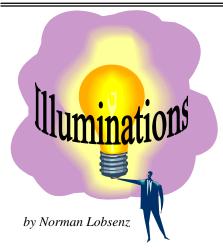
by the Website Working Group

The Sounding Board on our web page gives us the opportunity to explore, challenge, question, respond, react, and so much more. The topics are limitless, depending on the thread that the discussion takes. Recently, in the General Topics area, a member introduced a book that had impressed and enlightened her. Some other *Omnilore* members reacted and an interesting little discussion developed. (Here's the teaser – we aren't telling you what the book is; you will just have to log in and see for yourself!)

Interested in philosophy and/or science? Have some thoughts on the *Omnilore* curriculum? Log into the Sounding Board and express yourself.

Two pieces of good news. First of all, the Webmaster is in the process of making it easier to log in. We acknowledge that having to essentially log in twice is frustrating, (although clear directions on the website are available). The process is being streamlined. But if you are having trouble, contact any member of the Website Working Group and they will be happy to walk you through it. The Website Working group members are: George Clark, Jay & Patricia Edie, Blanche Herring, Mary Oran, and Myron Pullen.

The other piece of good news is that in January we will be opening another Sounding Board topic - Arts, Culture, and Entertainment, moderated by **Lindie Banks**. Look for the details in our next newsletter.



("Illuminations" is a new column in our newsletter, featuring Omnilorean writers who are willing to share their thoughts on issues, topics and experiences that may interest our membership. Norman offers the following, adapted from his book — Nobody's Perfect —How to Give Criticism and Get Results, copyright, 1981.)

It happens occasionally: someone makes a presentation in an *Omnilore* study group and you feel something was lacking. Maybe it was off the topic? Had some inaccuracies? Was superficial? Too long? Too short? But you hesitate to comment for fear of offending. True, some folks seem impervious to criticism – take, for example the actor whose performance as Hamlet was so terrible, the audience booed after the "To be or not to be" soliloquy. "It's no use booing me, "the actor said, "I didn't write the stuff."

But most everyone finds criticism hard to accept and difficult to give, because we tend to interpret it in a totally negative way – as a destructive act of finding flaws and faults. Dictionaries define it that way, and the synonyms they suggest for "criticism" include words such as "censure," "condemn," "blame," "denounce."

Originally, however, the word was meant to describe a neutral, objective appraisal of ideas and actions. From the Greek "kritikos," which meant "able to discern"; the goals of criticism were to communicate, influence and motivate. But this concept of criticism became skewed until today only the negative connotations of the word remain.

'I always found it hard to take criticism," one woman said. "Now I realize it is much more difficult for me to give it because I don't know how." But there is a key question that shifts the entire frame of reference of criticism from fault-finding to problem-solving. That question is: How can I convey the information I want to pass on so that the other person accepts it in a constructive way that will benefit that person, and perhaps better our relationship?

Here is a set of guidelines for giving constructive criticism:

- Focus on the specific behavior that bothers you
- Make your comments as specific as possible
- Be sure that the actions you are criticizing can be changed
- Make sure the other person understands the reason for the criticism
- Do not belabor your point. Lengthy and repetitive criticism just makes the other person tune out
- Don't let your feelings color your words avoid sarcasm, finger-pointing and frowns.
- Show that you empathize with the other person's feelings
- Hold your criticism for the appropriate place and time.

But more important than any formulas or guidelines is the spirit in which criticism is offered and accepted. If one can come to see criticism as a form of emotional support rather than emotional attack, one will be better able to give it and take it, to assess it and benefit from it.

(If you have a story to tell, an idea to explore, a question to ponder, and would like to write an article for "Illuminations," please contact the newsletter editor at <u>msoran@sbcglobal.net</u>. We are interested in all subjects — art, music, science, history, culture, drama, psychology – topics of interest to most, if not all of us. We welcome your input).



Brown Bag Science (Science for the Non-Scientist)

by George Clark

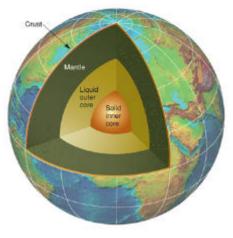


Room 7, 12:15 to 1:15 PM (Bring your lunch, if you like.)

There will be no Brown Bag Science meeting in November.

December 15 - Why Is Terra Firma So Unfirm?

Thursday, Dec. 15: Recent catastrophes have reminded us that the apparently peaceful landscape of the Earth is a thin veneer over the enormous forces and extreme temperatures that lie just a few miles below us. In December, Brown Bag Science will take a look inward toward the center of the Earth, into that churning inferno of molten rock and metal. We will examine the origin and age of the major components of the Earth's crust, the formation and movement of the continents, and the huge dynamo that causes the Earth's magnetic field and its reversals. Our speaker will be **James Stewart**, a physicist with training in geophysics, oceanography, and plate tectonics, who is also a member of Omnilore. His subject will be *Why Is Terra Firma So Unfirm*?



Marilyn Landau at (310) 514-3535.

Travel Update

by John Taber

Following suggestions from *Omnilore* members, your travel committee has put together two exciting trips for 2006. One will take us to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon in June and the other to British Columbia, the Inland Passage and the Canadian Rockies in September. The price of these trips decreases with the number of people involved and there are optional features that depend on people¹s desires. Each group will be limited to 25 people, so expressing your interest early is to your advantage. Spouses and friends are invited to join us on these special journeys

On **Tuesday November 22, 2005** we will have a meeting at 11:00 am at the Franklin Center for people interested in the Shakespeare Festival. It will include identification of the plays being offered. A similar meeting will be held **Tuesday November 29, 2005** at 11:00 am at the Franklin Center for people interested in the Canadian trip. Details of these trips including their highlights, transportation, meals, accommodations, other trip options, cost and the next steps to take to be part of this program will be provided. We will try to answer everyone guestions and will accept suggestions for later trips. For those interested there will be time to organize an S/DG to provide an informational background for either trip.

Please join us at one or both of these meetings if you have any interest in traveling with a congenial group of *Omnilore* peers. Show us by your presence that the volunteer effort we put in to create fun and educational extensions to your learning-in-retirement is worthwhile. If you have an interest in any part of our travel program and cannot attend these meetings, please call **Emil Raulin** at (310) 316-5750 or

Nancy Carol Sinclair Johnson

Spillane

Rick Spillane

Laurel

Roberta

Moore

Judge

Kehmeler Viany
Oran Lancy

Welcome, New Members

Bob Botek, married for 53 years and the father of three, is retired after 50+ years in commercial printing. He held a number of administrative and managerial positions in the field, including heatset, web and sheetfed systems. His interests lie mainly in the areas of politics, current events and theater.

Sally Downie says she has retired from the "schmata" (which, she explains, is Yiddish for "fabric") business. Married and the mother of three and grandmother of five, Sally loves to cook and to read all types of books. She also enjoys jazz and blues and attends local performances whenever possible.

John Doyle is a graduate electrical engineer who spent his entire career in aerospace/military venues, retiring in 1992. He has eclectic interests, including history, science, art, music, languages and foreign movies. His wife of 33 years was an artist; he has two adult children.

Phil Hammer, a native of Chicago, has lived in California since 1952. He's worked in data processing for General Petroleum (Mobil Oil) and Union Oil (Unocal) for a total of 32 years. Phil has enjoyed taking several classes at El Camino, and is particularly interested in American and English history, space exploration, biology and evolution.

Barbara Johnson, an L.A. native, has lived on the Westside for more than 50 years. After managing large residential communities and activities for seniors, she is now an independent consultant, providing advice and referrals for older adults, their families, and professionals in the community She enjoys movies, travel and wine-tasting adventures.

Mimi Lau was a "stay-at-home mom" while her children were in school; her husband is an engineer. As a child, she was "always curious about people from far-away places." Now as an adult in Omnilore she enjoys all the learning opportunities it provides. She likes reading good books & traveling.

Also welcome: Ellen Ekedal, Hank Frankenberg, Cleone Gabel, Trudy Hawkins, Sallie Josephson, Nancy Leonard, Gary & Gretchen Marlotte, Connie Murphy, Sybill Sabath, and Carmen Turner.

Prospective Member Meetings Set

The Membership Committee is getting ready for two more "Introducing Omnilore" meetings where prospective members are told about Omnilore's discussions, presentations and other phases of Omnilore life. One of these meetings is required for all who wish to become members, so be sure to invite your friends to attend.

The meetings will be held on Tuesday, November 15, and Friday, December 9, and will prepare new members for the spring semester, which starts right after New Year's Day. Both meetings will be held at the Franklin Center from 10-12 AM in Room 7.

HELP WANTED!

A few good men or women for the Forum Committee. Good working conditions, pleasant coworkers, and short hours. No resumes necessary. Call Diana Cutler, 541-8973 or e-mail to BurtC@Cox.net

E-Mail Subjects Please remember: when you are sending email to Omnilore members, put "Omnilore" in the subject heading. People have been deleting messages from fellow Omniloreans because they don't recognize the sender name. In these spam and virus days, it pays to be cautious, so give your sendees a clue.

Subject: Omnilore. Get in the habit!!

A Password Reminder

Remember- As of November 1st, you will need to type in our new password in order to have access to the Members Only section on our Omnilore website. The password was given to you in the just released Membership Packet. If you need help with the password, contact a member of the website working group (George Clark, Jay and Patricia Edie, Blanche Herring, Mary Oran, Myron Pullen).

Volunteer!!!

Too few Omnilore members are having to do too many things. We need every member to volunteer to help out in some capacity. Please share in the many tasks that keep our great organization running. If someone calls and asks, say YES!

For information about the Hiking Group, contact Nancy Sinclair at NancySincl@aol.com or John Taber at JETaber@lafn.org

Profiles

Sounding Board

Enter the Members Only

"Sounding Board". Log

in and you can see many

(discussion topics) that

you can explore. It's like

being in an S/DG but in

the comfort of your own

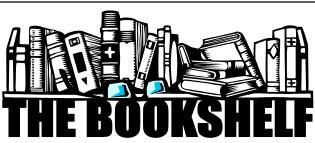
Join in the discussion!

area and click on

interesting threads

home!

Arriving soon on the Omnilore website the Profiles Archives. Many of our "veteran" members have been profiled in the newsletter over the years. Now you won't feel left out because they were featured before you joined the organization. An announcement will appear on the website when this addition has been made.



by Mary Oran

This autumn's recommendations highlight four books with Middle East themes. *Inside the Kingdom*, by Carmen Bin Laden, relates the author's experiences as she marries into the Bin Laden family (in 1974) and moves to Saudi Arabia. Carmen, half-Swiss and half-Persian, describes the increasingly restrictive life, the lives of the clan's wives, the power struggles of the Bin Laden brothers, the dubious business dealings, and her ultimate flight, with her children, from the hostile environment.

Azadeh Moaveni is an Iranian born in Palo Alto, who has been a writer for both Time magazine and the Los Angeles Times. Lipstick Jihad delves deeply into all aspects of life in today's Iran. Moaveni records her experiences living in Tehran – the underground network, the politically-deadlocked system, the demonstrations, the upper crust's drug and alcohol-saturated parties. Most of all, she describes a "young woman of the diaspora searching for a homeland" that may not exist. This work is a fascinating, first-hand account of modern Iran.

Two novels by **Bandula Chandraratna**, a Sri Lankan author, are also recommended. Both novels take place in an unnamed country that is assumed to be Saudi Arabia. *The Mirage* tells the story of an orphaned boy

who sacrifices his own happiness to care for his family. He lives in the shanty town of a city, working as a hospital porter. It is a cultural experience to read this beautifully descriptive tale. Mirage just missed being on Britain's coveted Booker Prize short Chandraratna's second novel, An Eye for an Eye tells of an American expatriate and his local Muslim friend, who are spending a day out together. They witness the most gruesome of acts, and the book goes on to show, in the land of shocks and surprises, how one man attempts to cope with the tragedy in his life. Both novels are relatively short but powerful.

For a change of pace, consider perusing the poetic. *A Poem A Day*, edited by **Karen McCosker** and **Nicholas Albery**, presents 366 poems old and new that are worth learning by heart. The poems have two things in common: they are short enough to learn in a day, and they are good enough to stand with great poetry. The editors have interspersed brief interesting trivia about the poets and poems to add to the pleasure.

Spoon River Anthology is a 1915 classic that everyone should experience. **Edgar**

Lee Masters presents the 19th century Midwest in a microcosm through these poetic epitaphs. 244 characters speak from the cemetery on the hill. These posthumous words are the voices of humanity, relating gossip, regret, corruption, injustice, love and, as one critic said, "the essence of American life." As the reader "walks" through the cemetery, he first meets the less desirable characters of the town; the more upright citizens are at the back.

Masters was referred to as "the Kinsey of his time;" this controversial book is a delight to read today. Reading it aloud with several people is even more fun!

Speaking of fun, another oldie but goodie is the John Nichols tome The Milagro Beanfield War. A simple act of irrigation turns into an all-out war in a New Mexican agrarian community. Here we have the age-old peasants versus government and wealth; agrarian versus city conflict. The quirky characters who decide to make a last stand, as they have nothing to lose, provide many laugh-out-loud moments. In spite of the 1970 outlook on a group of neglected individuals, the book is above all, humorous, irreverently so at times. The reader is definitely with the underdogs on this one!

(Thank you to Gloria Jacobs and Patricia Morris for contributing to this list. Please send <u>your</u> titles, with author name and a brief description, to <u>Msoran@sbcglobal.net</u>. Put "Omnilore Books" as the subject. We look forward to hearing from you!)

Link Up To A Good Resource

by Jay Edie



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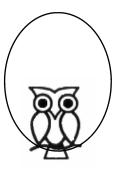
Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, www.en.wikipedia.org is just what it says – an on-line encyclopedia. (Wiki is the Hawaiian language word for quick or fast.) There are nearly 800,000 articles covering a wide range of subjects.

Wikipedia is an example of a new trend in computer software technology. It is "open source," that is, anyone can write articles for it or update the articles that are there. Of course, there is a built-in mechanism for quality control, namely all the other users plus a small amount of oversight by moderators. The Wikipedia management has a strict policy of "Neutral Point of View" in the articles though there are a few currently disputed articles which are prominently flagged at the top. In short, the articles are the product of progressive refinement by people (generally authorities) around the world.

The link to other useful websites as well as Wikipedia may be found in the Members-Only section of the Omnilore website. Go to www.Omnilore.org, click on Members Only (which requires the password), then click on "Links" and then "Research Tools." Other Research Tools will be described in future issues of the Newsletter.

(Know of any good resources for Omnilore presentations? Share the link information with a member of the website committee.)

OMNILORE November 10 Board of Directors Meeting - 12 Noon to 2 p.m. - Room 7 14 Stock Market SIG - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - Room 8 CALENDAR 15 Introducing Omnilore Meeting - 10 a.m.- Noon - Room 7 Hiking Group - 10 a.m. 18 2005 Travel Meeting on Shakespeare Festival - 11 a.m. - Room 7 22 (see article, page 5) Happy **Thanksgiving** 24 Stock Market SIG - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - Room 8 28 a hanksgiving, 29 Travel Meeting on Canadian Trip - 11 a.m. - Room 7 (see article, page 5) **December** 2 San Pedro Holiday Walk - 4:30 p.m. - north end Big Red Car Line (see article, page 2) 8 Board of Directors Meeting - 12 Noon to 2 p.m. - Room 7 Introducing Omnilore Meeting - 10 a.m.- Noon - Room 7 9 12 Stock Market SIG - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - Room 8 Brown-Bag Science (BBS) Series - 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. - Room 7 -15 Why is Terra Firma so Unfirm? - James Stewart (see article, page 4) 15 Input Deadline for January-February Newsletter 16 Hiking Group - 10 a.m. 21 No CSU Class at CSUDH 25 Christmas 26 Hanukkah 31 New Year's Eve **IMPORTANT:** Calendar changes and additions are scheduled with Pat Stevens - (310) 548-3253 - mh_pt_stevens@peoplepc.com



Omnilore, CSUDH
Division of Extended Education
PMB 236
P.O. Box 7000
Redondo Beach, Ca. 90277-8710