



# OMNIOLORE NEWS



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## DON'T MISS — IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	Page 2
Profile: Sandy & Ken Pickar	Page 3
Letters to the Editor	Page 4
My First Deployment . . .	Page 6
Tribute to John Taber	Page 7
Forum Registration Form	Page 8
Movie Goers SIG	Page 9
STEM SIG Doings	Page 9
February Walking Group	Page 10
Report on Oct. 31st Forum	Page 11
Next Intro. Omnilore Meetings	Page 11
Calendar	Page 12
Coordinator's Corner	Page 12

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## January 31st Forum Speaker:

### Omnilore Presents

## Author Steve Blinder Speaking on His Novel PANGA

by Leslie Criswell

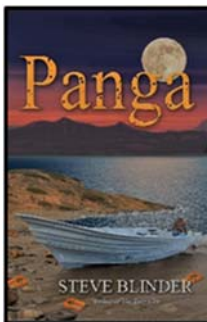
Steve Blinder, Author, Artist, Photographer & Entrepreneur will discuss his novel, **PANGA**, at the Omnilore Forum Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

The dream of *El Norte*, of perhaps being able to start a new life in the promised land North of the border, provides the motivation to leave the violence and difficult living conditions behind. With immigration crackdowns and the bleak possibility of being able to attain U.S. citizenship, many Hispanics have recently made the bold decision to attempt the illegal crossing by sea—often under miserable and treacherous conditions-- in small "Panga Boats."



Steve Blinder

**Panga** transports the reader on a journey, of people facing impossible decisions that will ultimately determine the fate of their families. Opening in the dusty fields of Guatemala & the jungles of Honduras, the characters must navigate an uncertain path to survival. Through interactions, often with frightening individuals bearing their own survival-driven plight, the story moves north through Mexico, and ultimately to the less than idyllic gang-infested gritty streets of Los Angeles.



Juxtaposing the lives of ordinary people, **Panga** tugs at the readers' emotions, often leaving the reader wondering how he would react facing similar circumstances. Intended as a follow-up to **The Last City**, Steve's first novel, his latest, **Panga**, has taken on a life of its own. Currently receiving 5-Star Reviews, readers are responding in ways that have surprised Mr. Blinder, himself.

*Continued on Page 5*

The Forum luncheon will be held on Tuesday, January 31, 2023: Social Hour, 11:00 a.m.; Lunch, noon. We're meeting at the Red Onion, 736 Bart Earle Way, Rolling Hills Estates. (From the intersection of PCH and Hawthorne Blvd., go up the hill on Hawthorne, onto the PV Peninsula, turn left on Silver Spur Rd., then left on Bart Earle Way.)

You may register for the Forum by using the coupon on the flyer you will receive or use the coupon on page 8. The menu for this luncheon is Red Onion Salad topped with a lite raspberry vinaigrette dressing; Parmesan and Panko roasted chicken Florentine - 8 oz. chicken filet filled with ham shavings and fresh spinach; rice pilaf; mixed vegetables - baby carrot, cauliflower, and broccoli; warm chocolate espresso brownie and coffee for dessert. Vege: mushroom and zucchini omelet with breakfast potatoes; same green salad and dessert as above.

The cost is \$40 per person.

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OMNIOLORE NEWS is published four times annually. We welcome short feature articles and news stories. Please contact the editor with your contributions.

Editor	Claire Damecour
Staff Member	TBD

## MESSAGE FROM OMNIOLORE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Frank Pohlner

Let me start out by wishing you all the best for the year end holiday season. I am most excited about a new addition to the Omnimore slate of activities that I have proposed that we will preview during the upcoming trimester. When CSUDH was paying for the classroom rent, we were allowed to use the classrooms only from 9am to 5pm on weekdays. The evening and weekend hours were reserved for university classes which they did schedule and use. Since we have taken over the lease that is not the case and we now have access to those time slots. In addition, many of our members are ready once again to meet with other members given that they are fully vaccinated or tested. Note that masks are optional.

Building on our tagline of "minds not ready for retirement" we are going to offer a selection of two distinct types - Lifestyle S/DGs and Lifestyle Activities. The LS/DGs will be less academic than our traditional offerings yet still present a learning experience in practical skills while the Lifestyle Activities will offer fun, social opportunities. The time slots for these LS/DG's and Lifestyle Activities will be weekdays 4-6pm and 7-9pm and weekend mornings and afternoons.

As many of you know, the existing Curriculum Committee has quite the job cut out for it; each trimester winnowing down approximately 150 proposals to the 20-25 S/DG's offered for you to select from. So as not to burden them with additional work, we have started a brand-new committee titled Lifestyles Activities Committee (LAC) which will prepare the offerings for your selection. The LAC is comprised of: **Susan Strauss**, Chairperson, **Leslie Criswell**, **Joan Kolic**, **Dennis Bosch**, **Barbara Case** and me. **Martin Ageson** participated in the initial brainstorming sessions.

Some of the initial topic areas included:

Gardening Topics	Cooking Topics
Earn a Ham Radio License	Wine Tasting/History of Wine Regions
Basic Automobile Maintenance	Investment Basics
Bicycling Topics	Basic Home Maintenance
Assisted Living Options	Computer Topics
Writer's Workshop	Let's Plan a Trip to (Travel Destination)
Let's Plan a Day Trip to (Local Destination)	Games -Trivia, Mahjong, Scrabble
Card Games- Bridge, Pinochle, Poker	Movie Night

From this starting point, the following proposals have been selected to offer initially to our members:

### (PGT) Play Games Time -- Lifestyle Activity

Meet in one of the BCHC classrooms to play games. Everyone should bring his/her favorite game, e.g., a board game, a deck of cards, a Scrabble set, a chess set, a Mahjong set, etc. When the class begins, you will find others who are interested in your game or find a group who is organizing a game you find interesting. It's recommended to bring snacks to share, and your own beverage.

### (TPT) Trivial Pursuit Tournament — Lifestyle Activity

Meet in one of our BCHC classrooms. Divide into balanced teams and begin playing a series of challenging Trivial Pursuit games over as many separate meeting dates as it may take to determine a winner. If there are multiple sections of this activity, then the winning teams from each section will pair off until an ultimate winner is determined. It's recommended to bring snacks to share, and your own beverage.

Supplies: Trivial Pursuit game sets owned by one or more members

### (MOV) Movies with Friends —Lifestyle Activity

Meet once a month in our BCHC classroom to watch a movie on our big screen TV. These films may be streamed or viewed via a DVD. After the movie there will be a discussion. How-

ever, the focus of this activity will be on the pleasure of watching a film together. Hybrid Zoom attendance cannot be accommodated. This first trimester, recent theatrical releases will be favored. It's recommended to bring snacks to share, and your own beverage.

### (WRI) Writing Workshop — Lifestyle Study Discussion Group

This Lifestyle Study Discussion Group (LS/DG) will concentrate on fostering creativity and improving written techniques through the production of original pieces of writing and submitting them to the group for literary critique. Each member will be responsible for at least one submission of a few pages of original fiction, non-fiction, poetry, a theater or screen script, an op-ed letter, a technical report, or any other form of writing. When during the review process specific topics about the craft of writing arise, some members may volunteer to create and give one or more presentations on these topics. The group will strive to maintain an open and accepting classroom environment where writers at all levels of expertise can feel at ease. Hybrid Zoom attendance will be permitted. It's recommended to bring snacks to share, and your own beverage.

*Continued on page 5*



Frank Pohlner  
President  
Omnimore LIR, Inc.

## Omnilore Profile: Sandy & Ken Pickar

by Shera Dolmatz

Sandy and Ken Pickar love learning and teaching. They both have had distinguished careers and share a passion to challenge themselves and others scholastically. Omnilore provides the couple with the perfect opportunity to explore new and exciting topics as well as educating their peers.

The two met six decades ago when Sandy was working in New York. She was born in Leeds, England during World War II and after the war grew up in London.

In the early 1960s, Sandy received an invitation from her U.S. relatives to come to America and work for a couple of years. The invitation prompted Sandy to come for an extended work holiday and have fun in the U.S.

While Sandy was exploring America, Ken, a New York native, was at the University of Pennsylvania completing a PhD in experimental physics specializing in low temperature physics.

Six months after Sandy's arrival to the U.S. her roommate and Ken's friend arranged a blind double date. Although the other two "hated" each other on first sight, for Sandy and Ken it was a remarkable success! Eighteen months later, Sandy and Ken were married and ready to begin their six, and counting, happy decades of conjugal bliss.

Both Ken and Sandy have enjoyed successful careers.

Ken's professional life spans both industry and academia. He began in industry at Bell Labs and continued with GE and Honeywell.

After decades in industry, Ken wanted to complete his working career in academia. In 1998 he accepted a job as a visiting professor with the California Institute of Technology teaching engineering design classes. His courses specialized in unusual engineering challenges, such as creating walking devices to assist people with mobility challenges or developing products for the international market to help consumers making less than \$5 a day.

Ken retired from Caltech in 2019. He loved working there and felt he was able to assist students choose their paths and provide both staff and students with his experienced business advice.

Sandy began her university education in the U.S. with Ken's encouragement. When she lived in England, higher education for girls was extremely limited. So, she began her higher education here in the States at the University of Pennsylvania with night courses, then to Temple University as a full-time student.

However, while Sandy was at Temple, the couple began their family and Sandy's university education was put on hiatus while she raised their children. Once, the children, Brad, Rob,



and Julia, were teenagers, she returned to her studies. Sandy enrolled full time at the College of St. Rose, in Albany, NY, where she enrolled in a special program designed for returning women.

Sandy holds bachelor's degrees in history and political science. With her degrees she taught high school social studies. Later in her career she worked on a pilot program in Los Angeles intercity schools which focused on a special approach to reading.

The couple has lived in many places both in the U.S. and abroad. They have resided in New York, Philadelphia, Israel, Canada, Saratoga in Northern California, and finally in Rolling Hills in Southern California.

Sandy and Ken love to travel. Together they have explored Australia for a two-month stay while Ken gave some guest lectures. They have also toured Thailand, India, and Europe.

About twelve years ago, a friend told Sandy about Omnilore. Sandy was hooked. She began the program first and now Ken is an advocate of Omnilore as well. Sandy credits Omnilore as being extremely helpful during the isolation of COVID.

Having taken classes in different institutions, what impresses Ken the most about the Omnilore program is that there are no professors. Ken says that Omniloreans are motivated and smart and because they are talking to their compatriots they work extremely hard to deliver good lectures. He feels that creating presentations for one's peers brings out the best in a student.

The couple enjoys subjects that are out of their comfort zone. Recently they have been taking their classes together. Sandy loves history classes. She usually takes fairly serious themes, but recently enjoyed the History of Fashion. For Ken, his favorite class was tracing history through DNA. Together they are currently enjoying a Gilbert and Sullivan class. Both agree that learning by reading on one's own is fabulous but having other people in a class increases one's ability to learn.

In addition to travelling and Omnilore their interests include, their children, six grandchildren, reading, theater, music, and attending concerts locally in the South Bay and also the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Ken is on the board of the above-mentioned chamber orchestra of the South Bay and the South Coast Botanic Garden. Sandy participates in her synagogue, Temple Beth El in San Pedro, where she has held the position of Sisterhood president for several years and is currently involved in the Rolling Hills Women's Club where she held the presidency for a while.

Their advice to retirees is to be as active as you can manage mentally and physically. Make new friends and find something that you really like doing and then do more of it. Get out of your comfort zone and take a course you know nothing about.





## Omnioleoreans—New Year Stories

by Claire Damecour, Omniole News Editor

Thank you for sharing your optimism, humor and heartening stories in our Letter to the Editor Section. Everyone enjoys reading the wonderful vignettes of our joys and trials and foibles. With this new year upon us, there has been some time for reflection. Thank you for your letters about what you would like to do differently in 2023. For myself (1) I want to try lifting small weights to build up some upper body muscle (no, I cannot do a push up) and (2) I want to spend some time every day with an attitude of gratitude, and (3) I want to give back to the community at large with my volunteer activities with Omniole, the Red Cross, and ESL. What about you?



### Jim North: STUFF Vs. KISS

**M**any of you will remember the George Carlin routine highlighting STUFF. Yeah, I have STUFF, you have STUFF, all of us have STUFF. It's a national phenomenon and very American-USA<USA<USA. We give some of our STUFF away, to make room for more STUFF. Some of us rent storage units because we just can't give up any of our STUFF. The garage is full of STUFF, so are all the closets, under the bed is full of STUFF. The New Year is at hand, and change is in the air. Get a grip and adopt a new policy - KISS. Rise up and join the revolution to find



SIMPLICITY in your life in all areas. You have two hands so do you really need five guitars or four tennis rackets. Do you really need NFL football games on Sunday 3, Monday 1, Thursday 1, like 22 hours of viewing and analysis. You can sit in your lounge chair and watch cable television, countless streaming options, free movies, videos, etc. The entertainment machine will do anything to keep your eyeballs fixed on a screen. Now that's a whole lotta STUFF. Give KEEP IT SIMPLE a chance

in the New Year; the results may surprise you!

PS: I know the acronym (KISS) stands for - KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID! The term STUPID would not apply to our members who were smart enough to find Omniole and wise enough to join and participate. That would be the wrong STUFF.



### Gail Ruder: A New Way of Life

**I** think of my recent move after living in my home in Rancho PV for 53 years as akin to ripping off a bandage. You know it's going to hurt but the faster you do it the faster it will feel better. It has been a few years of thinking seriously about maintaining a five-bedroom home which is 53 years old and needs a lot of attention or moving to a place much smaller with many amenities.

One of my daughters and some nieces and nephews live up here in Northern Cal so that's where I am now living.

With the help of my family from the East Coast who came out to stay for a week or two to help me pack and then my family up here near Santa Rosa, I was able to downsize, decide what to take, and move within a few months.

Of course, making new friends is a whole lot different when you're in your 80s as opposed to when you are young and in a new home with young children and meeting people from different activities such as school, religious activities, clubs, etc.

After learning how to zoom and visit friends online over the past few years due to COVID, I feel that at least I will be able to maintain friendships via the phone and the computer. It's not the same but there are always compromises that have to be made. I am so happy that I am able to continue with my Omniole classes. It's even worked out that some of my good friends are taking the same classes as I am and that makes it even better.

So, my plan for the new year is to continue the challenge of getting used to a new way of life. I have traded views of Catalina Island for views of lovely hills covered with vineyards.



### Dale Korman: It's a Wonderful Life

**A**lready I have begun to "re-enter" the activities that I've put "on the back burner" since Howard unexpectedly passed away. Coming back to Omniole has been welcoming. I had missed the short story classes and, especially, the class discussions. Thank goodness for Zooming during these uncertain times. (You know that I believe in divine intervention.) Starting the plan for the Movie Goers Group for the coming year will be fabulous, as well. And, even better for 2023 is that I've moved across the street from family. What a fantastic development in this, my next chapter. It's going to be just like the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*.... ahead.



*Continued on Page 5*

*Continued from Page 1—Panga*

"I absolutely love it when people tell me how they were affected by a gripping scene or how a favorite character emerged-- that a character's actions were an inspiration or made them think in ways they previously had not imagined. When I'm told I was able to get inside the reader's head, by first allowing the reader into the character's mind—it's a big part of the juice for me."

For much of his research on the book, Steve was granted high level access by the U.S. Coast Guard. He spoke with captains, crew members and spent time on numerous vessels. "The entire process was such an honor for me. The Coast Guard was nothing short of amazing to work with," says Steve. "The average citizen has little idea of the enormity of the daily challenges these people are tasked with, or, as we can now tragically see, some of the dangers that accompany that duty."

The book is loosely based on an actual incident which took place off our coast, wherein a Coastguardsman was tragically murdered during an interdiction with a **Panga** attempting to smuggle drugs into California.

Steve feels that the extensive nature of his travels in over 50 countries on all 7 continents has greatly enhanced his ability to convey thoughts and concepts as a fiction writer. "I love interacting with people from wildly differing backgrounds. I've always been attracted to the simple challenges, especially in Third World Countries, wherein their daily fight for survival is often amplified. I am enchanted to learn about both their dreams and fears and how they may compare with my own, living in the Promised Land of California. And wherever you are in the world—these fears take different forms. if you're in the Sahara Desert, where is the water coming from? In Botswana, how do I get across a river full of Hippos? In Tegucigalpa, Honduras, what route should I drive my kids to school which has the least chance of gunfire?"

At the Omnimore lecture, Steve will go into greater detail about the background of the novel, and some of his inspiration for the situations and characters portrayed in **Panga**. There will be a Q & A with the audience, after which Steve will be happy to sign books for all who have a copy.

Please check out Steve's website: [www.steveblinder.com](http://www.steveblinder.com)

You will find links to purchase his paperback novels or ebooks. (He has won many awards—his wildlife photography is simply amazing!)

Note: a portion of sales from **PANGA** will go to a foundation to support the needs of Wells Horne, who is the son of Senior Chief Terrell Horne, the Coastguardsman who was killed while on duty during a mission to intercept a Panga. It is to Chief Horne that Steve Blinder's novel, **Panga**, is dedicated.

[Note from Leslie Criswell: Steve is the son of long-time Omnimoreans Al & Ruth Blinder.]

*Continued from Page 2—President's Column*

### **Waterwise Gardening (GAR) — Lifestyle Study Discussion Group**

The Metropolitan Water District has declared a drought emergency for all Southern California. This Lifestyle Study Discussion Group (LS/DG) will gather Omnimoreans with knowledge and expertise about waterwise gardening, as well as those members who have little knowledge, but active interest in the subject. Members will formally and informally (through sharing, presentations, and discussion) increase their knowledge about gardening with drought-tolerant and native plants. Everyone will be responsible for a presentation. The group will plan one or more trips to local native plant gardens, botanical gardens and/or nurseries. Hybrid Zoom attendance will be accommodated. It's recommended to bring snacks to share, and your own beverage.

In early January, we will send you a more detailed description of the activities and a tentative schedule. You then can sign up for your favorite activity. You may want to bring a friend to introduce them to Omnimore in a more social setting. The LS/DG and Lifestyle Activities will start in February. If this initial offering is successful, we will expand the program. If you would like to participate in the Lifestyle Curriculum Committee or have a proposal for an activity, please contact me or Susan Strauss.

Best wishes for you in the New Year, Frank.

*Continued from Page 4—Letters to the Editor*

### **H.E. Kamiya: *Epiphany***



#### *Epiphany*

*Three wise seers from the ancient Orient  
espied in the firmament,  
a sign announcing a wondrous event,  
The twelfth day after the mystical night  
they found in Bethlehem  
a tiny babe, bathed in starlight,  
Bringing gifts of untold worth  
in homage of the Christ Child  
and prophesy of His life on earth,*

*Caspar brought a chest of gold,  
a valued metal, symbol  
of virtue, purity and kingship,  
Melchior brought frankincense,  
an aromatic resin, symbol  
of prayer and divine authority,  
Balthasar brought a jar of myrrh,  
an embalming oil, symbol  
of human suffering and death,  
The Magi now are of Christmas lore,  
their precious gifts oft recited,  
recounting the twelve day trek of yore.*



## My First Deployment with the Red Cross

by Claire Damecour

On June 13, 2022, flooding of multiple locations in Montana prompted the evacuations of several communities. The Regional Red Cross began providing mass care services in three shelter locations on June 13 and opened a fourth shelter location on June 14. Evacuation Centers were opened in two additional communities on June 14. Flooding continued to impact communities around the state and the regional teams worked with local Emergency Managers to determine mass care needs. Homes were damaged/destroyed in several of the flooded areas. Emergency supplies were distributed at the shelters and were delivered to specific communities, as requested.

A Federal Disaster Declaration for the State of Montana was approved June 16 for Carbon, Park, and Stillwater counties at a level 4.



The Disaster Assessment teams (DAT) conducted in-field assessment for affected and surrounding communities and provided hotshot assessments as they were identified. Recovery (REC) participated with local community partners at Multiple Agency Resource Centers (MARC) and Mobile Community Outreach Teams (MCOT) in impacted communities and provided essential resources (Distribution of Emergency Supplies or DES) to qualified clients in need of support.

As a former psychiatrist, I was assigned to Disaster Mental Health (DMH). The original role of this department was to support the Red Cross staff, making sure that everyone was getting what they needed to be able to function properly. After 9/11 psychological research was conducted with people who responded to the disaster at the time of the deployment, and a year later. It was determined that a majority still experienced significant levels of anxiety, insomnia, nightmares, flashbacks and other symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) a year later. So, my role at this Disaster Relief Operation (DRO) was to sit down with staff members and make sure that they were getting enough sleep, eating enough and healthily, drinking enough water, using sunscreen and bug spray, taking breaks, taking at least one day off every week of deployment, saying no to more work when you are overwhelmed (without feeling guilty), and regularly sharing their experiences with someone that they trusted. Sometimes my job meant picking up ice cubes for the cooler, or going to the neighborhood Subway restaurant with a list of requested meals and getting everyone something to eat at lunch. Often it meant “listening as if I had nothing better to do” (from my training).

The role of DMH has expanded since its inception to include the emotional support of the victims of a disaster. This could

include letting them recount what happened to them (debriefing); express their frustrations, anger and shock without interruption or judgement; and teaching them coping skills like deep breathing, visualization imagery and self soothing exercises. I worked closely with Disaster Health Services (DHS) who replaced lost medications, prescription glasses and medical equipment.

I learned about the organizational challenges of a large DRO, the numerous acronyms (DRO, DAT, DES, DMH, MCOT, MARC, REC, DHS), the different personalities of the various team leads and how that impacts the work, and the importance of being very patient. Sometimes it seemed like I was waiting around too much, waiting to be told where to go and what to do. That was frustrating for me, as well as for the staff who were eager to help in anyway we could. I learned that the people of Montana are proud and self-reliant and will refuse help a dozen times over, even when they are knee deep in mud. They have a pioneer mentality and prefer to take care of things themselves without outside influence. I learned that there are many organizations in addition to the Red Cross that help out at a disaster, like the Salvation Army, and many local organizations and churches. I learned that people who go to a disaster to help out come from all walks of life, of all ages, and backgrounds and are genuinely good people. However, they tend to put their own needs last, and will drive themselves past the point of exhaustion. So a lot of the advice I gave was: “go home and rest for a few hours”, “eat something”, “sit down”, “take tomorrow off” and “get enough sleep”. I would share, that in geriatric psychiatry, my former specialty, it is sometimes the caregivers that die before their demented partners do, because they neglect their own health needs. As they say on the plane, “Put your oxygen mask on first before helping others”.

It was my first DRO, but not my last. I’m looking forward to making a difference in people’s lives at the next disaster.



## Remembering John Everett Taber, The Ultimate Omnilorean

by Martin Ageson

**O**n November 13, 2022, Omnilorean John Taber passed away peacefully at his home in Rolling Hills Estates, at the age of 97.

During his long life, John truly achieved great things.

First, his professional career was remarkably accomplished.

After being raised in Burbank, John earned a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Caltech in 1946 in a special accelerated naval officer training program and then went on to earn his master's degree in Electrical Engineering from U.C. Berkeley.

From 1946 to 1954, John worked at Hughes Aircraft where he developed, among many things, an intercom system for the notable Hughes H-4 Hercules Flying Boat (nicknamed the "Spruce Goose").

In 1954, he was hired by TRW (now Northrup Grumman) and spent the next 37 years in various project management positions, where he was well known for his capacity to invent technical items and for his ability to lead groups of engineers. Among many other things, he led a particularly important late 1950's effort of the United States Air Force to develop a means to reach Venus (of direct benefit to the country's attempts to catch up with the Soviets in space technology), and his concept for Landsat Image Processing earned him the NASA Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement in 1974.

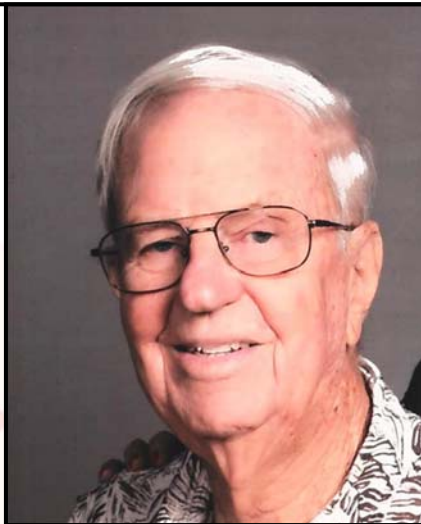
Second, John also led a very successful and varied personal life.

John was a loving husband to his beloved widow Lynn, and a devoted father and grandfather to the blended family he shared with Lynn. On Lynn's side: six children, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. On John's side: six children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He and Lynn shared many interests, including travel, hiking, and the environment (having met in 2002 on a Sierra Club trip he was leading in New Zealand). Among other things, John and Lynn were active participants in the Sierra Club and strong supporters of the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, which designated a pocket park in the City of Rolling Hills Estates as the "John and Lynn Taber Grove" in recognition of their contributions.

Third, John made huge, and arguably unequalled, contributions to Omnilore.

Unfortunately, much of the history of John's involvement



with, and contributions to, Omnilore has not been fully appreciated by current members. However, a close look at the evidence clearly establishes that John made striking, powerful, invaluable, and quite varied contributions to our organization over many years.

When John joined Omnilore in early 1991, the group had approximately sixteen members, up from the six who began meetings (in member's homes) in 1989. Omnilore selected its first officers at that time, with Ethel Allen (another very important early leader of Omnilore) taking the role of President and John becoming the organization's first formal Treasurer.

In late 1992, Omnilore had its first annual membership meeting, and

John was elected as the organization's Vice President, a role he would keep for two years.

In 1992, Ethel Allen asked John to re-write the organization's operational Bylaws, and his rewrite was basically unchanged for the next 29 years until Omnilore became an independent nonprofit corporation in 2021.

In 1994, John was elected our second President. Among the foundational changes he achieved as President was the creation of a document laying out all of the tasks that needed to be done in the organization, who was responsible to do them, the inputs needed and from whom, the outputs to be created and delivered, and the time-line needed to carry out the tasks. Several years later, this document became our present Procedures Manual.

John chose not to serve a second term as President. However, he continued to make fundamental contributions to the organization, helping it to become the organization it is today.

Among these accomplishments were:

- ✓ John's early 1990's founding of the Omnilore hiking group.
- ✓ John's 1999 creation of a weekly morning lecture series involving CSUDH professors.
- ✓ John's 2002 formation of a successful travel program which melded together a traditional S/DG relating to a particular geographical place with a class trip to that place. (For example, the first of these classes studied the Lewis and Clark expedition and then traveled along the Western half of that expedition's route);
- ✓ John's initial designing of the very complicated and efficient computer program (since refined and improved, and ably administered by Hal and Ruth Hart) which allows Omnilore to schedule our classes so that the greatest number of Omniloreans are able to get the classes they want and at the times they want them.
- ✓ John's research and authorship of a history of Omnilore for Omnilore's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Forum held in July 2015.

*Continued on Page 8*



*Continued from Page 7—John Taber Tribute*

As noted above, even this extensive list of contributions to Omnilore is not complete. It cannot capture what John added to Omnilore through his humor, creativity, inspiration, friendship, and dedication to the organization and its individual members on a day-to-day and person-to-person basis.

John Taber was an extraordinarily able man in many ways, including as an inventor, a manager, a leader of men, and a visionary. He led a successful life that he designed for himself. Thankfully, one of the things he loved most, and devoted his passion and talents to, was Omnilore.

Whenever Omnilore members reflect on what makes Omnilore great, it would be fitting to never forget John Taber, what he accomplished, and how he did it.

Other members, like me, will remember taking a walking tour of downtown Los Angeles with John. It was in one word - **FANTASTIC**. We met at the Blue Line station in Carson, I believe, and for the first time rode a train to the terminal in central downtown. Talk about diversity! Off the train up the stairs, on to the escalator and into Wells Fargo Bank. The special mural was guarded and no photos please. John talked to the guard and he gave us five minutes to take our shots. Fifteen grey, white and bald heads melted the guy. The next stop was the Angels Flight up and down, across the street to the Farmers Market. The trip to City Hall was incredible. Sixteen of us headed for the security guard and the elevator banks to the upper floors. John again approached the guard and we were asked to line up and show some identification. I used my PV Library card and off we went. Passed the offices of the LA County Supervisors with names that were headlines in the *Times* to a separate, smaller elevator that delivered us to the Tom Bradley conference and dining room. This facility sits in the triangle on top of the City Hall structure with a view that is breath taking. The rest of the day's itinerary included: The Central Library, Electric Company (fountains), USC campus (Tommy Trojan), Colosseum, Rose Garden, and the bronze male and female statues, **WOW!**

By now you get the drift of the article. John Taber was a special and gifted human being, an encyclopedic mind, with a willingness to share his knowledge. Our world grew a little dimmer and the heavens shone a little brighter with his passing. **THANK YOU, JOHN**

*Jim North*

I remember John fondly. He was the coordinator of the first class I took in Omnilore. He was always, in my mind, a great Gentleman and will remain that way.

*Merle Culbert, former long-time member*

### OMNIOLORE Winter Forum Luncheon Reservation Form

**WHEN:** Tuesday, January 31st, 2023—11:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Red Onion  
736 Bart Earle Way  
Rolling Hills Estates 90274

**NO** Reservations  
accepted after January 21st!

Please make \_\_\_\_\_ reservations for the Omnilore Annual Meeting and Forum Luncheon at \$40.00 each:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for: ☐ \$40.00 each

Vegetarian plate: # ☐

Regular plate: # ☐

Total number of meals: ☐

Please make checks out to **Omnilore LIR, Inc.**  
and or send to:

Forum Chair, Leslie Criswell  
27039 Sunnyridge Road  
Palos Verdes Pen., CA 90274-4030



## Movie Goers Special Interest Group

It was so wonderful for The Movie Goers to meet again and see *Glass Onion* together.

There were 19 who saw the movie and then we all met at Mimi's for our usual discussion. Phil Solomita took over with some interesting handouts. Great facilitator! The consensus was that this sequel had more humor than *Knives Out*. It was fun seeing Daniel Craig acting goofy with his "southern accent". The cast smashing the crystals was considered the best scene. Now you can watch the movie on Netflix. Don't miss it! Very entertaining.

Our next gathering will probably be in January. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Dale Korman at [daleakorman@gmail.com](mailto:daleakorman@gmail.com)

The more the merrier! Happy Holidays!



## STEM Special Interest Group Doings

The Omnilore STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Meaning) Special Interest Group has been meeting very successfully now for over two years. Our group offers stimulating science-related discussion in a very casual and enjoyable social setting. We've been meeting every two months (with a larger break in the summer). At each meeting, one member of the group agrees to select a topic and facilitate a discussion about that topic at the next meeting. Almost all of our topics have revolved around hour-long YouTube science videos (mostly, these are interviews or lectures on specific science subjects). Each facilitator picks the videos and develops discussion questions to send out to the group in advance of the meeting.

Recent discussions have included:

1. Theories about the ultimate fate of the universe
2. Recent advances in anti-aging medicine
3. Brian Kelley's ideas about "inevitable" future trends in technology
4. Jeff Hawkins' Thousand Brain Theory
5. The science behind trees "communicating" with each other via their roots.

We hold our meetings inside the homes or in the backyards of our members. We begin the meetings by sharing a casual potluck dinner with wine and other beverages. Then we gather around a table, in a living or family room, or outside on the patio (depending on the weather) and that's when the topic discussion begins. Discussions have always been fun, social and lively. Our meetings are two hours in length, starting at 5pm and ending at 7pm.

We are much more than just a discussion group; we are also very much a social group of Omniloreans who love science.

In the beginning, invitations to join the group were sent to all Omniloreans who had signed up for Omnilore science S/DGs in the previous year. But we want to make it clear that we are open to all Omniloreans who have an avid interest in science.

Please consider joining our group. If you'd like to join, please email our STEM SIG Coordinator, Michael Feygin at [mfeygin1@gmail.com](mailto:mfeygin1@gmail.com).



From upper left: Bob Bacinski, (Allen) Ace Rosen, Geri Chaudri, Rich Mansfield, Michael Feygin, Tom Vincent, Michael Costello, Barbara Case, and a partial of Petrina Long. This is Michael Feygin's backyard in Rancho Palos Verdes.

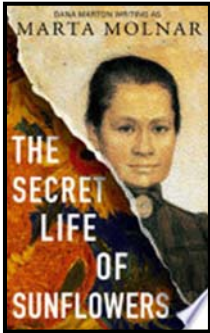
We have made a preliminary decision to have the next meeting on **Friday, February the 10th** at Karen Merikel's house. We selected "Developments in the Field of Artificial Intelligence" as the discussion topic. AI will be a huge disruptive trend of our future! It is definitely worthy of discussion. There are a lot of great YouTube videos on AI. For example, these three:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHoWGNQRXb0>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQkeRxeH34I&t=5s>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HUP6Z5voiS8>

## Have You Read....?

by Cindy Eggert and Patricia Edie

After ten glorious years of discussing Monthly selections, the Best Seller's Book Group is on hiatus. But we are still reading! As promised, here are some books that we enjoyed and recommend to our readers:



### *The Secret Life of Sunflowers* by Marta Molnar

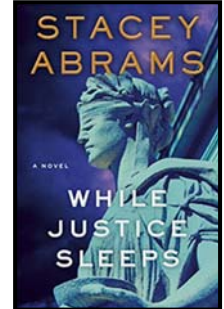
This is a gripping and inspiring novel based on the true story of Johanna Bonger, the sister-in-law of Vincent van Gogh. In the story, the lives of two characters generations apart are intertwined through their commitment to the world of art. Emsley, who discovers an old diary written by Johanna Bonger; and Johanna, a 28-year-old widow with a baby living in Paris in

the 1800s who has inherited her brother-in-law's obscure art. Though she barely spoke French she managed to share

Vincent's legacy with the world. If you happened to see the Immersive van Gogh Show, this story will help bring the Sunflowers to life.

### *While Justice Sleeps* by Stacy Abrams

This is a timely, complexly plotted thriller set within the halls of the U.S. Supreme Court. It involves a life-threatening struggle that faces law clerk, Avery Keene, when her boss, United States Supreme Court Justice Howard Wynn, slips into a coma. She is surprisingly told that Justice Wynn has left instructions for her to serve as his legal guardian and power of attorney. As political wrangling ensues in Washington to potentially replace the ailing judge, Avery begins to unravel a carefully constructed, chess-like sequence of clues left behind by Wynn.



**So many books...so little time!**

**Rain  
Cancels**

## Omniole Walking Group—February 10th (Friday) – 10:00 A.M. Whale Watching and Walking at Point Vicente

by Dennis Bosch

This walking outing is unique in several respects:

- Easy & beautiful trail that is accessible by wheelchair or walkers; this outing will accommodate slower walkers
- Spectacular views of the Pacific Ocean to view the annual migration of the Pacific gray whale at peak season (bring binoculars)
- Picnic tables for **our brown bag lunch** situated among the most beautiful views in the South Bay
- After the conclusion of the walk and picnic, you may wish to visit the Interpretive Center and enjoy its featured exhibits on the natural and cultural history of the Peninsula; however, we are told the museum most likely will be closed for remodeling.
- Native Plant Garden adjacent to the Interpretive Center

Friendly dogs OK on this hike, but a dog must be on a leash.

Meet in the parking lot in front of the Point Vicente Interpretive Center located at 31501 Palos Verdes Drive West, RPV. From PCH take Hawthorne Blvd south (toward the ocean), turn left on PV Drive and follow the signs for the Interpretive Center.

**Please R.S.V.P. to [walking-group@omnilore.org](mailto:walking-group@omnilore.org) by February 7, 2023.**



*Above: two views of museum displaying whales; top right: Point Vicente Lighthouse, Point Vicente Interpretive Center, and typical portion of the trail.*



**Report on the October 31st Forum Speaker:****SpaceX from the Inside. . . Presented by Paul Lasman***by Kent McDonald*

The 2022 Annual Meeting and Forum Luncheon was held once again in person at the familiar Los Verdes Golf Course for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic caused the restaurant to close. The social hour and luncheon were held in the outdoor patio, then the attendees moved inside to listen to our guest speaker, Paul Lasman, tell us about "SpaceX from the Inside."

SpaceX is the common name for Elon Musk's company Space Exploration Technologies Corporation. Paul Lasman joined SpaceX shortly after it was formed 20 years ago in a warehouse located in El Segundo. At that time there were fewer than 100 employees, all of whom were selected and approved by Elon Musk. Paul, along with the other employees, moved to the new company headquarters in Hawthorne, a re-purposed manufacturing facility, originally built by Northrup. He recently "officially" retired but still gets frequent requests for help. He even received a call while he was at the Forum luncheon!

Paul was responsible for the mechanical design/layout of the complex tubing and cable runs on the second-stage rocket motors for the Falcon 1 and Falcon 9 reusable rockets. He said that SpaceX was using well-known technology in its rocket-motor design, so nothing had to be invented. They just had to smartly combine reliable parts into something that would deliver the right lift and the duration needed. By the way, Elon Musk directed the designers to make the rockets ultimately reusable for ten launches. Paul was responsible for developing friction-stir welding for the metal plates combined to form cylinders. Eliminating the different metal in a conventional welding rod to join the plates made the assembled tank much less likely to fail at the seams. This has been very important for the reliability of every rocket.

He accompanied the rockets when they were moved to a SpaceX site near Brownsville, Texas for static testing. He followed each of the rockets when they were shipped to various launch sites. Omelek Island, part of the Kwajalein Atoll, was the remote site used for the Falcon 1 testing. Paul told us how difficult it was to work and live in such a place that has no hardware stores, motels, and rental cars that the team normally depended upon. Also, the launch-

*Paul Lasman*

support team consisted of mostly young engineers who happily worked long hours. Paul noted that the teams at SpaceX were very effective, and management welcomed suggestions from all employees for ideas that would make the rockets better or easier to construct.

Paul showed us numerous slides from the archives of SpaceX that showed the various launch sites where he had gone to support launch operations. He even designed a special vehicle used to move very heavy equipment at the launch pad. He spent a lot of time at Cape Canaveral, the Kennedy Space Center, and Vandenberg. Although the hours were long at these launch sites, he enjoyed seeing the mostly

successful launches. He noted that SpaceX always traced down the ultimate cause of every failure, so they could avoid any repeat from the same defect. Paul welcomed all questions from the audience and said that nothing in his presentation was company private. So, there was a lively discussion period that followed.

Note: We found out that Paul Lasman donated his entire honorarium given him for his talk. It was split evenly between the LA Regional Food Bank and Valomote Farm and Garden.

*Luncheon held in the patio.***The  
Next****Via****Zoom****INTRODUCING OMNILORE MEETINGS:****Wednesday, Feb. 15th - 1 p.m.****Tuesday, Mar. 7th - 10 a.m.****Help Spread the Word! RSVP 310-370-2494**

- January**
- 1 **New Year's Day**
  - 2 Spring Trimester Begins
  - 12 Management Council Meeting—12 Noon-1:30 p.m., Via Zoom
  - 16 **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**
  - 31 **Winter Forum**—11:30 a.m., Red Onion, Rolling Hills Estates  
(see article, page 1; reservation form, page 8)
- February**
- 9 Management Council Meeting—12 Noon-1:30 p.m., Via Zoom
  - 10 Walking Group—10 a.m. (see article, page 10)
  - 10 STEM SIG—5 p.m. (see article, page 9)
  - 14 **Valentine's Day**
  - 15 Introducing Omnimore Meeting—1 p.m., Via Zoom
  - 15 Input Deadline for March-April 2023 Newsletter
  - 20 **Presidents' Day**
- March**
- 7 Introducing Omnimore Meeting—10:00 a.m., Via Zoom
  - 12 **Daylight Savings Starts**

## OMNILORE CALENDAR 2023

# 2023



**2023 Forums**  
 Winter—January 31st  
 Spring—April 28th  
 Summer—July 31st  
 Annual Mtg.—October 31st

**IMPORTANT:**  
 Calendar changes and additions  
 are scheduled with Sharon Bohner  
[Calendar@omnilore.org](mailto:Calendar@omnilore.org)

### How to Join the Omnimore Learning-in-Retirement Facebook Group by Elyse Gura

1. Open Facebook on your laptop or PC
2. In the "Search Facebook" box at the top left of the page, type Omnimore Learning-in-Retirement
3. Click on "omnilore learning in retirement" which appears on the list below the search box
4. A list called Groups will display, with Omnimore learning in retirement at the top of the list. You will recognize the right group, because a picture of an owl appears to the left of the name
5. Click the word Join, which appears to the right of the group
6. You will see a confirmation message saying that you have joined the group.

### Coordinator's

### Corner

Denise  
DeVenuto  
Head  
Coordinator



I would like to thank the committee for the great job they did in obtaining coordinators and co-coordinators for the spring term. **Gloria Dumais**, **Carmen Svensrud**, and **Marilyn Brashear** worked with me to complete this important task in just a few days. Because we coordinated our efforts, we wound up with just one person who will be co-ordinating two S/DGs this term.

If you have any questions or issues, please contact me at [dendev88@gmail.com](mailto:dendev88@gmail.com).

[Membership@Omnimore.org](mailto:Membership@Omnimore.org) (inquiries about joining Omnimore, or referring friends)

**Visit the Omnimore website at [Omnimore.org](http://Omnimore.org)! Key Omnimore volunteers can be contacted via email.**

President@Omnimore.org  
 VP-Academics@Omnimore.org  
 VP-Administration@Omnimore.org  
 Curriculum@Omnimore.org (new S/DG suggestions)  
 Forum@Omnimore.org (Forum Committee)  
 Publicity@Omnimore.org (send your PR ideas)

Registrar@Omnimore.org (send updates to contact info)  
 Newsletter@Omnimore.org (submit articles or news)  
 Admin@Omnimore.org (Johan Smith)  
 Supplies@Omnimore.org (need to replenish cups, plates ...)  
 Equipment@Omnimore.org (report equipment issues)  
 Webmaster@Omnimore.org

CWG@Omnimore.org (propose a Computer Talk)  
 Best-Sellers@Omnimore.org (book discussion group)  
 Walking-Group@Omnimore.org  
 Calendar@Omnimore.org (room requests for pre-meetings)  
 SDG-Folders@Omnimore.org (help uploading class files)  
 Technology@Omnimore.org (new Technology Committee)