

**PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, INC.
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

The Board of Trustees of Universities Research Association, Inc. (URA) has initiated a search for a new President of the Corporation. For best consideration, applications or recommendations for this position should be submitted by March 15, 1994.

URA, a not-for-profit District of Columbia corporation founded in 1965, presently consists of eighty research-oriented universities in the United States, Canada and Japan. The corporation was formed primarily for the purpose of managing and operating scientific research and related activities.

Since January 1967, URA has been the prime contractor to the Department of Energy (DOE) and its predecessor agencies for the design, construction, management and operation of the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) near Batavia, Illinois.

In January 1989, DOE selected URA to be the management and operating contractor for the SSC Laboratory, in Ellis County, Texas. Since the Congress enacted legislation in October 1993 mandating the orderly termination of the SSC, URA has been managing the SSC termination phase, now underway.

As Chief Executive Officer, the President is responsible for corporate policy development and long-range planning, as well as overall management of URA research and facility contracts. The President is also responsible for pursuit of URA interests in interactions with government, industry and the research community. This is a full-time position, reporting to the Board of Trustees, requiring regular travel in conjunction with URA's various activities.

Inquiries and nominations should be directed to:
Chairman, URA Search Committee
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Life Processes of Plants — Arthur W. Galston. For anyone looking for a thorough introduction to plant life, Galston offers a comprehensive overview of photosynthesis, defense mechanisms, regeneration, endurance capabilities, reproduction, and the internal time clocks of plants that keep track of the minutes of the day and protect them from seasonal changes. He also investigates the growing field of genetic engineering and its relation to and implications for plants and agriculture. Sci Am Bks, 1994, 245 p., color photos and illus., hardcover, \$32.95.

The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality — Michael Heim. Through a series of essays, Heim analyzes the ontological implications of the move from digital to virtual reality and offers ideas for the direction in which this new technology should take us. For example, he contends that word processing has "swallowed the cultural heritage" of the English language and that hypertext threatens us with cognitive overload. He also worries that the time will come when we will have difficulty distinguishing virtual from real reality and warns that these issues must be considered, because the sociological ramifications of the technology will rival that of the automobile. OUP, 1993, 175 p., hardcover, \$21.00.

Poisons and Antidotes — Carol Turkington. Information about more than 600 toxins found in plants, animals, foods, medications, and chemicals is listed alphabetically. Each entry details where the poison is found and how it can be transmitted, as well as symptoms of poisoning and treatments for it. Those toxins especially dangerous to children and animals are noted, along with appropriate precautionary measures. Some rare occurrences, such as the potentially harmful effects on young children of the chemical phenylalanine, found in some artificial sweeteners, are outlined as well. The book lists names and addresses of poison control centers across the country. Facts on File, 1994, 372 p., hardcover, \$27.95.

Wrinkles in Time — George Smoot and Key Davidson. With the aid of science writer Davidson, Smoot recounts the events that led him and others to the discovery of cosmic "seeds," the wrinkles in time from which, he believes, galaxies grew. By examining Smoot's research and that of his peers — in such far-flung places as Antarctica and deep space — the authors explain current theories in modern cosmology and the principles of the big bang theory for lay readers and astrophysicists alike. Morrow, 1993, 331 p., b&w illus. and photos and color plates, hardcover, \$25.00.

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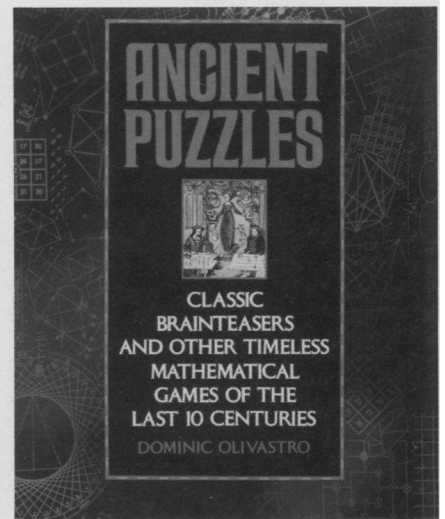
- What do prehistoric bone markings and modern computer science have in common?
- What is the mystery of pi that stumped generations of ancient mathematicians?
- What are the ancient puzzle origins of popular games such as tic-tac-toe and chess?
- Can you solve the puzzles posed to the emperor Charlemagne by Alcuin of York?
- What's the secret lore behind magic squares that captured the imagination of Chinese emperors, Persian mystics, and Benjamin Franklin?

In this fascinating collection of ancient conundrums, brainteasers, and mind-benders, Dominic Olivastro presents a popular history of mathematics by focusing on the puzzles that civilizations posed for their own education and entertainment. Here

are classic "puzzle problems" from ancient Africa, Egypt, Persia, China, and Greece and from cultures and texts spanning the Middle Ages and the Renaissance all the way to the present.

Each puzzle is linked with insightful folk and scientific history that helps shed light on the mysterious purpose and origin of the problem. Fascinating clues for figuring out answers draw on modern problem-solving techniques and lead to ancient secrets that, before now, have rarely been understood. Whether you decipher them for their historical significance, classical wisdom, or just for the sheer, maddening fun of it, these delightful puzzles provide a unique, entertaining, and enlightening guide to the evolution of the human mind.

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