

Division 8's Greenwood Treasures His Hawaiian Heritage

By LISA HUYNH

(July 16, 2003) Born on the island of Oahu, West Valley Division 8 Operator Verne Greenwood stays true to his Hawaiian roots – hula dancing, surfing and playing bass.

Greenwood and his wife, Caroline, took home top honors in 1998 when they competed in a hula dance competition. Verne earned first place in the men's solo category and Caroline won second for the women's solo group.

"I love competing, but that was my first and last competition," says Greenwood. "It's hard to compete because no one my age wants to."

Greenwood, 61, initially got into hula dancing because he thought he could do a better job than his wife.

People come together

He took on the challenge in 1993 and started dancing with a group called Keali'I O Nalani. "It's more of a family unit where at least 200 people come together to dance."

Although Greenwood doesn't compete or dance anymore because of arthritis in his lower back, he surfs the Malibu shores every Sunday morning with his friends. He plans to go back to Hawaii in September to surf.

A bass player, the father of three also plays Hawaiian music. He and his brother and cousin played professionally for 13 years in a band called "The Greenwood Brothers."

"We played in lounges in Alaska, San Diego and Nevada," he says.

Greenwood is enjoying life. "Maybe, one day I'll get back into hula dancing again."

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Verne Greenwood, above, and wife Caroline, below, took home top honors in a hula dance competition.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VERNE GREENWOOD