

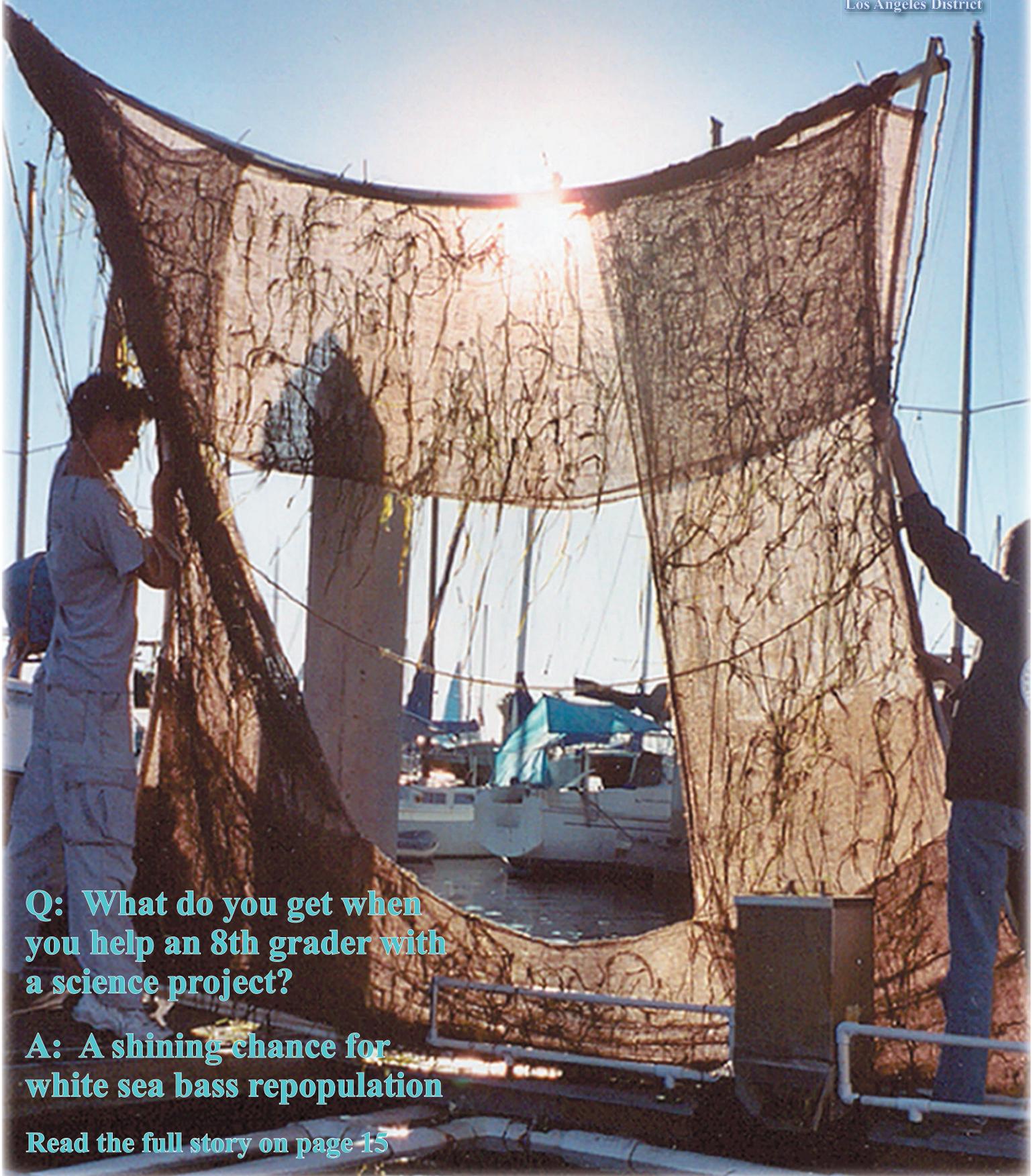
The Newcastle

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U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Los Angeles District



Q: What do you get when you help an 8th grader with a science project?

A: A shining chance for white sea bass repopulation

Read the full story on page 15

Agencies map Calleguas Creek permit plan

By Greg Fuderer

Coordination of environmental activities in southern Ventura County's Calleguas Creek watershed took a significant step forward with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement, allowing the construction of small-scale voluntary conservation projects designed to control erosion and sedimentation, to improve water quality and to enhance the natural resource functions and values of surrounding sensitive (predominantly wetland and riparian) habitat.

Gary Ball, Ventura County Resource Conservation District (VCRCD) president, and David Heilig, Assistant State Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), joined COL Alex Dornstauder in signing the agreement.

"The MOA is significant as it demonstrates that the stakeholders (including agencies) recognize the magnitude of the water quality and flood control problems within this watershed and are willing to work collectively towards a mutually beneficial set of solutions," said John Markham, Corps' project manager for the agreement. "Rehabilitation of this system is a technically and logistically difficult effort. It will continue to require the coordination of landowners, concerned citizens, scientists and engineers for years to come. This is a brave step in the right direction."

The agreement is modeled after the Partners in Restoration Program that the Corps, the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District and the NRCS signed in 2002 to address similar issues in the Morro Bay watershed. NRCS and Sustainable Conservation, a nonprofit organization in San Francisco, started the program with the implementation of a permit coordination program in the Elkhorn Slough watershed in 1998.

Ball agreed that the memorandum would provide major future benefits to the creek's watershed. "This agreement is

the result of a lot of effort and a good working partnership between the Army Corps, NRCS and the VCRCD," he said. "The program will be a win-win-win situation benefiting agencies, landowners and natural resources. A lot more work will be accomplished because of this simplified process."

The Calleguas Creek MOA addresses activities that may require a Corps Nationwide Permit in order to reduce channel degradation, improve water quality and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife. Those activities often include installing native vegetation, constructing grade stabilizers, removing accumulated sediment, diverting agricultural runoff into grass-lined bio-swales, increasing channel roughness to reduce scouring and constructing basins to reduce sediment or debris load.

The Calleguas Creek watershed encompasses about 341 square miles. It is one of the most heavily impaired watersheds in California and is under a federal consent decree to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads for nutrients, salts, toxicity, metals, historic pesticides and PCBs and bacteria.



COL Alex Dornstauder joins Gary Ball of Ventura County Resource Conservation District and David Heilig from Natural Resources Conservation Service in signing the Calleguas Creek Memorandum of Agreement.

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On the cover: Jessica Chan (right) holds up one of the eelgrass beds crucial to white sea bass recovery.

(Photo courtesy of Jessica Chan)



Corps team wins award for Matilija Dam plan

By Jay Field

The L. A. District has won the 2004 Outstanding Planning Achievement Award for its Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.

The Corps award was presented to members of the District's Planning Division and its Matilija Project Delivery Team (PDT) at the annual Senior Leaders Conference in Dallas in August.

Part of the \$128.5 million project to remove Matilija Dam, near Ojai, Calif., the feasibility study provides a blueprint for one of the largest dam demolitions in U.S. history. Built in 1947 for limited flood control and to store water for farmers, the 190-foot-high dam has trapped so much sediment over the decades that its original uses have been reduced.

As a result, Ventura County residents and officials for years have sought solutions that would maintain local water supply while increasing the steelhead trout population in the Ventura River and replenishing sand on county beaches.

Working with its local sponsor, the Ventura County Watershed Protection District, the Planning team focused on more than 32 miles of habitat along the Ventura River, Matilija Creek and other tributaries, reaching from Los Padres National Forest to the Pacific Ocean. The PDT also included federal and state agencies, local cities and water districts, public and private environmental groups and local citizens.

According to Tom Waters, a Directorate of Civil Works leader, District planners formed work groups to address

environmental concerns, public outreach, recreation, plan formulation, technical studies and funding opportunities. "The PDT determined that the removal of Matilija Dam was the key to meeting the overall ecosystem restoration objectives of restoration of natural sediment transport and fish passage in this relatively pristine Southern California watershed," he wrote. "Unique and innovative models were developed to address the subsequent release and natural transport of sediments to the downstream 16 miles of Matilija Creek and the Ventura River."

If budget plans proceed as expected, demolition would begin in 2008 and take about three years to finish.

From *Engineer Update* -

PDT Merit Award

The District Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study Project delivery team also recently received the PDT Merit Award. After careful project review, the PDT developed a management and decision-making subcommittee to complete the complex study and overcame numerous challenges on this complex ecosystem restoration study. Partnerships were created among government agencies, non-governmental agencies and the public to maintain the trust to make this project a success. The PDT is working on the design phase and will complete a Detailed Design Report in December.



Left to right: Jim Hutchison, Sue Hughes of Ventura County, LTG Carl Strock, Jeff Pratt, also from Ventura County, Darrell Buxton and Jon Vivanti after LA District was presented the 2004 Outstanding Planning Achievement Award for its Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study.

Navajo get richly detailed GIS atlas on uranium mines

By Mike Tharp

Only a man with keen cultural sensitivity would think to incorporate ancient elements of the Navajo Nation seal and flag into a 21st century atlas and geospatial datasets on the history of uranium mining in the Navajo Nation. That's why each page of the tabloid newspaper-sized bound volume is bordered with images of the four mountains and four colors sacred to the Navajo.

Glynn Alsup is the man who did just that. The Los Angeles District's tribal liaison has labored on health and safety issues for the Navajo for over a decade, and in late November presented copies of the atlas to Navajo leaders at a meeting of the Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (NAMLRP).

Alsup also delivered copies to Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley Jr., the Red Valley Chapter and to Dine College. "We not only completed the project on schedule and within budget, but also developed a product that will be beneficial to the scientists and engineers working the environmental restoration for years to come," says Alsup.

Each page of the document is bordered by symbols of Mount Bianca (Dawn or White Shell Mountain), the sacred mountain of the east; Mount Taylor (Blue Bead or Turquoise Mountain) in the south; San Francisco Peaks (Abalone Shell Mountain) in the west; and Mount Hesperus (Obsidian Mountain) in the north.

The atlas, also in CD version, collates thousands of pages of reports, studies and other data into a form that the Navajo can use as they continue to deal with the decades-old problem of uranium mines on their lands. "The Corps of Engineers had to go to five or six research centers to get this," explains Alsup, "and now the Navajo have it all electronically. We scanned all the reports, original documents, footnotes—even the original (mining) leases—into one database."

Wrote Melvin Yazzie, NAMLRP's project manager: "It has been a very enlightening experience and very fun to have met you and been able to work on this monumental project. I look forward to our continued work and friendship."

Added Elaine Ezra, president of TerraSpectra Geomatics, the contracting firm which produced and published the document: "We are so grateful to have been able to work with you on this very important project. Looking back over my long career, this is the project I am most proud to have participated in."

The project began in 2004 when BG Joseph Schroedel, South Pacific Division Commander, and President Shirley signed an agreement. In September 2004, the Corps completed the Mining GIS system for the nation, and Yazzie presented the product at the Office of Surface Mines National Conference that same month.

In September 2005 Mark Cowan, Division program manager for the Corps' Remediation of Abandoned Mines, funded the Los Angeles District to complete a summary atlas for the Navajo Nation. The document was produced and published by TerraSpectra Oct. 31, 2005.

Adding regional focus, Yazzie presented the project at the Northwest Mining Conference in Spokane, Wash., in December on behalf of the Nation and the Corps.

Alsup attended project presentation meetings in Window Rock, Cove and Red Valley, Ariz., and Shiprock, N.M. Others

Glynn Alsup presents the GIS atlas to Madeline Roanhorse.



Photos courtesy of Glynn Alsup

attending were Yazzie, Ezra, Madeline Roanhorse, NAMLRP program manager, Lawrence Benally, NAMLRP GIS manager, Brian Mego, Navajo Tribal Utility Authority GIS manager, Kevin Galard, Navajo Nation Rangers, Vernon Long, Everett Begay, Ryan James and Rachelle Silver of the Navajo Land Dept., Brian Tagaban of the Navajo Dept. of Transportation, Michelle Silver and Jerry Begay of the Navajo EPA, Dexter Pratt of Navajo Fish & Wildlife, Arvin Trujillo of Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources, Rose Grey of the Shiprock NAMLRP and Ray Tsingine of the Tuba City NAMLRP.

Besides Alsup and Cowan, other District and Division team members included Diane Watkins, Brian Jordan, Karen Warren, Imelde Garcia, Thad Fukushige, David Hays, Susan Tianen, Lawrence Minch and Romano Caturegli.

The atlas and database will come in handiest on the ground—and under it. They describe in scientific detail, for example, where all the water sources are in the Nation’s territory, the volume of uranium ore taken from the mines—even information on original Spanish

Melvin Yazzie, Glynn Alsup and Lawrence Benally at the GIS presentation.



land grants. “When you go to clean up (the mines), you want to know which way the wind blows, the rainfall, if you had a (mining) prospect but no production,” Alsup explains. “The cleanup phase can use all this information. You’ve got a good idea of what’s underneath the ground.”

In this project, Alsup, TerraSpectra and other team members have combined cutting-edge geospatial technology with the ancient customs and craft of a proud people struggling with a legacy of the Nuclear Age.

Have you gotten your Groove on yet?

By Pam Willis

One of the new software programs for the Corps is Groove. Groove’s Virtual Office helps users across or outside an enterprise work together over secure Internet connections.

Founded by Ray Ozzie, creator of Lotus Notes, the software allows individual computers to communicate directly and to share documents or communicate via instant-messaging. It allows sharing of files, projects, documents and data on a virtual desktop and allows secure teaming with stakeholders and partners—even if they are outside of the USACE/CEEIS network—without direct assistance from IM shops.

It does this both on- and offline, automatically synchronizing and updating files and data when on-line. Groove is best for working groups and project development teams who are constantly exchanging and collaborating future deliverables for public or USACE-wide internal consumption. The number of members within a workspace should be limited to 30 or fewer.

There are 20,000 Groove licenses. Additional licensing

requirements beyond the 20,000 will have to be funded by each organization. Local IMs have the flexibility of installing it through their networks or allowing users to download from a central Web server. Basic user training is done online and requires no travel.

Groove is not meant to replace existing tools, but augments the capabilities now available. Rodges Lawton from the Help Desk says, “I like it as a package and use it to communicate with technicians in the field. It is separate from MS Office/Outlook and is a group software. The only bad thing is that it eats up memory.” He compares it to Microsoft Netmeeting. “Netmeeting has to be launched, where Groove is always there.” Another issue being worked on is bandwidth.

“The Corps originally purchased Groove to try it out and used the Groove server,” John McMaster (IM) explains. “Then we bought licenses and now it resides on a Corps-wide server.”

More information on Groove can be found at <https://corpsinfo.usace.army.mil/ci/groove/index.html>.

Two American Indian interns introduce their unique cultural world-views into District work

Story by Mike Tharp

One is Navajo, one Ojibwe. Both are Corps interns, one in L.A., one in San Francisco. Together, Valisa Nez and Violet Albright are quietly introducing elements of their American Indian culture into how the Corps does business with nature.

They started their one-year internships as part of the American Indian Society of Engineers and Scientists (AISES) program that encourages and mentors American Indian students to pursue careers as scientists and engineers. “We were able to use allocations specifically for the Corps of Engineers in partnership with AISES,” says Rick Gallegos, South Pacific Division’s Human Resources Adviser and Regional Recruiting Manager.

Georgeie Reynolds, Tribal Liaison at Corps headquarters, thinks the outreach is proceeding “very well.” Three years ago, the Corps pledged to be a sponsor at the annual AISES conference and career fair, held in 2005 in Charlotte, N.C. “We attempt to hire graduates from the workshops and interview students on the spot,” she adds. “Then we poll the districts, and they send us a list of opening in science and engineering fields that recent graduates might follow.” Three people were hired this fiscal year.

The Corps team in Charlotte, and their tribal affiliation, included Kimberly Oldham (Caddo/Cree), Richard Zaragoza (Acoma Pueblo), Daniel Emerson (Skokomish), Mark Gilfillin (Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri), Direlle Calica (the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) and Anthony SiJohn (Coeur d’Alene).

One session at the most recent conference was called “Walking in Both Worlds: the Multiple Realities of Being a Tribal Member Working for the Federal Government.” Kimberly Oldham, a mechanical engineer in the Portland District, made a presentation that Reynolds described as “being a federal employee and being a Native-American employee—‘how I combine my culture with the federal culture.’”

That’s just what the two District interns are doing early in their Corps careers. Nez’s maternal grandmother, Grace Yazzie, is a noted weaver of the famous Navajo Two Grey Hills rugs. Nez recently wove a small one herself, which she drapes in whatever Corps cubicle she’s sitting in at the time. “I’m the only grandchild she’s taught how to weave,” says Nez.

When she moved to San Francisco, Albright brought her hand drum, shawl, moccasins and cedar sweet grass and sage for “smudging,” which she describes as “a cleansing of the space you’re in and yourself with the smoke. It takes bad things with it and dissipates them.”

Nez started as a general physical scientist in the LA District’s

Environmental Research Branch and has moved to Planning, Regulatory, Geotechnical, Hydrology and Real Estate desks during her internship. “I was so excited to know the Corps does projects with the tribes,” she recalls. “My goals are to work with my tribe or other tribe because a lot needs to be done in the environmental field.”

Nez came to Los Angeles armed with a bachelor’s degree in environmental earth sciences and a master’s in earth sciences from highly regarded Dartmouth College. She grew up with her mother Evelyn and younger sister Cassandra in Farmington, N.M., “always interested in geology,” which led her to her academic majors. After “six freezing years” in New Hampshire, she returned to New Mexico and interned at Los Alamos National Laboratories for a year in its environmental remediation division; there, she was introduced to hydrological studies of radioactively contaminated soils.

She then spent a half-year or so with the Arizona Public Service Co. studying new rules that protect aquatic organisms at the cooling-water intakes of power plants. She enjoyed being closer to home, but soon yearned for even wider horizons.

Glynn Alsup, the District tribal liaison, who’s almost a member of the Navajo Nation himself after years of working with them, talent-spotted her resume and recommended her for the internship. “What’s a better change than to come to one of the largest cities in the world to start a new career with the Corps of Engineers?” she rhetorically asks.

Navajo officials are thrilled at the opportunity the Corps has given Nez. “President (Joe) Shirley has said that as an emerging nation, the Navajo Nation needs all the help it can get,” relates Nation spokesman George

Intern Valisa Nez holds a Two Grey Hills rug she wove; her grandmother, Grace Yazzie, taught her the Navajo craft.



Hardeen. “That’s fantastic that she’s able to line up an internship and get that kind of experience because it will benefit her forever. What Navajo are proving is that they can compete—they may grow up without running water or doing their homework by a kerosene lamp, but it’s not holding them back.”

Albright, in San Francisco Division since July 2005, is spending the year also rotating through various branches—Planning, Operations, Construction, Engineering—“so I can try everything out,” she says. That summer she worked as a field engineer in the Oakland Project Office, helping on a project that is deepening Oakland Harbor by 50 feet. She also worked on a project to build a containment structure around a small bay at the entrance to the port’s inner harbor “so that material dredged in the deepening project can be put into the area to make a wetland/mudflat for remediation and restoration.”

In the fall, she volunteered for the Hurricane Katrina relief mission and toiled Oct. 16 to Dec. 23 in Belle Chasse, Plaquemines Parish, La. Plaquemines, she says, is a peninsula that runs southeast of New Orleans and where the eye of Katrina passed on its way north. The devastation resembled that after the 2004 Asian tsunami, Albright says.

And whether kismet, karma or coincidence, Albright’s grandmother, Violet Bushnell, long ago worked for the Corps in Seattle in an administrative post. She left the reservation at 17, got a job with the Corps during World War II and never returned to the reservation. “She typed out telegrams,” her granddaughter explains. “She says she never had to worry about ‘that damned carpal tunnel syndrome.’”

Albright grew up in the Seattle suburb of Edmonds, Wash., and attended the University of Washington, where she obtained a bachelor’s in civil engineering. She then worked for a private consulting firm in Seattle before finding her way to the Corps.

Her tribal affiliation is the Pembina band of the Chippewa, or Ojibwe, from Turtle Mountain, N.D. Bushnell, however, didn’t raise any of her children in American Indian culture, although she did pass along the world-view associated with being part of their tribe. It wasn’t until she was in college that Albright’s mother Jeannette became more involved with native tribes. She was a public health nurse who often visited nearby reservations, and Albright spent a lot of time there.

Growing up, Albright herself was more familiar with the coastal tribes in Washington State, but many Turtle Mountain Nation people had migrated to the Pacific Northwest over the years.

Both young women apply their tribal consciousness to their Corps jobs, now and to any future roles they may play. “The cosmic view of the world held by Native Americans is one I was raised with and very much include in my outlook,” says Albright. “The interconnectedness of everything on the planet; the idea we need to be careful what we do because it affects everyone who



Courtesy Violet Albright

Intern Violet Albright was on station for more than two months in Louisiana’s Plaquemines Parish for Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts.

comes after us. As a civilian engineer with the Corps, part of my job is to make sure any project we do is environmentally friendly, low impact and positive all the way around.”

Adds Nez: “I’ve always felt that I want to educate myself as much as possible to help my tribe and to take care of our environmental needs. Any training I get will be beneficial to help out my people or other tribes. A lot of the (tribal) areas are so beautiful that I wouldn’t want anything built there. That’s another challenge—economic development but not disturbing our sacred lands. One thing that did attract me to the Corps of Engineers was the possibility of working on tribal projects; I’m hoping to learn as much as I can from interacting with Glynn (Alsup).”

Recently, Albright got a new name. She neither married nor changed her birth name, but an “auntie”—not a blood relative but from her mom’s generation and tribe—gave Albright the new name. Among the Ojibwe, Albright explains, “at different critical points in your life, you can ask for a name, and it entails the person you ask to meditate on it and, generally speaking, the spirits will tell you the name.”

She prefers not to disclose it but says it was “really cool” to obtain. “Lucky doesn’t even begin to describe it, especially considering how quickly our traditions are all dying out as we become more and more urban Indians.”

Given the clear commitment and strong ties that both Nez and Albright share with their roots, those traditions and values are in safe—and engineers’—hands.

Mom in Contracting has 12-year-old rising star

By Mike Tharp

Ashley-Nicole Mitchell, called “a Corps baby” by her mother, Georgia Muse of Contracting Division, is a 12-year-old star on the rise.

The sixth-grader at prestigious Lord Baden-Powell School in Anaheim, Calif., has been accepted into the equally prestigious Oxford Academy in Orange County. Acceptance was a formality, as Ashley-Nicole scored 95 percent on the preparatory school’s admittance exam, with an IQ registered at 134. At Baden-Powell she’s been on the honor roll five straight years, and recently was nominated by teachers and school board members to be 2006 Student of the Year.

She’s also been selected to compete in the 2006 Miss Pre-Teen Anaheim pageant, competing with 30 other young women. That title includes \$5,000 in scholarships and prizes, awarded after contestants display their personalities and interview skills to a judging panel.

The pageant also includes modeling routines of both casual and formal wear. Personality is regarded as the main standard by which contestants will be judged. Businesses, organizations, private donors and others have become Ashley-Nicole’s official sponsors for the pageant.

For the past five years, she has participated in Tahitian dance, Polynesian dance, belly dancing and cheerleading.

She’s also an active member at her church in West Los Angeles and just finished recording a children’s Christian CD. Early in her academic career, she learned to speak fluent Spanish.

“I’m very proud of her and what the future holds for her,” said Muse, a procurement technician in Contracting. “She personifies this country’s future leaders. I believe the sky’s the limit for this up-and-coming young lady.”

As of today, Ashley-Nicole hopes to become a professor of English and teach and work closely with young people. “I believe her compassion to give back to her community stems from being an only child,” Muse said.

Whatever the motive, Ashley-Nicole seems destined for even more important achievements in the future. “I told her, ‘Maybe you can come to work for the Corps,’” said Mom.

Sounds like a great hire.



Photo courtesy Georgia Muse

Georgia Muse and Ashley-Nicole Mitchell

Any golfers out there looking for a game?

For those of you who don’t know, the Los Angeles District has a golf club, one which has existed for well over 35 years. Corps employees and retirees, friends and family, and Corps contractors are all welcome to join. Membership currently is \$30 a year. Our tournaments are held once a month (weather permitting), usually on Saturdays, at various courses throughout the local Southern California area. Tournament fees generally range from \$30 to \$35 (golf carts additional). We also participate in the Division-wide annual tournament held in late summer (this year at Hunter Ranch Golf Course, Paso Robles, Calif, August 28 & 29).

And don’t worry about your golfing skills. Our members range from beginner to near-pro. Members are placed in one of three groups (flights) with others of their abilities (i.e. golf handicaps) so that everyone has the chance of winning prizes.

Club membership is a great way to stay in touch, meet people and network, as well as getting some fun exercise and staying in shape.

- Monthly tournaments for the remainder of 2006 are:
- Navy Course (Cypress) – August 12th
 - Wilson Golf Course (Griffith Park – LA) – September 8th
 - Green Tree Golf Course (Victorville) – October 7th
 - Hansen Dam Golf Course (Pacoima) – November 18th
 - Encino Golf Course (Encino) – December 16th

For more information e-mail Mike Evasovic, Secretary/Treasurer, at mmeasla@aol.com or call (562) 592-4610.



The Mystery of the Hansen Dam Barracks

By John J. Killeen, M.A., R.P.A.
Archeologist, L.A. District

What you are about to read is, in my humble opinion, an amazing story that recently unfolded here at the District and at Hansen Dam. This article is a response to evidence for a mysterious, long ago demolished group of World War II barracks once located on the Hansen Dam property in Pacoima, Los Angeles County, Calif. The barracks stood on what is today the Hansen Dam Golf Course.

The barracks were first detected about two years ago on the 1940s (probably 1946) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers aerial photograph pictured below. Another Corps aerial, dated 1940, shows the barracks not in place yet.

The Story

Initially, the barracks were thought to be a forgotten Japanese internment camp, or housing for the workers for the Hansen Dam construction project or a camp for a small, World War II military unit. After two years of sporadic research into this question as part of the District's Historic Properties Management Plan for Hansen Dam, the mystery has been unquestionably resolved by pure coincidence. The final results of this research will reintroduce a long gone and forgotten San Fernando Valley community to the world.

As mentioned, the aerial photo was found here at the District during the course of project research about three years ago by former District archaeologist Rod McLean. When I came on board, Steve Dibble, L.A. District senior archaeologist, brought it to my attention since I was assigned as the archaeologist for Hansen Dam.

I thought it was interesting that no one knew anything about the barracks and pursued the question while working on several different projects at Hansen for ConOps Branch.

*Hansen Dam
area in 1955*

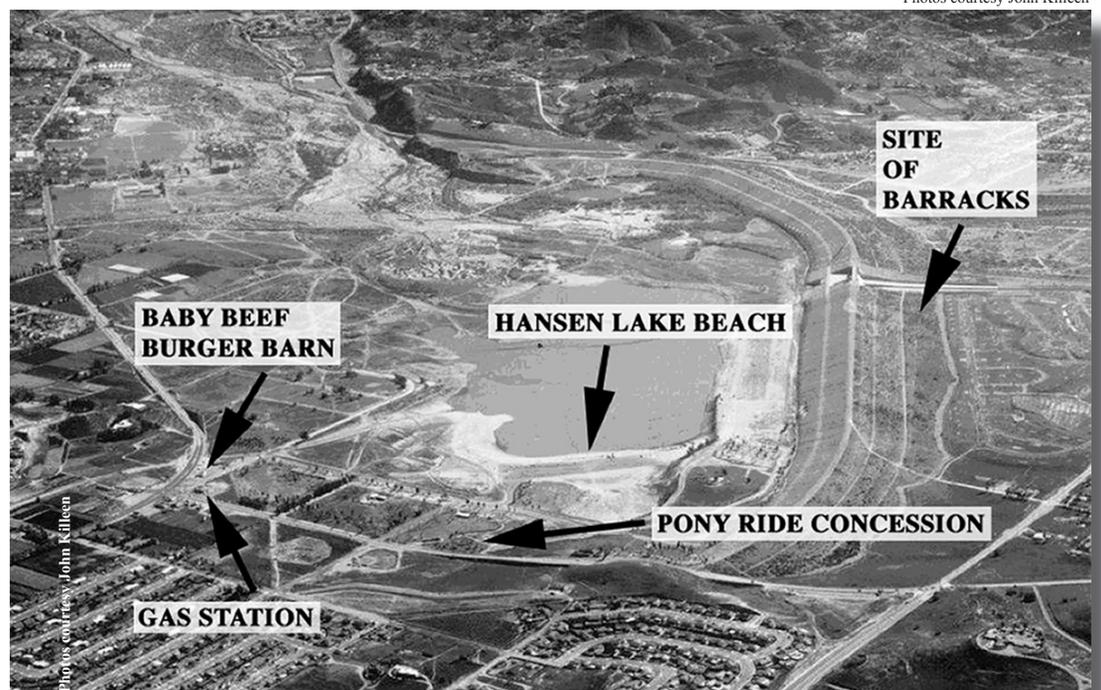
The barracks were turned into housing for displaced veterans and their families in a program that was supported by the likes of Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron and U.S. Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas.

I found that they were refurbished into housing and appropriately named Basilone Homes in 1947. John Basilone was a United States Marine who died while holding off a large enemy contingent on Iwo Jima during World War II. What I failed to discover was what the barracks were used for at Hansen Dam before the housing project and the date when they were demolished or removed.

The Resolution

On Dec. 22, 2005, LA District PAO received an e-mail through the Web site from a gentleman by the name of David Moore who was seeking information on his childhood home at Basilone Homes (Hansen Dam). The week before Christmas 2005 I began e-mail communication with Mr. Moore from home and we promised to speak after the holidays. On Jan. 10, 2006, I spoke with Mr. Moore and received much information. The barracks were transported to the Hansen Dam location from Washington State for the express purpose of providing housing for displaced veterans. I asked him if he might have photographs of himself and family on the site at Basilone Homes, and he e-mailed three wonderful snapshots (note the barracks and Hansen Dam in background). Moore resided there from 1948 to 1950 with his family.

Photos courtesy John Killeen



I knew I was destined to write this article and the upcoming conference paper for the Society for California Archaeology when I found the e-mail message with these three images from Mr. Moore on arriving at work on the morning of Jan. 11, 2006. On my drive to work the weather forecaster mentioned that there hasn't been snow since this day (Jan. 11) in 1949. When I looked at the three images Mr. Moore had e-mailed there was the photo below of Mr. Moore, his mother, his younger sister and her friend. Guess what the date of this image is. You guessed it, Jan. 11, 1949.

During the course of e-mailing and speaking to Mr. Moore and rummaging around the District, I managed to gather some great information which has helped date some of the events that have transpired on this portion of the Hansen Dam property since the late 1930s. For instance, construction of Hansen Dam begun in 1938, was finished in 1940 documented by the aerial photo and Corps records.

In a letter, which included an attached telegram from the Los Angeles Housing Authority to City of Los Angeles Mayor Bowron and alluded to the fact that possibly only 500 -600 units would be completed, from a Gordon L. McDonough, M.C., 15th District, Calif., to U.S. Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas, the Basilone Project is described as being 1,500 dwelling units, which supports Moore's statement that the aerial only shows a portion of Basilone Homes. Moore also stated that the barracks were broken up into apartments. The Moore family had a two-bedroom apartment. Add this to the fact that we have a beginning date of July 1946 for construction at Basilone Homes provided by Rep. Douglas' letter from McDonough, and an approximate finish date for construction of 1948 provided by Mr. Moore. (The actual scheduled date of occupancy was May 1, 1947.)

Mr. Moore's family left Basilone Homes in 1950. Moore visited his boyhood home after a tour of duty in England in



David Moore today

1960 and found only an open desert-like area with the foundations of his home protruding out of the ground here and there. Leslie Margolis, Hansen Dam Golf Course starter, tells us that Hansen Dam Golf Course (the 9 holes on the west side of the spillway) opened in late 1960 or early 1961. By deduction, we can say that the homes were removed or demolished between 1951 and 1955, based on evidence from the 1955 aerial photo shown below.

The Historic Context

In 1870, the northeast San Fernando Valley was basically barren desert, nearly impassable. In 1874 Charles MacLay, later a California senator, with two partners bought the ex-Mission San Fernando Ranch from then Gov. Pio Pico. Soon after, the entire tract was owned by MacLay. The railroad came in 1876. By 1891 vineyards and orchards were contributing to the development of the Valley.

By 1895, however, there was not one house with running water or electricity in the valley. In 1892, Dr. Homer Hansen came to the Tujunga Valley and promoted development of the foothills which became Hansen Heights. Dr. Hansen's house was just on the other side of the dam spillway from the Basilone Homes. The spillway is on Dr. Hansen's land.

Until World War II, this northeastern portion of the San Fernando Valley remained largely agricultural. In fact, the Callity Ranch, a citrus farm and ranch house was located immediately north of the Basilone Homes on the other side of the dam. The 1920's Mathilda Haack Farm was just on the other side of the dam from Basilone Homes and was displaced by the dam. The farm was displaced by the dam and included the land that Basilone Homes were ultimately built on.

Pop's Willow Lake Resort opened in 1931, pictured on the aerial photo, and was located just to the north of the Basilone Homes. Pop's Willow Lake Resort was the beginning of the Hansen Dam area becoming a very popular resort by the early 1950s. Washed away in the 1938 flood, it was rebuilt and frequented by Marilyn Monroe (a student at Van Nuys High School) and her future first husband during World War II.

The 1920s Stonehurst neighborhood, a group of beautiful houses built of water-worn cobbles from Tujunga Wash, was situated less than a half-mile away and, like Basilone Homes, was part of the beginning of suburbanization in this portion of the San Fernando Valley. Unlike the



Basilone Homes, some of the Stonehurst Homes are still with us. Some of the Basilone Homes residents no doubt purchased homes in the Pacoima area and contributed to the population growth.

By the early 1950s there was the Baby Beef Burger Barn stand and a gas station near the corner of Foothill Boulevard and Osborne Street can be seen on the 1955 aerial photo. Also on the Dam property was a pony ride concession just off Osborne Street about a thousand feet south of Foothill Boulevard. In the 1950s, Hansen Dam Swimming Lake Beach, situated in the basin behind Hansen Dam, became a very popular destination and can also be seen on the aerial photo. There were also miniature train ride and bait shop concessions at the same time. It is not clear if Pop's Willow Lake Resort was still in existence in 1955.

This minor mystery has afforded us a peek into the beginnings of suburbanization of the modern-day Pacoima/Hansen Dam area.



David Moore and his sister, ready to take on the bad guys.



Location of Pop's Willow Lake Resort and other landmarks. (Note the lack of suburban development.)

Family affair:

Victorville school gets all-day show-and-tell from District's Navajo expert

By Mike Tharp

Tammy Turner's first-graders at Mojave Vista Elementary School in Victorville, Calif., had never seen anything like it.

On display in the front of their classroom were Navajo dolls, an authentic Navajo code-talking GI Joe that spoke in Navajo, a replica of a Navajo windmill, Navajo jewelry, flower arrangements and blankets and books about the Navajo people. Even "stuffed" sheep and rams, so critical to the Navajo farming way of life, found their way into the room.

Presenting this unusual display to some 120 students and Mrs. Turner was District Tribal Liaison Glynn Alsup. He traveled to the school Nov. 23 as part of American Indian Month. For 37 years, Alsup has worked on hazardous, toxic and radioactive waste studies for various government agencies, and since 1998 has worked as a District representative with the EPA on a science-driven and boot-leather-intensive project to determine how uranium mining has affected people on the Navajo Nation.

Speaking to the kids was hardly new to Alsup. He teaches classes in Environmental Science and Tribal Relationships for the Corps and EPA. He has given presentations to other elementary schools, high schools, colleges and universities. He has taught at the last four Dine College Uranium Training classes for Navajo

teachers, and gives presentations at national conferences. Earlier in November, he manned the Corps booth at the American Indian Society of Engineers and Scientists job fair in Charlotte, N.C.

The all-day presentation to four classes "was very enjoyable and educational," recalls Mrs. Turner. "The kids made comments about how 'cool' and 'interesting' it all was. They came away with a lot of information."

Alsup asked the students questions after his talk, then handed out Corps Frisbees and rulers if they answered correctly. Each student was also given a Corps pencil, Park Ranger hat and Junior Safety Ranger Pledge Card for Safety First. Those were supplied by Anthony Johnson of Corps HQ, Richard Gallegos of South Pacific Division, and Madeline Zamora and Dr. Fred-Otto Egeler of Los Angeles District.

The trip was sponsored by the EEO Office's Special Emphasis Program Manager Program.

He answered such questions as, What do Navajo school kids wear? What do they eat? Do they have TV? What do they do for fun? "Jim Quinn, a CPA, loaned me a ram from his collection of sheep," Alsup says. "My grandkids,

Glynn Alsup tells the first-graders at Mojave Vista Elementary School in Victorville how sheep are important to the Navajo Nation.



Danielle and Peyton, loaned me their Navajo GI Joe and their sheep. Jewelry, pottery and blankets were loaned by my wife, Kathy.”

A real family affair, right? Please keep reading.

Besides the Navajo materials, Alsup also showed a poster display of the Corps’ work on the Navajo Nation and a PowerPoint presentation of photos and discussion about the Navajo people. Students also watched a video, “Hear Our Voice,” made by high school students from the Navajo Nation speaking both English and Navajo, and Alsup read from the book, “A Tourist in Navajoland,” by Margaret Grimes-Isaac. He showed a half-dozen other books about the Navajo to the students.

“He did a lot of hands-on,” recalls Mrs. Turner. “They got to feel things and he kept asking them questions. He had so much to tell them and to show them. We were just thrilled.

“He’s my dad.”

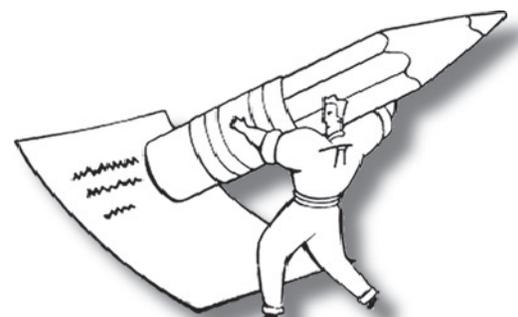


Glynn used a variety of items to bring Navajo life into the classroom.



Correction

In the Volunteer issue of the Newcastle, the feature on Debbie Mitchell reports she is a black watch captain, it should read she is a block watch captain. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.



Goodbye commute, hello retirement



MAJ Brad Endres presents Certificates of Appreciation to Gary Adkins (above) and Ron Musgrave (left) at their retirement at the Phoenix, Ariz. office.

GEN Joe Schroedel, Glynn Alsup, Jacquelyn Heard, Pete Gonzalez, Dr. Fred-Otto Egeler and COL Alex Dornstauder pose after May's retirement ceremony at LA District headquarters.



District teams up to help San Diego 8th-grader's bold eelgrass and white sea bass science project

Story and photos by Mike Tharp

Jessica Chan did a science project. But not just any science project.

The San Diego 8th-grader conducted sophisticated and intense research aimed at helping a threatened fish.

A get-your-hands-wet project that involved contacting the Corps and state agencies for regulatory approval, researchers and scientists all the way from the Ivy League to San Diego, marine life experts and a private environmental consulting firm.

A deliver-on-deadline project that involved scores of hours of Internet research and every-other-day testing of water for two months, sandwiched between homework, church activities, swim team practices and prepping for the California Science Olympiad.

Displaying discipline and poise well beyond her years, 14-year-old Jessica completed her project in January in collaboration with the San Diego Oceans Foundation (SDOF). She hopes to enter it in the Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair, if, as is likely, her school picks it.

Reflecting the Confucian and Christian virtues of her closely knit family, the Muirlands Middle School student is modestly pleased at the outcome, only because she believes her experiments will help wildlife. "I like animals and wanted to be a veterinarian when I was little," she explains, "but I don't like dissecting animals."

Jessica's story also illustrates the merits of the Corps' oft-overlooked human side. Technically, a teenage girl's science fair project doesn't come close to any of the agency's standard missions. When she asked for help, it would've been easy—and bureaucratic second-nature—for the Los Angeles District to ignore her request or pass her somewhere else along the matrix of "proper channels" where paper could be shuffled until she just went away.

Instead, Corps team members Terry Dean and Jeannette Baker were instrumental in helping Jessica navigate federal regulatory waters to get the permits necessary for her research. Dean put Jessica in touch with Keith Merkel, principal of Merkel & Associates Inc., a biological consulting firm that often works with the Corps, who already had relevant nationwide permits. Baker contacted



Jessica and brother Jonathan hold the burlap frame for growing the eelgrass.

Jessica and explained the permitting system and how to dot the I's and cross the T's.

Both Corps people were impressed by the girl's precocious strategies. "I talked with her several times," Baker recalled in an e-mail, "and advised her on what would and would not require a permit, who else she should coordinate with, etc." And although she said the Corps didn't provide "any direct help, it showcases (our) ability as a resource that can be tapped, as well as her own hard work and abilities." Added Dean, "She does sound like someone we'd want to have on our staff when she's ready for employment...."

Jessica's experiment involved two main species: the white sea bass and eelgrass. Population of the fish, which is actually part of the croaker family and not a bass, had been flat-lining for decades because of over-fishing and loss of habitat. Combative and tasty—two irresistible attributes for sport and commercial fishermen alike—the white sea

***The eelgrass frame
on the marina dock at
West Mission Bay.***

bass was dangerously close to becoming an endangered species when the Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute and the state Dept. of Fish & Game began a program to re-stock ocean schools with pen-raised juvenile fish.

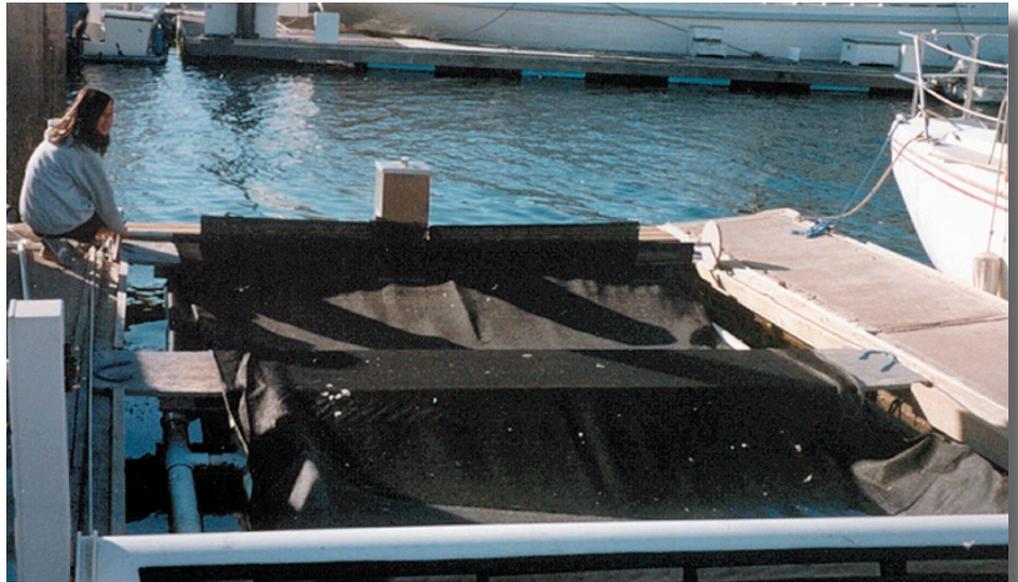
By the fall of 2004, according to the Los Angeles Times, the \$19 million project had placed 1 million juvenile fish into coastal waters, similar to captive-breeding programs for peregrine falcons and California condors.

The ambitious program wasn't problem-free, however. Last summer Jessica was helping her 16-year-old brother Jonathan, an 11th-grader at La Jolla High, who was an intern with SDOF. She was typing in data to record when the young fish were fed each day at pens in marinas at West Mission Bay in San Diego. "I realized that almost every day there were uncounted numbers of dead fish," Jessica recalled, "some with white heads, popped eyes and other symptoms of immune system stress.

"I figured that if I could increase the dissolved oxygen level and improve the water quality, the death rate of the bass would decrease. During my research I also found that eelgrass is a very important part of the ecology as an environment factor and a food source for animals, as well as its ability to filter through sediments and create more dissolved oxygen for the fish."



Eelgrass - hopefully, an elixir for white sea bass.



Basically, she wanted to find a way to put more oxygen and less pollution in the water so more fish would survive.

Beyond any altruistic motive, the cost of a lot of dead baby fish floating in their nurseries isn't cheap. Raising a home-grown juvie runs about \$10 each, and up to 4,000 can be fed in one pen. The more that survive to be released into the ocean, the happier scientists and fishermen will be. Adult white sea bass can grow up to 5 feet long and weigh 10 to 30 pounds (the record is 84); their meat is uniformly described as delicious.

Since the other component of Jessica's experiment—eelgrass—requires Corps and state approval to be transplanted, she contacted Dean and Baker through the LA District Web site, as well as Marilyn Fluharty of the Dept. of Fish and Game's Marine Region. That was for the red tape.

For the science, she contacted Chris Pickerell, a habitat restoration specialist at Cornell University's Cooperative Extension Marine Program, his Cornell colleague Fred Short and Noelle Morris, executive director of SDOF. And she spoke with Merkel, a soft-spoken biological resource expert who's worked often with the Corps on permitting and regulatory actions.

Jessica started in mid-October, getting permission from Morris to use a 10-foot-by-7-foot pen at one of the marina docks in West Mission Bay where white sea bass were scheduled to grow before being released. At first she wanted to use a method that transplanted eelgrass to wire frames with biodegradable ties at the bottom of the pen. Morris okayed the idea, then Jessica discovered she had to get a Corps permit to harvest and transplant the eelgrass. She contacted Baker, and while awaiting the Corps action, she learned that the pen was too deep (10 to 11 feet) to plant the eelgrass the way she'd planned.

Eelgrass beds grow in shallow bays, coves, tidal creeks and estuaries, according to a University of Delaware Marine Studies Web site, and provide myriad sea creatures with habitat, nursery grounds and food. It photosynthesizes oxygen, which enriches the water, and “each blade of eelgrass is a small food factory,” says a Puget Sound, Wash. Web site. But since it’s also been threatened by development and pollution, the Corps and other regulatory bodies pay special attention to take care of it.

After consulting with Cornell’s Pickerell and Merkel in San Diego, as well as a friendly boater at the marina, Jessica knew she had to turn to Plan B. The eelgrass structure would have to be suspended vertically from the side of the fish pen, not laid horizontally at the bottom. “I recommended using burlap or some other sediment-free matrix,” Pickerell described in an e-mail. “We have used these materials in the past to grow grass in our greenhouse here at Cornell.” Merkel suggested that “maybe we could hang it on a rack and grow it hydroponically, which would fit with her goals.”

With her dad, Jessica built a 10-foot-by-10-foot frame with burlap stretched across four PVC pipes roped together and began growing the grass hydroponically in the burlap itself. She and her mom, Esther Liu, along with dad and brother, harvested eelgrass in spots around West Mission Bay that Merkel had pinpointed, then transplanted it to the frame. But they needed more—a lot more. One Sunday, after services, she enlisted the help of several members of her church youth group who waded knee-deep in the cold low tide to gather the grass. “They didn’t come home till 6 or 7 and were freezing,” Jessica’s mom recalled.

Said Cornell’s Pickerell: “I think that it is rare, in this day of electronic entertainment, when a young person can grasp mechanical concepts and actually build something with her hands. I encourage her to continue to get her hands wet!”

Jessica then contacted Fish and Game’s Fluharty, who explained “the long, drawn-out procedure” needed for transplant permission and referred her to Merkel. His firm already had several permit letters, and he “got together with Terry Dean and we dug through the nationwides (permits) and one of them that might cover the temporary placement of the (eelgrass) structure. Terry identified the nationwide that would cover it and meet the permitting requirement.”

Merkel, the veteran marine biologist, was “intrigued by a person of her age having the interest and having the determination to follow through. I was shocked by how well-spoken, well-disciplined and focused she was at her age.”

Fluharty and the Oceans Foundation’s Morris were equally impressed. “There’s been a chronic problem with dissolved oxygen at a lot of the sea bass pens,” Fluharty said. “She was helping out her brother and came up with a novel solution. No one has actually proposed anything like that. We usually get requests to transplant eelgrass, but nothing like this.”

Added Morris: “Part of our mission at SDOF is to ignite the fire in students, such as Jessica. We realize that our youth will be future voting citizens and it’s important that they are educated about marine ecology. In Jessica’s case, she is putting her passion into full drive by realizing there is an opportunity to help solve a problem. Her project just may help the white sea bass. If not, the experience and education gained are just as important.”



Jessica Chan records eelgrass-related data while her father, Chin Lee, inspects the fish pen.

(Morris’s husband Quincy also did the scuba-diving needed to erect the eelgrass structure in the fish pen.)

Another fan of Jessica’s experiment is Philip Friedman, who writes a weekly fishing column in the Daily Breeze. Noting that the white sea bass was pushed to “the brink of extinction” in the ‘60s and ‘70s, Friedman wrote in an e-mail that he thinks “Jessica is doing a tremendous service to the oceans environment, and I salute her efforts. She understands just how important her study is in perpetuating this magnificent species.” He acknowledged that “there is a long way to go” in preserving the fish, “making Jessica’s project even more crucial and important.”

Jessica’s drive is genetic. Her father, Chin Lee, was born in Hong Kong and came to the U.S. for college. He

holds a B.S. in biophysics from Loma Linda University and a master's in statistics from Texas Tech University; he's now a business analyst for Kaiser Permanente. In 1982, it was in the cowboy-and-oil-rig town of Lubbock where he met his wife, Esther, a native of Taiwan, who has both a bachelor's and master's in nutrition and is now working on her doctorate at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena.

Without her parents, who had to drive her to and from the fish pen, and her brother, whose work with the Oceans Foundation inspired her own idea, Jessica couldn't have done the project. "Basically, it started with asking, why are the fish dying?" Liu remembered. "Then, how can we improve the quality of the water?"

One recent sunny afternoon before the project's Jan. 12 deadline, Jessica and her dad balanced themselves on the floating dock surrounding the fish pen. Repeatedly, Jessica filled vials with water from the pen, then tested it, according to a color chart, for pH (which measures acidity and alkalinity), the level of dissolved oxygen, turbidity; she also counted the number of dead fish. "The goal is to increase the oxygen level," she explained. "It was 4 ppm [parts per million] before, and after I put the grass in, it went up to 8. Now it's 5 or 6 after the fish came in." Her goal is to keep the oxygen level at 6 or raise it to 7 or 8. "The grass is doing its share, I think," she said.

"It's not conclusive yet, so the experiment is continuing," said her father. As he talked over the sputter of boat motors and the smell of salt water mixed with gasoline fumes, Jessica recorded the data—pH and oxygen levels, water

temperature, date, time—to compare with those of a year earlier. As an automatic feeder fed the fish, she noticed two others struggling near the top "for more oxygen."

Nerd she is not. She practices with her school's swim team four times a week, focusing on the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle, breaststroke and backstroke. She'll try out for the swim team when she enters La Jolla High and also enjoys listening to contemporary Christian music.

Since 6th grade she's been a member of her school's Science Olympiad team, which her mom helps coach. Her current science teacher, Marcia Halpern, describes her as "very thorough and meticulous, willing to do the most she can do, as opposed to the least, as a lot of students do."

What does she want to be when she grows up? Jessica's not sure now. But her mom, listing all the activities her daughter likes today, said: "Maybe an artist who owns a pet shop and does science on the side." Added Jessica, "And maybe even a psychologist during my free time!"

As for her science project, Jessica simply said: "Many problems arose, but I managed to overcome them. I'm extremely grateful to all the people who helped me because it would have collapsed if they weren't there to aid me in my struggles. They really were so willing to help and were very patient when listening to my questions and requests. I think they deserve more credit than I do."



The eelgrass frame on the marina dock at West Mission Bay.

Corps taught retiree about character, became her family—and she became ‘California Woman of the Year’

By Mike Tharp

The Corps taught Valaria Lincoln, a District retiree, how to judge character—through a No. 200 sieve.

The diameter of wire mesh in such a sieve is only 0.075 millimeters, the cutoff line between sandy gravel and silt or clay. Fine gravel—good for a foundation—doesn’t get past the mesh; silt and clay, not so good a base, slips through.

Valaria learned that in the 1960s and early ‘70s when she wrote design specs and did other chores for the District until heart trouble forced her to step down. Among the projects where she used that sieve was the



Marina Del Rey Harbor. That taught her a lesson. “I sort people through a sieve now,” she says. “Clay won’t work. Gravel is good to put a building on. If you don’t land on the No. 200—goodbye!”

Although health problems

curtailed her Corps career, Valaria treasures her time at the District. She recently attended the annual Retirees Luncheon, and it brought a tide of memories flooding back.

She landed in L.A. from Nebraska in 1961, newly divorced, with daughter Kim, 5 ½, and son Kent, 4, in tow. She took and passed a civil service test and was called by an outfit she’d never heard of—the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She reported to what was then called the Editing Unit, where Elizabeth Jewell gave her and another applicant a typing test.

She soon reported to work on a three-month temporary tryout, typing specification plans on stencils (this was a generation before copy machines, and only those of a certain age remember the purple color and chemical tang of mimeograph machine fluid).

As happens, one of those reductions-in-force came down, but Valaria quickly found another job at another engineering giant, Ralph N. Parsons, as a receptionist. She tried to learn as much as she could in the private sector, but still wandered back almost daily to the District to lunch with her former colleagues. “So they wouldn’t forget me,” she explains.

They didn’t, and when budget once again expanded, she was brought back to the District. At first she typed, edited and read specs, then a woman in Publications in the next room went on vacation. Valaria apparently did OK filling in because when the District moved to the Federal Bldg., there was a brand-new GS-5 working in Publications.

She remembers the “patience and understanding” of her bosses back then. She and her kids were living with her sister on 77th Street, and she had to take them to nursery school every day before reporting for work. She’d run “in 3-inch heels” to Florence Avenue to get a bus to Figueroa, where she’d transfer to another one headed downtown. “I was nearly always 15 minutes late,” she confesses, “then I’d just give them an hour of my leave time for having been late. That’s the only way to do it.”

Although she liked Publications, she hankered for a job in Construction. Back at the University of Nebraska, she’d been 13 credits shy of graduating with a degree in Classical Languages, Latin and Greek. So when the head of Construction Branch, Richard Hewitt, asked her what she knew about construction, she replied:

“Con = with; struo = to build; ion = a state of.”

*Alea jacta est!**

She was moved in with the civil engineers on one side of the room, the “estimating” engineers on the other. Her efficiency prompted one of her bosses, Robert Perkins, to get her to apply for a Corps-paid international correspondence course in engineering. “He said he’d OK the school if I’d swear on a spec book that I wouldn’t leave the Corps.”

She so swore, took the classes, got all A’s “and they sat me with the engineers where I wrote specs—I was the first woman in LA District to write specifications—until I had my heart attack.” She was finally forced into disability retirement in 1972.

Valaria had also been busy raising her kids in south Central Los Angeles. It wasn't any easier then than it would be today, though for different reasons. Her children didn't have to worry about gangs, for example, but they did have to deal with discrimination.

To get her son into Fairfax High, then an academic paragon (where, she says she was told, "the black quota is filled"), she donned a long dress from the Sudan that her mother had sent her, wore a red blouse ("to emphasize my cheekbones") and told the admissions official that her father was an Omaha Indian and her mother an Apache. There was still room, it seemed, under the "Indian quota." She recalls, "I did everything but put a feather in my hair."

He got in.

(Years later, Valaria learned that she is, in fact, one-eighth Comanche.)

Her daughter graduated from University High School, went on to college and is now manager of a State Disability Office in Ontario. Her son went to LA City College but got a job with Western Airlines, which quickly led to one with Southwest Airlines, where he has spent the last 23 years. He's also been involved in the NFL Raiders organization in various security jobs for the past 17 years.

Two years ago, then-speaker of the California Assembly Herb Wesson named Valaria "2003 Woman of the Year." She was flown to Sacramento and treated, she remembers, like "queen for a day" for what the plaque said was "her outstanding service and dedication to the people of California."

For after her medical retirement, it seems, Valaria volunteered. Despite five years in and out of hospital, she volunteered.

With the Greater LA Community Action Agency, for instance, on the executive board. She helped raise money for a friend's nursery school on Western Avenue. She instilled the fear of the Lord in some 30 neighborhood children, who found her a beacon of disciplined warmth in an ever-colder environment.

At some point in those years, the District's Dick Hightower called, saying she could come back to the Corps to be assistant chief in Specifications and Estimates, as a GS-9. That dream had to be canceled, however, when it became clear the federal government couldn't be liable for a pre-existing medical condition. Still, she says, "it was very, very good of him."

Today, her health is fine—a combination of diet, exercise and "my faith in God" as a fifth-generation Episcopalian.

Recently, she was riding on a boat in Marina Del Rey Harbor and walked up to the pilot. "I wrote the specs for this," she told him, "from excavation to final cleanup." He told her he'd been manning boats for 40 years in southern California, and "this was the best man-made waterway he'd ever piloted—boy, did I stick out my chest!"

Why, after more than 40 years since working at the District—a job she held for only a decade—does Valaria still come to the Retirees Luncheon? "I love the fact that once you're Corps of Engineers, you're always Corps of Engineers," she enthuses. "It's family."

A family that would pass the No. 200 sieve test.

*"The die is cast!" Supposedly uttered by Julius Caesar as he crossed the Rubicon River into Gaul (present-day France) with the Roman army, signifying the taking of a great step.

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