



# Whatever Happened to Roland Sweet

Then	Capsule Summary	Now
	<p>Born in: St. Petersburg, FL            Grew Up in: St. Petersburg, FL            High School: St. Petersburg High School, 1958            Undergraduate Degree: AA, St. Petersburg Jr. Col; BS in Math, Florida State, 1963            Entered Purdue: Fall, 1964            Purdue Degrees: MS 1966, PhD August 1967            Lived/Worked in: Ithaca, NY; Boulder, CO; Seattle, WA; McKinney, TX; Boulder</p>	
<b>Purdue Highlights</b>	<b>Career Highlights</b>	
<p>As an undergraduate at FSU, Roland programmed an IBM 709 on a research grant to Dr. Leland Williams. Dr. Williams mentioned that Purdue University had a new graduate program in Computer Science and was offering three-year Ph.D. NDEA grants to new graduate students. With a good recommendation from Dr. Williams I was accepted into the program in the fall of 1964. At that time most of the faculty were numerical analysts, the exemptions being Profs. Rosen and Korfhage. I studied hard the first two years, passing all of the six qualifying exams, and receiving a congratulatory MS. I chose to work under Prof. John Maybee and wrote a thesis on essentially matrix theory.</p>	<p>My first position after Purdue was as an assistant professor in another new Computer Science Department at Cornell University. I had a three-year contract and spent each summer at research labs—Argonne National Laboratory and Marathon Oil Research Center in Denver. Living in Colorado for a summer hooked me on that state so when my contract ended at Cornell in 1970, I applied for positions at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and at the Mathematics Department of the University of Colorado. I was offered a tenure-track position at the University with my teaching duties on the urban Denver campus and luckily also a consulting contract at NCAR. Teaching was very rewarding in Denver as the students were almost exclusively working full-time and taking evening classes. In addition to that I loved the research opportunities at NCAR.</p> <p>In 1973 the Denver campus became independent--the University of Colorado at Denver (UCD). I received tenure in 1974 and was promoted to Associate Professor. Times were very trying at UCD in the early years and especially in the Math Department which was controlled by an anti-research faction. Things went from bad to worse and finally I resigned in 1980 and took a position with the National Bureau of Standards (now NIST) in Gaithersburg, MD, and two years later returned to their Boulder Laboratories.</p> <p>By 1985 significant changes had occurred at UCD, especially a complete house-cleaning in the Math Dept. A new chairman was hired and given a significant number of new positions. One area that was highly developed was computational mathematics and I was hired back as a full professor and as Director of the Computational Mathematics Group.</p> <p>I retired in 1996 and my wife and I moved aboard a sailboat for two years after which I took a position with a tech start-up in Seattle working in digital image compression. From there I worked for several other small start-ups and eventually retired (finally) in 2008. We moved back to Boulder in 2011 and are ecstatic to be back home!</p>	