



# Whatever Happened to Steve Pruess

Then	Capsule Summary	Now
	<p>Born and raised in: Cedar Rapids, Iowa            High School: Washington High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa            Undergraduate Degree: BS Math, Iowa State University, 1966            Entered Purdue: Fall, 1966            Purdue Degrees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MS CS, May 1968;</li> <li>- PhD CS, May 1970</li> </ul> <p>Lived/Worked in: Albuquerque, NM; Lakewood, CO; Green Valley, AZ (current residence)</p>	 <p>(atop Alta Peak, Sequoia NP)</p>
<p>Purdue Highlights</p>	<p>Career Highlights</p>	
<p>Steve started at Purdue in the fall of 1966, switching from math in his undergraduate years to CS at Purdue - he never did figure out (or care) where he belonged. He was a year-round student at Purdue, having a month off at the end of summer to travel a bit. He minored in math, though seriously considered Physics, which would have been a big help in the years to come had he only known. For his dissertation, he worked under Carl de Boer, a few years before Carl left for Wisconsin. Many times over the years, he returned to his dissertation topic of numerical methods for Sturm-Liouville problems, and he still "tinkers" in areas somewhat related to this. Steve had spent a summer at the (then) Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory after receiving his B.S. degree, and returned to the Southwest to stay after he defended in the spring of 1970.</p>	<p>Steve's first job after Purdue was as an Assistant Professor of Mathematical Sciences at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. At that time the department had faculty from math, statistics and computer science. The mathematicians thought he was a computer scientist, the computer scientists thought he was a mathematician, and the statisticians just knew that he wasn't one of them. He received tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1975, and Full Professor in 1982. He taught several times at the Los Alamos Graduate Center and maintained research ties with people there for some time. For one sabbatical, he spent a very pleasant and productive year at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. In 1986 he cut ties with the "big state school" for a small state school with a very strong applied engineering focus, the Colorado School of Mines. Even though the mechanical, chemical, and petroleum engineers far outnumbered the miners, the school had, and continues to have, a very traditional focus. The department name started as Dept. of Mineral Engineering Mathematics, probably unique in human history, but by the 1990s had changed to Mathematical and Computer Sciences (and included statisticians as well), so Steve was right at home, teaching classes like Linear Vector Spaces as well as Data Structures and Computer Architecture. Over the years Steve had six PhD students, a dozen Master's thesis students, and served on over a hundred thesis and dissertation committees from other departments. He served as Assistant Department Head for the last few years before his retirement in 1999. He holds an emeritus appointment at the Colorado School of Mines but doesn't make it to the office very often. He has written over fifty published research papers, many with his close colleague Charles Fulton, and continues with research, though at a much slower pace. He is a volunteer teacher for computer classes (and system administrator) at the retirement community where he now lives. He has been a very active hiker since moving to the West, and continues to wander various mountain ranges and canyons in Arizona and elsewhere.</p>	