

OCTOBER 2015

HELLO WORLD



Why are men so attracted to mountains? From climbing the tallest mountains in the world to skiing down them, men have always climbed, explored, skied, hiked, mined, carved and otherwise attempted to tame the heights. When they have to leave their mountains behind, generally to make a living, they return again and again to rejuvenate. Perhaps it is the beauty of the vistas or the crisp clean air that attracts them. Mountains make our spirits soar and inspire us to new heights.

Recently, I was invited to hike at Alpine Meadows, from the bottom of the ski slope to Lake Estelle, along with Peter Palecek, his family and friends. The hike was only about two miles long – but straight up with a 1,000-foot elevation gain! The group of about 50 included several people associated with SRI International. One was Peter Palecek, who worked as a Senior Management Consultant with SRI in the 1980s. You can read more about Peter's early life in Czechoslovakia at the National Czech and Slovak Museum's website at www.ncsml.org/exhibits/peter-palecek. Peter's expertise is economics, and he earned his MBA from Stanford University. He hiked the Pacific Crest Trail before it became popular from the book and movie "Wild" by Cheryl Strayed.

Another person from SRI along for the hike was Don Shockey, Senior Staff Scientist with SRI's Materials Research Laboratory. His special research interests are high-strain-rate failure and the role of microstructure on cracks. Don and Peter (as well as Peter's three sons) have been part of the local Lake Tahoe area ski patrol for many years. An avid cyclist, Don has been spotted enjoying a 70-mile ride over the Santa Cruz Coast Range.

The hikers included wives, girlfriends, daughters and granddaughters. It was as if life was coming to the mountain to wake it up. There were smiles all around, especially as the group finished the hike up to the lake, and many took a well-deserved refreshing swim. Some hikers were in great shape and had no trouble on the ascent; others took a little longer. The benefits of a lifetime of exercise were clear, with fit hikers showing more stamina and strength getting up the hill than the rest of us mortals. Mountains can make us humble and remind us of our human limitations. A geocache was started on the northern cliffs over Lake Estelle to celebrate the day. Send me an email if you are interested in learning the coordinates. Best to do this in the summer, as I'm sure it will be a challenge to find in the winter!

If you are dreaming about a cabin in the mountains or just a way to finance that next vacation, keep the credit union in mind. You will be surprised at how low our loan rates are! Conquer that mountain!

Steve Bowles
CEO/CFO



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