

Rob Shugg (1948 - 2011)



Our geophysical community lost a passionate practitioner and compassionate human being on Sept. 13, 2011 when our colleague, Rob Shugg, succumbed to a pulmonary embolism. Rob's passion in life revolved around science, and how science might be used to better the human condition, be it energy, health or attitude. It was no coincidence that he ended up working as a geophysicist in the Calgary oil patch, where this kind of inquisitive spirit is welcomed and rewarded. Rob would want his love of science to be one of his legacies, and that passion will live on through the establishment of a CSEG Memorial Scholarship.

Rob grew up in North Vancouver, at the base of the Grouse Mountain ski hill. Rob fell in love early with a broad variety of outdoor sports. His parents encouraged all of their brood to do everything to the best of their ability and supported this by taking the family on many camping, hiking and skiing vacations.

Rob joined the Boy Scouts of Canada, and was awarded the status of Queen's Scout in 1965. In high school Rob excelled academically, particularly in mathematics and the sciences. After graduating from Handsworth Secondary School with a multitude of citizenship and scholastic chevrons on his school sweater, Rob attended UBC and graduated with a B.Sc. in Geophysics in 1970. Rob received a number of bursaries and scholarships from industry and from the Province of British Columbia. He was always grateful for these, and was a long-time supporter of the Dean of Science Scholarship fund at UBC to try to give the same opportunity to other young students. It is for this reason that a CSEG scholarship in his memory is particularly fitting.

Like many graduates, Rob was attracted to Calgary where the nascent oil industry was in one of its many boom periods. As an avid skier and ski patroller, he joined the Canadian Ski Patrol System where he was active for over 20 years, including coordinating their involvement in the 1988 Olympic Winter Games. After selecting his team from 700 applicants, Rob was quoted as saying "This experience proved that whether we are from Toronto or Tennessee, we're all the same kind of people who care about the same kinds of things". This attitude epitomized Rob's approach to teamwork in all of his endeavours.

Rob's geophysical career started with Mobil Canada, where he contributed to Mobil's exploration efforts in the Canadian Frontiers. Rob also worked in the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin, mapping areas in Northeast British Columbia. From Mobil, Rob

moved on to POCO Petroleum in 1989. In addition to his daily geophysical duties at POCO, he contributed to the greater geophysical community, being a member of the SEG for 34 years. POCO was acquired by Burlington in 1999 and subsequently by ConocoPhillips in 2006. Rob worked as a special projects geophysicist. He had a passion for testing new software, work-flows and processing ideas. Most recently Rob worked on pre-stack inversion and rock physics analyses. He mentored other geophysicists on how to best use these high tech workflows and products to assist in their interpretations. Rob believed in "paying it forward", and loved helping out and stimulating young geophysicists with advanced seismic analysis techniques. He always had a passion to see other people excel. He loved this work.

Although Rob was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in his mid twenties, he never let this affect his approach to life and outdoor sports. He took his young family camping in the mountains. When he no longer felt able to ski patrol, he turned his attention to teaching his children the love of skiing. As a member of Earl Grey Golf Club, he encouraged his son to take up the sport and took great pleasure from seeing the junior golfers excel. Rob also loved to sail with his family and with the Doodlebuoys, a group of 'sailing' doodle-buggers.

Rob loved to participate in the social and sports events of the CSEG. As long as his physical health allowed he attended the Ski Spree, Doodlespiel, and the Doodlebug golf tournament.

Throughout Rob's life certain 'themes' became apparent; things such as Rob's passion around helping others (particularly young people); Rob's 'fearlessness' in the face of adversity, his positive attitude and his search for always finding the 'facts' about any topic of discussion. These personal attributes will be the foundation that future geophysical students.

Even though we have lost Rob Shugg the man, all those who knew him ,when we listen carefully, can hear him say, "Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."