

## **Yves Deguirre (Cont')**

### **Sports/hobbies:**

I'm a very serious cross-country skier. I train year-round to compete in long distance ski races (called loppets). Typically, I do between eight and 10 races a year. Considering that the ski season in Ottawa is only (well, for me!) four months long, it means one race every two weeks. I train with a local club called Skinouk, and I am fortunate to live five minutes from the superb ski trails of Gatineau Park, where the biggest race in Canada takes place. It is called the Keskinada and is part of the [Worldloppet](#) – a series of loppets around the world. When the ski season is over, I stay fit by competing in a few triathlons and road running races.

### **My ideal weekend would be:**

Spending the whole weekend skiing with my wife (who by the way is almost as crazy as me about skiing) under perfect snow conditions.

### **Favourite foods:**

I have to admit that I have another passion in life. I'm a wine lover. I have my own cellar and I typically try to match my food with the wine I have selected. So, my favorite food should match my favorite wine! In practical terms, it means that my favorite food would be something like a coq au vin or boeuf bourguignon that would match perfectly with a red Burgundy wine.

**If I could be anything at all (besides a SAS programmer), I would be** the owner of a small sport shop to provide active people with good advice and excellent equipment.

**When I'm not programming in SAS, I like to** (other than training) work around my house and travel. I especially enjoy camping in a national park. Except for Newfoundland, I have visited all the national parks in eastern Canada.

### **One thing every SAS programmer should know:**

If you use a SAS data set multiple times within a program, there is a way to reduce the processing time by using the SASFILE global statement. The SASFILE statement reduces the open/close operations to just one and also I/O processing by holding the data in memory. When the SASFILE statement executes with the LOAD option, SAS opens and reads the file in memory. Then, when subsequent DATA and PROC steps execute, SAS does not have to open the file each time and issue I/O requests, since all the data resides in memory. The file remains open until a second SASFILE statement closes it, or until the SAS session ends.

Try the following code that uses the SASFILE statement. The first data step reads a file loaded in memory, whereas the second data step reads the exact same file but NOT loaded in memory. You should observe a much greater "real" time in the second data step. Note that the more data steps and procedures you have that use a file loaded in memory, the greater the performance gain you will experience.

```

/* Create a big file */
%let size=1000000;
DATA work.big;
  DROP I;
  ARRAY vv(100) 8;
  DO key = 1 TO &size;
    DO i = 1 TO DIM(vv);
      vv(i) = RANUNI(1);
    END;
  OUTPUT;
END;
RUN;

/* Load the big file in memory */
SASFILE work.big LOAD;

/* Create a file from the big file loaded in memory */
data test1;
  set work.big;
  if vv1>.5;
run;

/* Close the file and free the memory */
SASFILE work.big CLOSE;

/* Create a file from the big file NOT loaded in memory */
data test2;
  set work.big;
  if vv1>.5;
run;

```

Before you decide to use the SASFILE statement, make sure that you have taken into account the time required to load the data in memory. Also, don't forget that I/O processing can be reduced only if there is sufficient real memory allocated to your SAS session. If the SAS file does not fit in real memory, the operating system will use virtual memory. Because virtual memory resides on disk, you could be back to square one because you will be replacing data access I/O requests with swapping I/O requests. You should always set up a test in your environment to measure performance with and without the SASFILE statement.