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TECHNOLOGY

Productivity in Practice: Going the Distance

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With the tax season just about to get started, enduring long hours at the office is a dreaded reality that many accountants and tax professionals are about to face. Of course, this is

also the most profitable season of the year for many firms. So with fairly concrete benefits in mind, these professionals stand waiting for the starting gun to get the race to April 15 underway.

If you'll pardon the obvious racing metaphor, Dennis Greeno is no stranger to arduous feats, and there's little doubt that he has the endurance to go the distance and guide his practice and his clients to the finish line in profitable condition. In addition to having more than 20 years experience in the accounting field and being an Air Force veteran, the Goodlettsville, Tennessee, CPA has run 13 marathons, including three times in the Chicago event and once in Boston's.

Dennis says his love of running comes from a desire to stay fit as well as personally challenging himself. His best time so far has been 3 hours, 24 minutes. That's

averaging nearly 8 miles per hour for 26 miles. But he hasn't always been as health-conscious, he says.

“As an accountant, you're often cooped up in an office staring at a monitor, and it can be hard to get out of the office to exercise sometimes,” he said. “By the time I was in my mid-30s, I was getting overweight and knew I had to do something to start getting in better shape.” Greeno, who is now 50, was working as a corporate tax specialist for Northern Telecom (NT) at the time. The company had built a new headquarters with a fitness center for employees, and he joined up with others for running.

<p>Firm Name/Professional: Dennis P. Greeno, CPA</p> <p>Location: Goodlettsville, Tennessee</p> <p>Productivity Score: 292</p> <p>Practice Specialty: Restaurants, Hotels, Grocers, Construction</p> <p>First Client: Retail Grocer</p> <p>Favorite Professional Website: www.nysscpa.org</p> <p>Last Book Read: “Chronicles Vol. 1,” by Bob Dylan</p> <p>Marathons Run: 13 — Fastest Time: 3:24</p>

After the Air Force, Dennis used the G.I.

Bill to attend Purdue and Western Kentucky University, graduating with a degree in accounting in 1982. Right out of college, he had originally worked for a small CPA firm in Nashville, preparing taxes, performing audits and assisting small businesses.

After a few years

at NT, Dennis decided to go back to those roots, opening his own practice in 1991.

By 1992, he and another local CPA, Tom Donaldson, agreed to share office space and basic resources, while maintaining separate practices with non-competing client bases. The three-person firm of Dennis Greeno, CPA (www.greenocpa.net), specializes in compilations, write-up and tax planning and preparation, and also provides payroll and business consulting services. While the core base of his clients consists of retail businesses, being in the Nashville area means the music industry also plays a role.

“The area has more than its share of music wannabes,” he said. “Music is the reason many people move to the area, whether to write, play or sing. Of course, most of them don't make it, but they keep their dreams alive, even if they take a ‘temporary’ job to pay the bills.” One such client has established a painting business that, because of the entrepreneur's bilingual capabilities, has become quite successful. “But when

he comes into the office, at some point he will talk about his plans to become a drummer.”

The firm is about to go through some significant changes. Although Dennis says that sharing an office with Tom has been beneficial and that he has been one of the greatest influences during his career, Dennis will soon be moving his practice to a nearby office condo.

Another factor that will surely change the practice is the pending addition of his wife Joan, who after about 20 years in the healthcare and benefits fields has returned to college to pursue a Master’s in accounting. The couple has been married for two years, after having met online four years ago. Obviously, Dennis sees the benefits of technology. His practice is moving toward a paperless model, he utilizes multiple monitors and other efficiency-enhancing tools, and he took the free Productivity Survey at www.cpata.com/productivity. His well-above average score of 292 shows that the firm is staying on top of technological issues.

In addition to running marathons and, of course, running his practice, Dennis also spends time with his youngest son Tristan, who will be a pitcher on his baseball team next year. He is a member of the AICPA’s Tax Section and the Tennessee Society’s State Tax Committee, and is a QuickBooks Certified Advisor.

Involvement within the community is also important, and Dennis served an “intense” three years as treasurer of the Goodlettsville Chamber of Commerce, and is currently active in the Hendersonville chamber. He would like to get involved in programs to keep children in shape physically, and has an idea for a running program for kids.

Retirement is not on the radar any time soon, but Dennis and wife Joan enjoy traveling and are planning a vacation to Dublin, Ireland. They have previously visited the Napa/Sonoma area, New York and Sanibel Island, Florida.

Dennis will run in the 110th Boston Marathon on April 17, 2006. So if you live in the area, go out and cheer for one of your colleagues. □

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