

Company Adventure—Knik Glacier



On Friday, September 1, 2023 several Design Alaska employees and their guests traveled to Palmer to enjoy this year's Company Adventure through the backwoods, high waters, and freezing rain on side-by-sides. They traveled to the Knik Glacier with Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours.



2023 Wellness Challenges are due by November 30!

President's Corner—Transparency

I had a recent conversation about transparency of our business operations. What does transparency mean to you?

As president, I literally have an open door. You can feel free to send me a Team's message, email, appointment request or just stop by and ask a question. Of course, I may have to say 'I will get back to you' but I am happy to communicate on business, project management, or technical topics that I may be helpful on. Of course, it always helps to come prepared to talk to me with information, so I encourage you to talk with your peers or your department heads and see if they can help you.

Transparency is frequently related to fiscal matters. For us, we provide information on financial performance directly to PM's each month as part of invoices, data can be exported from Deltek and organized in any way you like, the department heads and shareholders get a financial package each month, and I include a summary of that package in the Managers' Meeting notes that I send out to all staff. As you can imagine, there is lots of data there, so in my notes I try to summarize it in a way that everyone can digest and understand our overall performance.

We are generally a profitable business. Most of the profits from our work are distributed as bonuses to every employee and a small portion is used to provide returns for shareholders who have invested in the business. All of the shareholders are your coworkers. The 10 of us come to work every day and do work that contributes to the overall performance of the company. We are 100% employee owned and we have it written in our ownership agreements that you must be an active employee to be an owner. This is not the only employee ownership structure used by A&E firms but it is one that has been successful for our business for many years.

If you would like more information about our business, project management philosophy, or just a general question of 'why,' please feel free to discuss and ask your peers, supervisor, or myself. We really value working together as a team for the overall goal of a rewarding professional work experience.

~ Chris Miller, PE

President

Company BBQ



After an unfortunate bout of rain, we moved the August 17 company BBQ inside where a delicious meal of kebabs, coleslaw, and rice was served.



August Food Truck



On August 24th, we celebrated summer foods with the Corn Diggity Dog corn-dog truck, which included the controversial "Pickle Dog." People also enjoyed home-made kettle chips, iced tea, and banana pudding.



What is your oldest piece of clothing that you just can't let go of?	
Eliza Cink	My wedding dress. I got rid of all my high school and college t-shirts during my Marie Kondo phase, but can't bring myself to donate that dress...
Cat Peterson	When I was like eight years old, I had a hat that said "I am never growing up." I wore it everywhere. I think it came from Disney World. I still have the hat, but I don't wear it because I outgrew it....
Kym Pihlaja	I have a letterman's sweater from my high school drill team days.
Don Hopkins	My Mount Marathon contestant shirt. You know the one in Seward on the 4th of July 1983. Did not place anywhere near the front but was still fun. 1 hour and 3 minutes to the top of the mountain, 12 minutes back to the starting line. Pretty ragged now, but still in the bottom of the shirt drawer.
Blake Burley	I have a shirt my sister got me when she was in Peru 15 years ago. I spilled paint on it, but still wear it occasionally and can't seem to throw it out.
Eric Gabrielson	I still have Grateful Dead tour shirts from the 80's. I liberate them from the rag pile when no one is looking.
Jack Wilbur	My -40F down winter coat is, I believe my oldest piece of clothing (40 plus years), Carol gave it to me as a Christmas present before we were married. It is still in perfect condition and is used mostly these days as emergency gear in the truck during the winter. Another special piece of clothing of mine that is quite old is a dress wool overcoat that was my Dad's until he died in 1996. My Mom gave it to me and I had it tailored to fit. I wore it quite often in winter back in the day when I was wearing a sports coat and tie every day, but not much anymore.
Marina Jones	<p>My Teddy Bear sleep shirt! Used to be down to my knees and now I can barely get it over my head but still wear it occasionally to sleep in. With a newborn on the way, my mom is also sending me some very old memory gems of mine to pass on. Baby jackets, necklaces, booties, and lots of old books my parents read to us at night. It has been a great trip down memory lane and can't wait to share with my daughter.</p> 
Emory Mildon	My two oldest clothing items, which I can't let go of, are my West Anchorage High School cross-country running sweatshirt and skiing windbreaker. Both are from my freshman year of high school, right after I stopped growing. The ski team windbreaker is a classic, complete with puffy white sleeves with an orange and black color block design. Unfortunately, my parents thought I would continue growing at that point and bought it two sizes up, which it remains to this day.
Chris Miller	The Columbia fleece I wear almost every day....the zipper is breaking, the fabric is thin in the elbows, but it still comes clean out of the wash and has no tears, and is totally comfortable..... great value....



Incorporating Wellness into our Busy Schedules



During a time when our schedules have been busier than usual, it's easy to let our health and wellness fall to the wayside. If you're like me, you may struggle to fit that workout in, or your healthy sleep and eating habits become an after thought. I've learned the hard way that this can be detrimental to your wellbeing and before you know it, it's been months since you took the time to focus on health. So, this month I'd like to focus on ways to incorporate wellness into our busy schedules.

Focus on things you can do during the workday:

- Drinking more water
- Making healthy snack choices. Especially if you're someone who snacks more when you're stressed. Be prepared by bringing in some healthy snack options or choose the healthier options from our snack bar.
- Utilize your standup desk or try out the tread-desk in the plotter room.
- Take a break and use the wellness room for a quick reset and recharge either by using the massage chair or taking a moment to stretch while listening to music.
- Sign up for one of the monthly massage sessions.
- If you need to have a conversation with a co-worker, check if they're free to talk and walk over to their desk instead of calling them. All those little steps add up and gets your blood flowing.
- Get away from your desk at lunch. It's important to give our minds a break throughout the day and you'll probably find you're more productive when you get back.

Ideas for outside of work:

- Incorporate positive affirmations into your teeth brushing routine.
- Sign-up for a workout class or personal training session ahead of time and put it on your schedule so that you feel obligated to go and don't just blow off your after-work workout.
- Keep some quick and healthy meal choices in your freezer for those long days when you don't have the time or energy to cook when you get home.
- Schedule time to hangout with friends and family at least once a week. Research has shown that it's important for our mental and physical health to maintain social interactions.
- Make time to relax and recharge, whatever that looks like for you.
- Set aside time to wind down before bed to help maintain a healthy sleep schedule.
- Make a habit to be off your phone by a certain time at night so that you don't stay up late mindlessly scrolling.

Finding small ways to include health goals into our busy lives is important for our physical and mental health. I like to remind myself that **it doesn't have to be all or nothing** and that prioritizing my health will benefit me and my work in the long run. As always, I encourage you to find what works for you!

Friendly reminder that the **2023 Wellness Challenge** is still underway until November 30. Don't forget to send the Wellness Committee an email for the challenges you've completed or to request a custom challenge!

October ~ Upcoming Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 United Way Kick-off Breakfast	4 Table Massage	5 Managers' Meeting	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Birthday Cake Day	17	18 Table Massage	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 Managers Meeting	27	28
29	30	31				

October Birthdays

Cutter Degerlund	October 2	
Isaac Ladines	October 12	
James Godfrey, II	October 19	
John Dennis	October 19	
Jack Wilbur	October 25	

Design Alaska Anniversaries

Chris Miller	27th Anniversary	October 28, 1996
Emily Steele	14th Anniversary	October 5, 2009
Mary Sue Dates	10th Anniversary	October 14, 2013
Marina Jones	9th Anniversary	October 16, 2014
Kyle Rankins	2nd Anniversary	October 11, 2021

October Local Events

Fall Festival October 7	Tanana Valley State Fair 12:00pm - 4:00pm
Fiber Festival October 14-15	Pioneer Park Civic Center 10:00am - 4:00pm
City Sampler October 19	Westmark Hotel 6:30pm - 8:30pm
Go Winter! Expo October 21-22	Carlson Center Sat 10:00am - 6:00pm, Sun 11:00am - 5:00pm
Boozar October 28-29	Bentley Mall 10:00am - 7:00pm
Halloween October 31	