
Subject: Farewell to Paul van Delst

Posted by [Liam E. Gumley](#) on Mon, 18 Apr 2016 16:50:28 GMT

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Dear IDL Colleagues,

It is with deep regret that I must tell you of the passing of Paul van Delst, a long time user of IDL and contributor to this forum. He suffered a heart attack while biking with friends in Washington DC yesterday and did not survive.

Paul and I were undergraduates at Curtin University in Western Australia in the late 1980's, and we both started using this new system known as "Interactive Data Language" when we moved to the USA in 1991. He went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and I went to NASA GSFC. When I moved to Madison in 1994 to start working at UW with Paul, we fell into a habit of getting coffee every morning and discussing the latest programming tasks we had been tackling in IDL. Paul was the first person who told me "You should write a book on IDL". A few years later, with his encouragement, I did so and he was the first reviewer. Paul was a very careful programmer, and no detail escaped his attention.

Paul was a researcher at the Space Science and Engineering Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from 1994 to 2007, and from 2007 he was a scientist at the NOAA National Center for Weather and Climate Prediction (NCWCP) in College Park, Maryland. During his time at NCWCP he was the lead developer of the Community Radiative Transfer Model, a Fortran software system for computing the radiative properties of the atmosphere, that is used in the operational numerical weather prediction models run by NOAA. He was always a keen user of IDL for visualizing and analyzing results from CRTM, and he was never able resist chiming in on a discussion in the IDL discussion group when an interesting post caught his eye.

Paul had numerous interactions with the US and international atmospheric radiative transfer communities, and he will be missed by many colleagues and friends.

Sincerely,
Liam Gumley
SSEC, UW-Madison.
