
Subject: Re: Farewell to Paul van Delst
Posted by [rawahranger](#) on Tue, 19 Apr 2016 16:04:56 GMT
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Just a memory of Paul.

Shortly after my book, Traditional IDL Graphics, came out, I was doing a "book tour" on the East Coast. Paul had offered to set up a lecture for me at the NCWCP in the afternoon. In the morning, I had been dropped off by a friend I was staying with at the Naval Research Lab to do a talk to six people who had apparently been dragged to the talk against their will. After the meeting, I was to rent a car, head over to see Paul and whatever motley crew he could put together for a talk, then drive that night to Hampton, VA for another presentation at the NASA Langley facility in the morning.

When I got to the rental car place I discovered that while I had been hiking on the Pacific Crest Trail that summer (the inspiration for writing the book!) my driver's license had expired. No car for me! Shit! I called Paul with a great deal of frantic desperation in my voice. He couldn't come get me, since he always rode his bike to work. But, there was a Metro line nearby that would drop me off close enough for me to still make the meeting, if barely. I could worry about how to get to Hampton later.

When I got to NCWCP, Paul had already been at work on a "plan" that involved catching a "special Chinese bus" on some street corner in Washington that would get me down to Virginia Beach later that night. Grateful, I walked into the meeting, which was absolutely overflowing the room. I don't know how many people were there, but they were packed into the hall outside, too, and they were EXTREMELY interested in buying my book. Wow! Best organizer I EVER worked with!

Later, we took the Metro downtown together because Paul was worried I would screw up the rendezvous with the Chinese bus, too. We had a short meal with a lot of laughter, as I remember. Then he dropped me off on the corner where I was to meet the bus. He offered to stay with me, but I told him I was pretty sure I could get on a damn bus by myself. We shook hands and he left.

Twenty minutes later, I saw a bus full of Chinese people pull up on the opposite corner. I damn near missed that, too. I still hear Paul laughing when I told him later.

I will miss him a lot. Fond memories.

David
