

# I Love My Librarian!

2010 Award

## **Nominations for Paul Clark**

Clay County Library System  
Fleming Island, Fla.

### **Nominator:**

Eileen Annie Ball  
Eastpoint, FL

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Paul Clark is known as "The Library Guy" in Tallahassee and in every corner of the Florida Library community for his advocacy role in the restoration of endangered State Aid to Libraries funds. His dedication and passion go beyond the inner walls of one library or library system, but clearly extend to the entire field. Paul Clark should win this award because of his demonstrated ability to take a stand when it matters, because of his enthusiasm and love for libraries, and because he truly stands out as the library's champion.

### **2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

Paul Clark's love of libraries is evident in everything he does. This very trait is contagious. Our three county cooperative library system was extremely fortunate to have him serve as the systems librarian, also known as the "tech guy." His technological knowledge is really second to anyone I know. It is also backed up nicely by his library experience and awareness. As previous director of one of the libraries in the cooperative system, I relied on Paul a great deal to assist with the transition to online cataloging and the numerous day to day computer related library issues.

The most striking trait about Paul is his excitement about life, libraries, computers, and general learning. His very curious and enthusiastic nature resulted in his ability to keep up with the latest information. On a professional level, our library system benefited directly from the very latest technological advances while existing on an extremely shoestring budget.

Paul was always helpful to everyone and would absolutely glow when asked a question, especially when relevant to computer literacy and technology. He would take the time to

assist library patrons and to stay with an issue until it was resolved satisfactorily. He conducted workshops and specialized classes. Staff members all relied on him and could call on him at any time and he would have the incredible patience to answer even the most obvious questions.

On a personal level, he inspired a respect for technology both as it related to libraries and to everyday general use.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Paul Clark is a team player. Even while being praised for his “single-handed” efforts in restoring funding for libraries, he clearly gave the credit to all of the library employees and patrons who spoke against the funding cuts. And yet it was decidedly Paul Clark who was at the State Capitol in both 2009 and 2010 standing as the face of all libraries, rallying, lobbying, and carrying signs that reflected the Paul Clark humor – such as big “Chamber Notes.” It was Paul Clark who gave up his vacation time to stand on duty to be this face of libraries.

His professional service as systems librarian for Wilderness Coast Public Libraries has contributed greatly to the three library communities he served for more than a decade – Franklin, Wakulla, and Jefferson Counties. From a fledgling system in three rural counties, the three libraries have branched out and have grown tremendously in space, acquisitions, high-tech networked computer systems, and outstanding service to patrons.

Paul Clark recently received joined the Clay County Public Library as systems librarian. For his efforts on behalf of all Florida Libraries, he was awarded the prestigious Florida Association of Counties Advocacy Award. During the presentation at the Clay County Commission meeting, it was stated that Paul was the “first non-lobbyist in FAC’s 80 year history to win it.”

Yes, he has made a difference to all of the libraries in Florida.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

Paul Clark has the gift of being able to share what he knows with others. He actually takes delight in what others can learn and accomplish. Although I retired from the library director’s position, I still serve as youth program director for other special grant funded projects. Through all of these years of interacting with Paul, he has served, and continues to serve, as my technology mentor. It is because of him that I have learned to respect and utilize technology. This has improved the quality of my life, both personally and professionally.

Paul’s persistence as “Library Guy” is something to aspire to. One person can and does make a difference. This is something to share and pass on to others – young and old. I do believe that Paul will be at the State Capitol again next year. But I think this recipient of the Florida Association of Counties’ 2010 Advocate of the Year award will find there will be many others with him.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

“It is a joy to be doing something that I love. Serving libraries – how can you not be happy!” In a recent conversation with Paul, this is what he shared with me. I can only

say that with that attitude and that outlook, how can the library he is serving not be a better place? It would be virtually impossible.

**Nominator:**

Sylvie Szafranski  
Stuart, Florida

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Paul's efforts directly resulted in the state of FL revising their plan to eliminate funding for public libraries. He did this on his own time, sacrificing his vacation hours.

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

I have known Paul thru friends, and by hearing from him regularly in various library circles. His dedication is not only apparent but also contagious. He believes in the rewards of investing in libraries, for communities and at a personal level.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

here are direct quotes from an 4/28/10 TampaBay.com article <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/library-guy-shows-how-one-man-can-make-a-difference-in-tallahassee/1090758>

I couldn't say it better:

Clark would just stand quietly, mostly, hoping for someone to ask him — anything. He talked to 40 senators, almost as many representatives. Once, he waited two hours to have five seconds of face time with Sen. JD Alexander.

"That gentleman has been a fixture around here. I came to expect to see him," said Alexander, R-Lake Wales. "He's just a librarian who cares, who's been standing there, quietly reminding us how important this issue is. ...

"When you see an individual citizen, taking his own time to be heard, that makes an impression," he said.

Monday night, just before midnight, state lawmakers reached a budget deal. They added \$7 million to library funding, bringing the total to \$21 million — enough to qualify for \$8 million more in matching federal money.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

He possibly helped keep my job! He also showed that engagement thru social media bears fruit as this is how I learned about his efforts. This gave me confidence in requesting support for other social media campaigns at work.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

He allowed our community to keep library hours and collections. He showed me and many other library people that personal involvement matters and makes a difference.

## **Nominator**

Charlie Parker  
Riverview, Florida

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

When Florida public library funding was threatened during the 2010 legislative session, Paul Clark, aka “The Library Guy,” made advocacy personal, touching legislators, the media and lobbying corps like no one ever before. Using vacation time, he positioned himself with signs in the Capitol. He did not get in legislators’ faces, but over time they approached him, heard his story about libraries changing lives, and all were moved. In the end, funding was restored and for all who talked to him or read his story, cynicism fell away because Paul showed that one person can indeed make a difference.

### **2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

What Paul did was play a critical role in preserving state funding for public libraries large and small all over the state of Florida, funding that was by all accounts very nearly lost. The impact of his accomplishment varies from library to library and community to community and without his efforts library services would have suffered statewide.

Paul Clark (MLS, Library and Information Studies, Florida State, 1996) took time off from his System Administrator position for Wilderness Coast Public Libraries to advocate for public library funding in the state Capitol during the 2010 legislative session. Though no one will ever know if public library funding would have been continued at the previous year \$21,253,978 level without Paul’s efforts, we do know he made a huge difference and an incredible lasting impact on state decision makers.

From the time the session began on March 2 until it ended April 30, Paul took off more than 80 hours from his job, and spent many additional hours after work and on weekends in the Capitol, creating signs, talking points and managing his website “State Aid to Libraries.” He printed signs with an appropriate library message for that day and positioned himself in the Capitol Rotunda or outside Appropriations Committee meetings.

When Paul began, like most people, he did not understand the legislative process, but with help from the Florida Library Association, he quickly figured things out. He was soon able to determine which appropriations meetings were critical. He learned to recognize legislative leaders, important committee chairs and members. Since he was positioning himself so that leadership had to pass him entering and leaving meetings, sooner or later they went up to him and had their first conversations.

Over time, members, legislative staff, the media and lobby corps accepted Paul as part of the Capitol community, and one at a time approached him and talked with him about libraries. Paul carefully prepared his talking points and handouts to tell his story about the importance of library funding and how critical it is, particularly to the small rural counties that his library serves.

This is how Paul built relationships with the legislators who would ultimately have to make hard choices in order to fund libraries. They got to know him, they learned about how his library changes folks' lives, and through this relationship, their commitments to public libraries grew stronger. By the time the session was well underway, it was common for committee chairmen, when they encountered Paul outside of their committee meetings, to go out of their way to tell him about how things looked for library funding and provide advice.

This was a very difficult year for funding because Florida was facing a \$3 billion shortfall following several years of budget reductions. There were times in the budget process where library funding was zeroed out in both House and Senate but through it all, Paul and the Florida library community kept working, always keeping the message positive.

As the House and Senate budget conferees met to work out their differences, State Aid to Public Libraries funding was at \$11.7 billion, down \$9.5 million from the previous year's \$21.2 million, which is also the Maintenance of Effort level required for Florida to receive \$9 million in federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds. A state reduction that deep would have hurt for the year ahead, and the loss of a substantial share of federal funds would have wreaked havoc with LSTA-funded services two years later.

On the last night of the conference process, the House and Senate Budget Chairmen, their committees and staff worked through their unresolved issues. After midnight, as the Budget Chairs resolved the last differences, the Senate Budget Chair looked around the room and asked "Where is the Library Guy?" People searched for Paul, but he had gone home to his family, having been at the Capitol that day until the early evening and the night before until nearly midnight. At that point, the Senate Chair spoke for several minutes about Paul Clark, and what a wonderful a job he had done representing libraries and how other constituencies should look to Paul as a model for advocacy. These comments from a budget Chair were unheard of before.

The following morning, the front page of the St. Petersburg Times proclaimed, "Library Guy shows how one man can make a difference in Tallahassee" and on their blog was a picture of Paul, in the Capitol with a "Thank You" sign. This was just the first of many articles and columns about Paul that ran in Florida newspapers for the next six weeks.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Paul certainly played a very big role in the library community's success. With a \$9.5 million reduction, it's certain that several rural systems would have closed branches, reduced hours, and laid off staff. Had state funding been eliminated altogether, there would have been branch closings, additional hour reductions and staff layoffs in communities of all sizes around the state. For library cooperative systems like Wilderness Coast where Paul worked, the cooperative services are entirely paid for with state funds so those systems would have lost their library automation and even public Internet Access.

Because State Aid to Public Libraries funds are used to meet LSTA Maintenance of Effort match requirements, the reductions to LSTA under either a complete elimination of funding or a \$9.5 million cut would have devastated statewide programs like the Florida

Electronic Library and would have resulted in the loss of positions at the State Library and Archives of Florida.

Paul made an incredible impression on legislators and the media. The St. Petersburg Times front page story that appeared the day after funding was restored is in itself remarkable. There were many stories and editorials about Paul that appeared over the six weeks that followed. Almost all focused on how Paul proved that one individual can make a difference and are remarkably positive stories about the legislative process and politics – areas where very few good things get reported and cynicism rules the day.

Paul represented libraries in a very positive and compelling way. He did a great job of helping legislators see and understand the transformational things libraries do. He connected with legislators on a profoundly human level that is seldom seen. During recent meetings between the members of the Florida library community and legislators, the legislators have brought up “The Library Guy” repeatedly. And they all comment at length on how wonderful a job he did representing libraries. And they all smile.

On July 8, the Florida Association of Counties took the unprecedented step of naming Paul “Lobbyist of the Year.” (Library Guy receives FAC Honors). When presenting the award, John Wayne Smith, Legislative Affairs Director, went out of his way to point out that Paul is not a paid lobbyist, and that this is the first time in the award’s 80 year history that it has been presented to someone who is not. He also claimed that without Paul’s efforts, funding would have been seriously reduced.

#### **4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

Paul is certainly due a large share of the credit for protecting a \$21.2 million state appropriation and for preventing the loss of \$9 million in federal LSTA dollars that would have been lost 2 years in the future.

Rita Maupin, Director of the Calhoun County Public Library, located in the Florida Panhandle described Paul’s quality of life contribution from the small rural community perspective.

“Rural Library services exist in a tenuous balance dependent on the good will of county commissioners and the vision of our state legislators. Without Paul telling our story, our book budgets would have been slashed and our collections would have become outdated. Our Internet access would be in jeopardy because we could not maintain the equipment. Assistance for the public in using electronic information and applying for assistance would not be available because we could not afford staff. Our School Readiness programs for our most underserved would be reduced. Family and Adult Literacy programs would be eliminated. Finally, without the state money, staff would be laid off, we would have to reduce hours and close branches. People would lose the support system they have come to rely on for a better quality of life. Rural families would lose the most potent democratic institution available to them.”

#### **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Ms. Maupin’s comment above describes not only how Paul’s efforts helped preserve services critical to the quality of life in her community but also how he helped make the library a better place. As mentioned earlier, by helping ensure that funding was not eliminated or deeply reduced, Paul helped make every Florida library a better place.

Paul impressed some remarkable people. About midway through the session, when Rep. Rich Glorioso, the Chairman of the House appropriations committee that handles public library funding presented his committee's budget, he was so impressed that he took the liberty of praising Paul on the House floor. This is highly unusual, but what is even more unusual is that Representative Glorioso's Senate counterpart was similarly impressed. Senator Mike Fasano has words of praise that demonstrate how Paul has impacted all Florida libraries.

"Paul Clark, affectionately known as "The Library Guy," is an excellent example of how one individual can have an impact on state policy. Mr. Clark's untiring advocacy on behalf of the continued funding of library programs made an impact on myself and all decision makers in the Florida Legislature. His willingness to spend countless hours of his own time to make the plight of the libraries known to legislators and other policy makers will forever be remembered. I heartily endorse the application for official recognition of Mr. Clark and his hard work to save the funding of Florida's libraries."

Senator Fasano's view is shared by Kurt Browning who served as Florida Secretary of State during this period. Public libraries are part of the Department of State's responsibility so Secretary Browning was heavily involved in the funding effort.

"I am pleased to be asked to write in support of Paul Clark's nomination for the I Love My Librarian Award. As the former Secretary of State, I witnessed, first hand, the impact that Paul had on the legislative process and key lawmakers. I credit, in large part, the successful restoration of the \$21.3 million to state library funding to Paul. His commitment to libraries is second to none!"

I am honored to nominate Paul Clark for the I Love My Librarian Award!

Note - This summer, following the legislative session, Paul changed jobs and is now System Administrator for the Clay County Public Library (Florida).

#### Supporting Material

- Library Guy Shows How One Man Can Make a Difference in Tallahassee – St. Pete Times article <http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/library-guy-shows-how-one-man-can-make-a-difference-in-tallahassee/1090758>
- State Aid to Libraries – Website Paul created - <http://flstateaid.blogspot.com/>
- Library Guy Receives FAC Honors – Article describing Florida Association of Counties Award [http://www.claytoday.biz/content/2508\\_1.php](http://www.claytoday.biz/content/2508_1.php)

**Nominator:**

Jane Jones  
Crawfordville, Florida

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

For two years in a row the Florida legislature threatened to zero-fund the State Aid to Libraries program. Paul Clark took it upon himself to lobby the legislature for the better part of six weeks, taking personal leave to do so, to fight for us all with the passion he feels every day for libraries and their patrons. This year, Paul (known as “The Library Guy”) won full library funding and was named 2010 Advocate of the Year by the Florida Association of Counties—the first winner in 80 years who was not a county lobbyist!

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

I met Paul Clark when we were in Library School at FSU in 1994. I was starting a new career, taking care of my 89-year-old father and my 60-year-old retarded brother, working, going to school, commuting three hours a day and was “down to my last nerve”!

I was a computer novice, working on a class computer assignment in the lab at school, getting nowhere. I was due home for my dad and brother; others were impatiently waiting for my computer spot. The pressure was awful. I burst into tears. Suddenly, kneeling next to me was this young man whom I’d never met, asking, “Can I help you ma’am?” That young man was Paul Clark. He guided me through the assignment with caring ease and became, as I’ve said since that day, “My Hero”.

Although a new library student himself, Paul displayed the innate caring for people and extraordinary technical skills that make him an outstanding librarian today. Ironically, after graduation from Library School, Paul took his first professional job in Wakulla County, near my home, as the Systems Librarian for Wilderness Coast Public Libraries. I have seen Paul grow the technology at my library, Wakulla County Public Library, from one public access computer to 8, then 12, then 16 public access computers and a 12 seat computer training lab.

He has also created and nurtured similar labs in the other Wilderness Coast Libraries located in Franklin and Jefferson County so unfortunately he is not always there to provide the expert personal assistance that I sometimes require. I don’t mind sharing him with those other counties though because I now as soon as he returns to home base, Wakulla, I will get the caring, expert, humble help that only Paul Clark can give. Whether it is asking him about an issue I am having with my computer at home, how to save a file to a flash drive on the library computer, or how to modify a poster done in Publisher, Paul will give his undivided, personal attention to the problem at hand and not be satisfied until he knows that I understand the solution.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

To say that Paul Clark has a passion for libraries is an understatement. In 2009, the Florida Legislature had proceeded throughout its 2 month session carefully considering

legislation and a budget that included State Aid to Libraries. That is until two days before the session ended. With just 48 hours until adjournment, State Aid to Libraries was zeroed out of the budget. What came to most library patrons as an unexpected shock came to Paul Clark as a challenge to rise up to. Paul immediately enlisted the support of a few friends, went to the local copy center and had Signs made and began an information campaign that involved visiting every legislative office, emails campaigns from local Friends of the Library groups, and waving signs in front of the Capitol building and at each final budget committee meeting. When the dust settled on the last day of the session, and as a big surprise to seasoned legislative budget watchers, State Aid to Libraries was restored to the budget.

The 2010 Legislature used a different strategy. State Aid to Libraries was zero funded at the beginning of the session. Paul Clark responded as only Paul Clark could. Paul spent the better part of six weeks of his own time at the Capitol holding signs and sending the message to legislators that cutting the State Aid to Libraries program would cripple rural libraries in Florida.

In the late hours of April 26, 2010, the day before the session ended, the Florida Legislature restored funding to the State Aid to Libraries program at the full amount to maintain Florida Library's eligibility for Federal grants. This action was largely the result of the efforts of one man, Paul Clark. Magazines such as American Libraries and Library Journal, and newspapers around the State, including the St. Petersburg Times, Palm Beach Post, Tampa Tribune, Jacksonville Journal, Tallahassee Democrat and many others ran stories and pictures of Paul Clark while describing the actions he took on behalf of Florida's library patrons and libraries. Many letters to editors were written, and particularly heartwarming are the online comments many readers posted to the online versions of those stories. Paul became a quiet hero for not just me but library lovers all over Florida.

The Wakulla Board of County Commissioners honored him on May 3, 2010 for his efforts in saving the State Aid to Libraries funding, the cornerstone of the Wakulla County educational system, "providing programs for children, families, adults, and elders to enrich their understanding of the world."

On July 27, 2010, at his new job in Clay County, Paul Clark was honored before the Caly County Board of County commissioners by the Florida Association of Counties as "Advocate of the Year". It was the first time in the 80 year history of the award that it was presented to a non-lobbyist.

#### **4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

A small county like ours, which has no shopping malls, no public transportation to the nearest city, no movie theatre, and (to date) no community center, is dependent on the library for meetings, activities, programs, education, and entertainment. It has been for decades the center of life in our community. With the new things Paul Clark's abilities and caring focus have provided us, the library has taken on even more importance. For me personally, the access to genealogy databases and the training to use them, has opened a whole new world of interest, entertainment, and knowledge. It has truly changed my life, giving me a delightful, open-ended activity for my retirement.

## **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul Clark's ever-expanding knowledge and passion for libraries has made our small library competitive with large library systems. What we have may be on a small scale, but it is excellent and up-to-date. Paul's caring nature makes him easy to work with and his skill helps make the jobs of other staff members easier. His work gives added value for the patrons.

Perhaps most importantly, Paul's work with the legislature in Florida this year has SAVED the library—not only ours, but others as well.

In July 2010 Paul Clark took a position with the Clay County Public Library in Clay County, Florida. Paul Clark served the Wilderness Coast Libraries, a multi-county library, for 14 years, bringing his technical expertise to three small rural counties in the Big Bend region of Florida. My county, Wakulla, was going through a transition from the card catalog to an online system. Paul's knowledge of computers, networks, and routers are the only skills most "techies" would bring to this challenge. But in addition to his vast technical skills, Paul knows the MARC record like the back of his hand, and maneuvered that knowledge into a seamless transition into the digital age.

Paul used Gates Foundation grants, federal e-rate subsidies, LSTA grants, Tech Soup software bargains, and old fashioned horse trading with vendors like Dell and Cisco to make sure the library had the best and latest equipment at rock bottom prices.

Paul's job knowledge is always on the cutting edge. He buys excellent hardware, and keeps a careful eye on security, providing training to staff and public when needed. This attention to detail pays off as seldom will you find a computer that is down or infected with a virus. Everything, from the public printing stations, scanning documents from the copy machine to whatever computer station you might happen to be using, is always working.

Paul also sought out and helped the library purchase software programs and links to state databases that opened doors to history, genealogy, government programs and more for the library's patrons. He saw to it that Family Tree Maker software was added to all of the public access computers (except those in the children's area) and in the computer lab where genealogy classes are now taught on a regular basis.

In addition to his expertise in Technology and Cataloging, Paul Clark is also an excellent Reference Librarian. He saw to it that each library joined the Statewide Ask-A-Librarian effort to provide 24 hour a day online reference service to those communities participating in the project. Paul personally manned the online desk every week so that our libraries, and patrons at home, are eligible to use the service.

You would think that Paul would have no time to pursue any other activities with all of the time he devotes to library matters but in his spare time, Paul created and still maintains [floridasprings.info](http://floridasprings.info), an award winning blog on Florida's many natural springs.

During his tenure, the library's role as "the only game in town" became even more important.

If anybody deserves the I Love My Librarian Award, it is Paul Clark

**Nominator:**

Georgia Russell  
Dallas, Florida

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

I think the thing that most set Paul apart from other "consultants" was his personal caring and dedication to the staff and library patrons. He made the computers work for all, and made them better and made them important, not something to be feared or avoided by older folks, for example. He brought opportunity and excitement to computer learning by making sure the programs were new and functioning properly and accessible and understandable to all. He deserves appreciation and gratitude on behalf of my late sister, as well as this award. But he never worked for awards; he worked for library patrons and the staff who helped them use and enjoy their library.

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

My sister Carolyn Sparks was the branch manager of the Carrabelle library for the Franklin County library system. Whenever Carolyn needed him he was there.

There were so many times he would meet her after hours because the library would be full or all the computers would be in use and he needed to update them or do repairs to them. If he and Carolyn had been discussing a program or a change that they wanted to implement, he would meet her and work on Sunday as needed.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

There were so many programs and so much information that he brought to the library that it would be impossible for me to name them all. If not for him, I feel certain that Carolyn (were she still with us) would still be trying to get the Wii, games and learning tools that went with that system. If Carolyn ever wanted to implement some new learning program, Paul was the resource she asked because he knew how to help her get it and how to make it work. He had so many good contacts and so much knowledge about the possibilities available for our library.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

I saw Paul make things better for my sister whose whole life was the FC library. His dedication and sincerity and commitment to making the computers work for the staff as well as the customers, and his caring and professionalism helped my sister, and made our lives much better because of it. My sister depended upon Paul and his knowledge and skills to help her make the library a better, more user-friendly and more personal place in which to learn. I will never forget Paul's professional support and caring toward my sister and our library. He helped me understand what a difference that a giving and caring person can make in the lives of others.

### **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul is a hard worker and 90% of the strength he puts into this knowledge and work is toward the libraries. As an example, several years ago Paul was going to leave because he was to be transferred. He came to the library and talked for a couple of hours with Carolyn about the move. The decision was made to meet with the library personnel to see what they thought Paul could help them get for the library before he did leave the area. To show you Paul's commitment and care toward the Carrabelle library and staff, Paul's list was much longer than theirs because he knew what other libraries had and he wanted to help get those advantages for the Carrabelle library. Paul knew his work and suggestions and acquisitions would be appreciated and implemented, not left on the shelf somewhere to be forgotten!

#### **Nominator**

Linda Norton  
Tallahassee, Florida

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Paul exhibits a passion for serving the public and for supporting the public libraries of Florida. He nearly single-handedly secured state funding for Florida libraries by lobbying and, more importantly, educating our state representatives about how important state funding was to keep libraries in the state open to the public. Paul has dedicated his life to libraries.

### **2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

Paul has assisted me in several projects for the Wilderness Coast Public Libraries' Bookmobile. He was instrumental in securing funding for many years. He advocated publically and between agencies for support of the program. By way of his position with Wilderness Coast, he was always prompt and competent in solving technical problems as they arose.

### **3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Paul has been an inspiration for all of us who had the pleasure of working with him, those he worked for and the public. His dedication to always giving more than 100% of himself to every project, his attitude toward co-workers and the public and his sense of excellence has inspired all of us to do better and be better. Our community has made it clear that Paul has been an essential part of keeping us moving forward in technology and securing our libraries for the public.

### **4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

For me, Paul has been a life saver so many times. He always has the time and generally the answer to any questions or problems that I have experienced. He is always a pleasure to work with, patient with my computer-challenged brain and competent.

### **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul keeps up with all the latest technology, the prices of technical products and where to get the best deals. Libraries are his passion. This shows in his work with the librarians and with the patrons. He has new ideas, and sees them through to reality. Any

library is lucky to have Paul. Any community is lucky to have Paul. And, everyone that Paul comes into contact with is lucky to have met him.

**Nominator:**

Mel Kelly  
Carrabelle, Florida

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

His selflessness in his work and efforts on behalf of the clients and staff of the library he services. There was no time clock or unavailability for his skills and expertise. He was truly the man behind the scenes who made it all work!

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

Paul introduced our Franklin County library computers into our system, and then made them function so that we could all work better and smarter. His incredible technological skills and expertise brought our small rural libraries into the 21st century and prepared them and us - staff and consumers alike - for the new futures we all faced. He brought new programs and ideas and made the programs work and saw possibilities for classes and education on behalf of all our community members, not just regular library users. His computer work brought us photography and geneology and word skills and spread sheets and so many other opportunities became available because of his efforts on behalf of our county library, personnel and customers.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

When a person brings the opportunity for education into a community, the difference becomes crystal clear. Paul introduced the incredible horizons of computer literacy to the benefit of resume builders, job seekers, WIC mothers, hobbyists, visitors and resident alike. IN a community where many citizens are unable to afford their own computers, Paul made it possible for everyone to use and benefit from the technology, with classes and repair work - and there was always repair work! Computers were never down and out of service that he wasn't there almost immediately, rushing from whatever part of the three county service area he was in at the time. He never watched the clock or said "It's not MY job!" His skills and deducation on behalf of our libraries and our citizenry and guest-users could not be measured in normal quantitative terms.

Simply said, Paul Clark made computer usage possible for the residents and visitors of Franklin County. Without him, it would have been impossible to bring the education and resources to all who sought it!

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

I am more skillful, better educated, more technologically able and more interested in so many new things. Because of the geneology programs Paul installed several years ago, a new horizon opened up to me and my husband as well. We both took the classes and began serious research and fact-finding into our family roots and tree. Without Paul's skills and understanding of the opportunities presented in those geneology programs, and his encompassing of the Ancestry and other resources available, we would have never known what we were missing! That was the kind of door that Paul opened for others as well. But for us, it was one for which we will always be grateful!

### **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul made the library come alive with his enthusiasm and willingness to open doors of computer literacy and skills to all those interested. He brought to life such opportunities as Photoshop and Word Processing. He was able to provide and explain the latest and best programs and technology so that the learner was never at a loss for the highest and best use of the computers. His care and attention to the "machines" was as careful and thorough as was his attention and care of the staff toward their own computer education as well. He gave them the tools to better help their customers. The definition of a library in today's world takes it above the quiet image of inanimate books, words and pages. Paul helped our libraries come alive with his knowledge and enthusiasm. He saw potential and opportunity and made it all work for Franklin County users. He broadened the traditional appeals; he even introduced the Wii games and exercises and kept them working for all who wanted to enjoy them. Paul's participation and enthusiasm made the library a better place just because he was a part of its growth and operations!

#### **Nominator:**

Doreen Gauthier  
Lighthouse Point, Florida

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

The unsung hero of the 2010 Florida legislative session. Standing day after day in the rotunda to remind legislators of the importance of libraries in the lives of the citizens of Florida. Even when, at the last moment the legislature removed the State Aid to Libraries provision of \$21 million, Paul stood his ground holding a handmade sign "Save our Libraries". It cost him his accrued 80 hours of vacation time with wife and three children, hours upon hours of sleep, and he returned to his job and a mountain of accumulated workload. His success might have gone unrecognized when in the late hours of the night or early hours of the morning the money was restored by Chairman JD Alexander, but Alexander himself had asked Where was that library guy? Paul returned the following day with a second handmade sign "Thank You, the Library Guy" for all, especially Chairman Alexander to see.

### **2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

A novice at lobbying for anything, Paul proved that one person can and does make a difference. In every positive and respectful manner Paul's presence spoke volumes for the library community -- no shouting, no protests, no chest-beating, but a dignified reminder that words are more powerful than a sword.

### **3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Virtually every public library and community in the State of Florida received benefit of Paul's efforts. In reality whether or not a library is a participant in the State Aid to Libraries grant opportunity matters little; the visual stimuli of Paul and his signs to the legislative bodies enhanced our chances for the \$21 million. The Doreen Gauthier Lighthouse Point Library received less than \$9000 in State Aid funding, but that funding saved one part-time employee's position. In today's difficult economy, even half of one part-time salary is worthwhile.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

From a store front volunteer effort begun in 1965 to the completion of a major renovation, remodeling and addition of 7200 square feet in 2007, this community has supported the library's effort to maintain recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities for all ages. This library has been cited as the "third place" for seniors; our volunteer support cadre is legendary throughout the library community; our own director was selected as Librarian of the Year 2009. The library has earned the respect of citizens and the elected officials. We are fortunate to share "a place at the table" for all citywide undertakings. Paul's distant efforts are a trickle-down effect 375 miles apart for our portion. Without the \$21 million in State Aid, the State would have lost an additional \$8 million in Federal funding, a crippling blow.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul has earned the respect of the State Legislature, the State Library of Florida, the Florida library community-at-large, the Florida Library Association and the admiration of all of his colleagues -- public, academic or special librarians, para-professionals, and support staff at any level. His technological expertise at the local level continues to benefit all patrons--even statewide. The rapid changes in this digital age; hence his position. His lobbying effort, however supports every library and the philosophy of readership.

**Nominator:**

Patricia Rock  
Ashford, Florida

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Paul Clark took his own 2 week's vacation time and spent it lobbying as "the Library Guy" in Tallahassee, Fl. He was able to get millions of dollars restored to budget.

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

He is so dedicated to the public having access to the computers. He was able to get many on-line courses in computer useage/programs.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

He has dedicated the last 14 years into training the libraries personnel into better serving the public. He has been able to write and receive many grants for the counties.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

He has given me a love to visit the library and take advantage of the programs.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

It is a joy to see someone so friendly and dedicated to the public.

**Nominator**

*Name withheld by request of nominator*

**1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

This young man is very diligent and works very hard to keep things going smoothly at the Library

**2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

Because of his dedication, the Library is very accessible to the public. He keeps everything working. That is invaluable to our community.

**3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

The Library is very current with access to computers that are in top shape.

**4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

Because we are a small town, our Library is invaluable to us. With access to computers and up to date books, we are well served.

**5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

Paul has worked tirelessly to keep our Library and the machines in it working and the community so appreciates all he does.