As the winter issue of The Native Speaker was going to press we learned that Karen Landahl, Academic Director of the LLA, had passed away. Since it was too late to include a notice of her death in that issue of the newsletter, I decided that the spring issue of The Native Speaker would be dedicated to Karen’s memory. Some of Karen’s friends, colleagues and students have submitted brief remembrances and photos which appear on the following pages. But from the perspective of those of us who work at the LLA and those who use its facilities, Karen’s greatest memorial is the LLA itself. Devoted to the study of languages, the LLA embodies her philosophy of service to language teachers, learners and researchers. Moreover, the LLA’s major functions—teaching, research and learning—reflect Karen’s life-long interests and career as a scholar. All three were brought into balance during Karen’s tenure as Academic Director. I witnessed her abiding interest in the mission of the LLA nearly every day for the six years we worked together. Her students and colleagues in Linguistics and other departments at the University also experienced Karen’s seemingly inexhaustible energy and interest in all affairs that were related to teaching, research and learning.

Some of Karen’s students have contributed to this memorial issue of the LLA’s newsletter, attesting to her teaching skills, her interest in their projects, and her deep personal involvement in their research. Her colleagues, too, offer tributes to Karen and recall her thoughtfulness, consideration and compassion, as well as her academic achievements. Her commitment to her own teaching, research and learning, and to improving these three functions of the LLA alone would be a fitting tribute to Karen Landahl as an excellent academic. But on the following pages, we also remember Karen’s qualities of compassion, consideration and thoughtfulness that touched so many.

MICHAEL BERGER, Manager
Karen L. Landahl  
and the LLA

Karen’s association with the Language Laboratory began in July 1985, when she succeeded Robert Hummel as the fourth academic director of the facility. She came to the Lab with the express mission of restoring its research function. As a consequence, in 1989 she changed the name of the Lab to its present designation, the Language Laboratories and Archives (LLA). By making “laboratory” plural, she emphasized the broad range of research that was carried on here. And, by adding the word “archives” to the name, she not only reminded everyone of the fact that the LLA possessed archives, but she let the world know that as a kind of library, the facility enjoyed all the privileges of “fair use” that the copyright laws grant to libraries. The extent of Karen’s success in restoring the Labs’ research capabilities is borne out by the testimonials of Karen’s graduate students elsewhere in this newsletter.

When Carolyn Killean, founder of the Language Faculty Resource Center (LFRC), proposed to retire from teaching at the end of the 1995-96 academic year, the time was ripe for the LLA and the LFRC to merge. They had overlapping constituencies (the language faculty) and complementary facilities for language learning, course development and linguistic research. The merger became official on April 1, 1996, and Karen assumed the directorship of the combined entity. She held this post up to the time of her death.

In the last year of her life, she pushed me to work on my dissertation. I could never decide whether it was blackmail or bribery, but we made a deal. Each of us had to spend an hour a day writing, she on a number of reflections related to her illness and I on my dissertation. For each day I did not fulfill my quota, I would owe her a tatting lesson (for the uninformed, tatting is a kind of lace making); for each day she was not able to write, she would owe me a piece of dark chocolate. I still owe her five tatting lessons. I still have some of the dark chocolate.

I will miss Karen; she brought out the best in people.

Barbara Need, the manager of the Language Labs (SS4 site), is archivist and computer specialist for the LLA. She is also a graduate student of the Department of Linguistics.

If she were here with us, she would accomplish more than ever

I could have received an “incomplete” for the computer science class that I took last spring. One day, I talked to Karen about the difficulty in keeping up with the class work (in addition to my full-time job at the LLA) and she told me that everyone’s life could be incom-
complete at some point. I dare say that because of her illness she might have felt the same way about her life at that moment. If she were here with us, she would accomplish more than ever and anyone else, but now it remains for us to complete her life. I wish for her a peaceful rest.

Kay Yang, manager and multimedia specialist at the LLA.

Her consideration always touched me even as her health declined

I was delighted when Karen joined the Linguistics Department. Another woman! We were a minority in that department.

Karen’s interest in the Language Laboratory paralleled mine in the provision of services to the language teachers at the LFRC. For several years our two facilities were separate but equal. During that time, Karen met regularly with me for lunch and we discussed everything from policy issues to current campus gossip. I really enjoyed her company.

My favorite holiday during the school year is Halloween. The Language Faculty Resource Center pulls out all the stops to put on a party for teachers and staff on that day. We decorated the Center, showed horror movies, provided a sumptuous potluck feast and wore costumes to celebrate. It was a very special day in our calendar. After I retired, Karen sent me a Halloween gift book each year in memory of our celebrations. Her consideration always touched me even as her health declined over the past five years. I will always remember her thoughtfulness and kindness as well as her impressive intellectual talents. Her friendship was special and unique, and her courage a lesson to us all.

Carolynn Killean, former Academic Director of the LFRC and Associate Professor Emerita of the Departments of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and Linguistics. Lynn lives in Houston.

She was determined to train hard-working and excellent phoneticians

It’s often said that “things have not been, and/or won’t be, the same around here” since a particular person has departed a place. The saying is so true of Karen, since she marked our Department of Linguistics in her own way. She was determined to train hard-working and excellent phoneticians single-handedly, though she knew the toll her commitment took on her academic life. Karen didn’t want to mislead anybody into thinking of phonetics as an easy specialty area of limited appeal. Even though Karen made her introduction to phonetics class the most demanding of our core courses, many students left first-year phonetics wanting to specialize in it. She didn’t run out of students to work with and she gave them more attention and time than was reasonable.

To salvage some of the research time this dedication took, Karen involved her students in her research projects and published with them, thus providing them with hands-on training in research. She single-handedly developed the phonetics lab, providing her students with the right environment for state-of-the-art research. She insisted on keeping them current in their scholarship and designed extra-curricular seminars for them, the last of which was Chiphon (Chicago Phonetics), in which students participated with lots of enthusiasm. They even ran it without her after she was incapacitated by her illness. Those students who were already writing their dissertations will remember how diligently she continued to supervise them during those moments when she was convalescing. The same applies to the administration of the Language Laboratories and Archives, where she spent more of her working time than in her departmental office when she was in good health.

Karen’s commitment to the Department and her students was exemplary. She was so eager to know the students personally and to consult with colleagues about how to assist the students with their academic problems. When I joined the faculty of the University of

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Brenda Tunnock (now Griffith), Mike Ziolkowski and Karen Landahl, Studio, SS4, November 1991

Karen Landahl and Margot Hamp at Eric Hamp’s Retirement Party, Classics 10, November 1990

George Chao and Karen Landahl at the Faculty Open House, Back Foyer, SS4, October 17, 1991

Brenda Tunnock (now Griffith), Mike Ziolkowski and Karen Landahl, Studio, SS4, November 1991

Joseph Toth and Karen Landahl, Service Area, SS4, Summer 1994
1. Karen Landahl and others at the FLEAT II conference, Japan, August 1992
2. Karen Landahl at the FLEAT III conference, University of Victoria, BC, August 1997
4. Bond Chapel at the University of Chicago, where the memorial service for Karen Landahl was held on May 2, 2003
Chicago in January 1992, it was so helpful to find in her a friend who could advise me about the local academic culture. I got to know her better after I became the Chair of the Department. She was even more candid in discussing what could be done differently, such as restructuring our core courses, some of which seemed to be valued more highly by the department than others. We were planning a field methods class together when she was first hit by the ailment that would steal her away from us. We thought that it would be useful to make available to our graduate students a course that would prepare them to conduct field research in more or less the style of the social sciences, starting with understanding what the word *field* in the phrases *field methods* and *field research* means and what it takes to plan and conduct field research successfully.

Being the Chair also enabled me to reflect with her on her academic career and ask her why she served on so many University committees. It was an opportunity for me to discover how far her unselfishness extended. I had to ask her whether she was concerned about shifting some of her academic and administrative priorities and being promoted to full professor. What a relief it was for those of us who had worked with her for quite some time to see her accomplish this before she died. She knew her efforts had to be rewarded and she worked even harder toward that goal before taking her last sick leave. She was always worried about the back seat that phonetics was given to syntax, phonology, semantics, and pragmatics in the Department, as if it was not theoretical enough. Considering the number of graduate students who chose to work with her, she always thought that she deserved more help. Her voice in this respect will continue to resonate in my memory.

Also worth remembering is the critical role she played in bridging our department with others such as Psychology. Thanks to her, a number of phonetics dissertations written under her supervision have been interdisciplinary.

I lost a dear colleague and a dear friend. Long live your precious memories among us, Karen.

Karen, we all miss you.

With love and respect, George Chao

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**SALIKOKO S. MUFWENE, Distinguished Service Professor and former chair of the Linguistics Department.**

**GEORGE CHAO, Associate Professor Emeritus in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations.**
Karen was a colleague, a friend and a neighbor

Karen was a colleague, a friend and a neighbor. (She lived just a block away.) We would meet on our way to campus or walk home together after some meeting or campus event that we both had attended. Occasionally we would talk when Karen walked by while I was gardening and she would be interested in what was being planted. Last week’s unseasonably late snowfall reminded me of one of the last times we met like that. Somebody’s styrofoam pellets had blown all over the front yard and I was trying to pick them up when Karen came by. She smiled and spelled out "snow??" on her communicator. Ill as she was, she could still see the funny side of things. I miss her.

\textit{Gundi Ratcliffe, Senior Lecturer Emerita in The Department of Germanic Studies.}

She was ... an admirable phonetician and the greatest teacher that I have ever had

Karen was the chair of my dissertation committee, and she has had an enormous impact on my current research in phonetics. Karen’s intellectual and personal influence on me is also profound, as it must be for many others. That I will not be able to see her and talk to her ever again has created a big hole in my heart. I am very grateful that I had a chance to know her.

I have so many things to express my gratitude to her for, but with limited space, I will share just one of them with you. I became very desperate in the final year of writing my dissertation when I began to suffer from serious tendinitis and carpal tunnel syndrome in both of my hands. The symptoms were so severe that I could not type, an essential physical activity in writing a dissertation. I told Karen that I would still like to do my best to finish my dissertation within six months, as I had originally planned. It was only a week later that Karen, as the director of the Language Labs, handed me newly purchased speech recognition software that could translate speech into text. With this software I was able to “type” without using my injured hands. At first, it did not work well because the software was sensitive to small environmental noises and would translate them into nonsense sentences. On seeing this, Karen immediately provided a special quiet room just for my use so that the software only “heard” my voice. I was able to finish my dissertation in six months, as I had planned.

Karen never said it, but it seemed to me as if she were saying, “Never give up! There will always be a way!”, she was not only an admirable phonetician and the greatest teacher that I have ever had, but also a pioneer in the use of new technologies for language learning. Her interest in language teaching technologies was not only theoretical but also practical. Two-and-a-half months before her death, the last time I saw her, she had become an expert user of text-to-speech software, which transformed her typed input into spoken sentences. This was her primary means of communication after her glossectomy. She told me of this tool’s many annoyances, but even in the midst of fighting her illness, I never saw her turning back, getting stuck, or giving up.

Karen, your teaching will be carried on and remain forever alive through us, your students, as we teach the next generation. I will do my best.

\textit{Yukari Hirata, Assistant Professor of East Asian Languages and Literatures at Colgate University and a former student of Karen Landahl’s.}

To this day, I am deeply touched by her personal commitment to me

Karen Landahl was a friend and mentor to me, as well as one of the most careful and thorough instructors I have ever had. Who else could assign, grade, remember, and elucidate all of Smalley’s tapes on articulatory
Karen consistently challenged me intellectually and academically. Her interdisciplinary approach encouraged me to look beyond my own comfort zones, pushing me into libraries, literature, and conferences that I might never have sought out otherwise. I recall fondly the hours and hours of my life spent in the Language Lab. It was there that I learned to use a computer, analyze data, write and edit a paper, compose an abstract, and discuss subjects ranging from parallel distributed models of computing to categorical perception in frog’s vision as well as human speech and strategies of language development in young children.

Karen encouraged her students to pursue all avenues of research, to present work in progress, write papers, submit abstracts, and discuss findings. I gave my first paper to the Midwest Child Phonology Group in Lincoln, Nebraska with Karen and Michael Ziolkowski as co-authors; Karen insisted that I be the one to present our work. (Mike could not make the trip.) Despite the greatest trepidation, I discovered that I had the courage after all. She also made an excellent travel companion, as I was to find on other occasions as well.

I would never have finished my dissertation if it had not been for Karen’s prodding. When I moved out of state, she insisted on a monthly telephone meeting preceded by receipt of the month’s work on my dissertation. (Prior to that I took my minor field exam via fax!) She even came to my home in Alexandria, Virginia to go over plans for the final stage of my work. She took the Metro from her hotel in D.C., then walked to my house from the Metro station while my infant daughter napped. Over the years since then we kept in touch, and Karen continued to be both a friend and advisor to me.

I am a better teacher for Karen’s example and a better person for the intellectual curiosity that she helped me to develop.

Karen made manifest the wisdom of her position by bringing to it imagination and practicality

On the cork board above my desk at the office there are family photographs, important telephone numbers, accounting codes, attempts at producing my name in Chinese, and a few favorite quotations. One of them, a statement that Karen Landahl made in the early 1990s at a Consortium workshop on technology and the language laboratory of the future, is printed in big bold Palatino letters: TECHNOLOGY IS NOT A THEORY. It is this direct no-nonsense approach to her work, supported with theoretical rigor and great common sense, that made working with Karen invariably worthwhile and delightful.

Few universities have an academic director for facilities like a language laboratory, but Karen made manifest the wisdom of her position by bringing to it imagination and practicality, potential and organization, a clear sense of immediate needs and a remarkably broad vision for preserving the past and moving into the future.

What an example and what a loss for us all!

PETER C. PATRIKIS, Executive Director of The Consortium for Language Teaching and Learning.

ANNE M. FARLEY, a 1992 graduate of the Department of Linguistics.
April 8, 2003

Karen Landahl
Posthumously

Dear Karen,

It is my distinct pleasure to inform you that you have been selected by the IALLT Executive Board to receive a very distinguished award, the IALLT Lifetime Achievement Award. This award is intended to recognize a major contribution to the organization and the profession over an extended period of time. Your contributions to IALL/IALLT over many years were indeed very worthy of this accolade, particularly your editing of our professional publication, the IALLT Journal. I would like to extend my personal congratulations, and assure you that the current Board is honored to bestow this award to such a deserving individual.

This award is normally conferred in person at the IALLT banquet during the biennial conference. We are hoping that one of your colleagues from the University of Chicago can be there to accept this award on your behalf. This year, the ceremony will occur on Thursday evening, June 19th, at the dinner banquet during the conference at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Your accomplishments and dedication to IALLT remain in our memories and in our hearts. Your hard work and good example live on in our organization, and we are thankful for it.

David Pankratz
IALLT President