
Obituary

Linda L. Wallace

1951–2009

Linda Wallace was a beloved teacher, colleague, and mentor at the University of Oklahoma. Hailing from Colorado Springs, Colorado, she attended the University of Northern Colorado to earn her bachelor's degree in biological sciences in 1972 and the University of Wyoming for her master's degree in botany, in 1975. She continued studying plant physiology in relation to the environment at the University of Georgia, where she earned a doctorate in botany in 1978. She won a postdoctoral fellowship to Syracuse University (1978–1981), spending most of that time doing research at the Serengeti Research Institute in Tanzania, Africa.



Linda came to the University of Oklahoma in 1981, where she taught popular courses in environmental science, plant ecology, and plant physiological ecology. Many of her summers were spent in Yellowstone National Park, directing research on the response of plants to grazing by elk and bison. Her work and leadership in Yellowstone led to the publication of *After the Fires: the Ecology of Change in Yellowstone National Park*, published by Yale University Press in 2004. She also studied the interactive relations among grazers, producers, and mycorrhizal fungi in Oklahoma grasslands. In 1999 Linda was awarded the Samuel Roberts Noble Presidential Professorship at Oklahoma University for her contributions to teaching and research, and in 2005 she won the Regents Award for Superior Teaching.

Instrumental in the development of the 350-acre Kessler Farm Field Laboratory in central Oklahoma, Linda became its first director in 2005. The Farm is the site of long-term experiments conducted by faculty in several academic units at Oklahoma University. Her last NSF-funded project was conducted there, on the effects of an extreme climate year on the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. She also taught elementary school teachers the scientific method at the same site by examining the ecosystem effects of

armadillo behavior. In recent years, Linda was active in addressing issues pertaining to the sustainability of biofuels.

Linda continued to work through most of her long struggle with cancer, teaching in both the summer and fall of 2009. She passed away on 13 December 2009 of that year. She was supportive of her friends, while being forceful in her opinions on many topics. Her many friends and colleagues miss her greatly, but appreciate the time we had with her.

In honor of this excellent teacher, investigator, colleague, and mentor, who touched the lives of many, the Department of Botany and Microbiology at the University of Oklahoma created the *Linda Wallace Fund for Student Activities*, which will support the research and teaching activities of both undergraduate and graduate students. Donations may be sent to the Department of Botany and Microbiology, 770 Van Vleet Oval, University of Oklahoma, Norman 73019 USA.

Written by Rebecca A. Sherry and Gordon Uno
