Behind the Scenes in RLE's Electromagnetics Group

"I love my work," Kit-Wah Lai speaks enthusiastically about her challenging position as administrative assistant to Professor Jin Au Kong in RLE's Electromagnetics Group. Kit provides secretarial support to Professor Kong, seven research staff and visiting scientists, and almost twenty students.

In the group's fast-paced environment, Kit manages her many tasks efficiently: preparing reports to sponsors, technical papers, and class reservations; making travel reservations; and managing all other group activities. Kit enjoys working with the group's students and learning about their diverse cultures and backgrounds.

A native of Hong Kong, Kit earned a bookkeeping certificate from the Standard College of Language and Commerce in 1976. Before coming to the United States, she worked on the Hong Kong stock exchange and served as an editorial clerk at the business desk of the Hong Kong Standard Newspaper.

In 1989, Kit relocated to Medford, Massachusetts, to be close to her parents, seven brothers and sisters, and several nieces and nephews, all of whom live in that city. She began working as a Secretary for Professor Kong in August 1989. Recently, Professor Kong commented that "Kit is very responsible, efficient, hard-working, and takes her work very seriously. She is friendly to all group members and manages the group like a family. She is truly a most capable person and deserves the best."

Kit and her older sister Vicky live on different floors of the same house and share a huge collection of CDs. Kit describes herself and Vicky as "crazy for music," enjoying everything from rock music to Chinese opera. Kit loves to watch movies in her brother Stephan's home theater, which has a large collection of movies on laser disc. Kit also enjoys knitting and wears many of her own lovely creations. Shopping, particularly window shopping, is another hobby which Kit pursues avidly. Future plans include taking courses to enhance her secretarial skills and working toward a college degree.

Ruth Ippen Garden Dedicated

Tucked away behind the clatter of heavy construction and traffic on Vassar Street lies an oasis for everyone to enjoy. A new vest-pocket park, the Ruth Ippen Garden, is a welcome stretch of beautifully landscaped green space located behind the Ralph M. Parsons Laboratory (Building 48) at the corner of Vassar and Main streets. Thanks to the generosity of MIT and the donations of more than one hundred friends, the newly completed garden was dedicated in memory of the late conservationist at a ceremony on October 5, 1993.

Ruth Ippen, who died in 1989, was the wife of the late Arthur T. Ippen, Institute Professor of Water Resources and former director of Parsons Laboratory, and the mother of Professor Erich P. Ippen of RLE's Optics and Devices Group, and his wife Dee; Professor Emeritus Donald R. F. Harkema; former Director of Parsons Laboratory; and Professor Rafael L. Bras, Head of MIT's Civil and Environmental Engineering Department. (Photo by John F. Cook)

From electric to electric, Administrative Assistant Kit-Wah Lai loves all kinds of music. (Photo by John F. Cook)
New Faces

Anne E. Conklin began working part-time as a senior staff assistant on August 25, 1993, for Professors Bernard F. Burke and Jacqueline N. Hewitt in RLE’s Radio Astronomy Group, and also for Professor John G. King. A native of Utica, New York, Anne received a bachelor’s degree in English Literature from St. Lawrence University. Anne enjoys tinkering with reading, traveling, and Latin dancing. (Photo by John F. Cook)

Retirements

In May 1993, Senior Staff Assistant Terry L. Gaffney of the Plasma Physics Group joined the U.S. Department of State in Washington to pursue a career in international diplomacy...

Senior Staff Assistant Wendy E. Hunter of the Radio Astronomy Group relocated to New York City in September 1993, to devote herself to a professional singing career... After fifteen years at RLE, Dr. John Melgailis, senior research scientist in the Materials and Fabrication Group, was appointed to the faculty at the University of Maryland at College Park, beginning October 1, 1993. On the day before he departed for Maryland, Dr. Melgailis was honored at a gathering of faculty, staff, and students from RLE and the Microsystems Technology Laboratory... Senior Technical Illustrator Robert H. Priest moved to New York City in September 1993, to pursue a career as a professional artist. Bob’s imaginative work and creative designs will be missed, especially by the staff of undercurrents.

Musical Notes

continued from page 1

joined by other Boston musicians, performed a noontime concert at the Stratton Student Center (photograph below).

Palma is working toward a master’s degree in Electrical Engineering. She is a graduate of the University of Maryland with a bachelor’s degree in both Music and Electrical Engineering. Palma soloed at the age of twelve with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and has performed with her older brother Nicolas on radio and television.

And Baby Makes Three

When the staff of undercurrents realized that we had accidentally omitted Peter Guaid, technical assistant in RLE’s Speech Communication Group, from the “New Faces” section of the spring 1993 issue, we set out to make things right. We recently found Peter, accompanied by his wife Antionette (Toni) and a really new face, Joshua Daniel Guiod, eight days old. Joshua was born at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, weighing seven pounds and ten ounces, on November 10, 1993. Peter began working at RLE on November 16, 1992, and is in charge of subject recruitment, travel and logistics for the Speech Group’s acoustic neuroma project and does data extraction for its voice project. Peter, a native Bostonian, spent three years with the U.S. Army’s 82nd Airborne Division, attaining the rank of staff sergeant. Peter graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1990 with a bachelor’s degree in Linguistics. Currently, he is in the reserves and working toward a master’s degree in Speech Pathology at Northeastern University. Toni is a former teacher for the First Congregational Church Day Care Center in Revere. She and Peter like to camp in New Hampshire. (Photo by John F. Cook)