

# Polk Library Newsletter

Spring 2013

## Quest: Game on!

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Among the many aspects of the USP's new Quest series is an emphasis on information literacy. Polk Library knows a thing or two about that, teaching over 5,000 students a year in hundreds of library instruction classes. In these sessions, librarians teach students how to effectively locate, evaluate, and use the information they need. Most students come to campus lacking these skills, making it critical they develop them during the early Quest courses. So why not make it fun?

Continuing its commitment to innovative library services, Polk has worked to create new tools faculty can employ to teach information literacy in efficient and engaging ways. Having some experience with short, "just-in-time" instructional videos, Polk has turned to the "gameification" trend to add assessment and some fun to these on-demand, training approaches.

This spring, Polk staff has been busy developing a "bar trivia" game that students take after watching newly produced instructional videos. The multiple choice quizzes feature a countdown clock for each question and are scored in real time. Points are achieved not only by answering the question correctly but also quickly. Anyone who has been to a chicken-wing joint knows what happens next. Once the test is finished, students' scores are placed on a leaderboard under their own customized player name. Looking to topple "LegendaryTitan14's" top score? Study up and take the quiz again!

"Essentially, we made the assessment the fun part," says Instruction librarian **Ted Mulvey**. Mulvey hopes students and faculty will encourage a little friendly competition for greater engagement with this important subject matter.

Polk web developer, **David Hietpas**, created the prototype in just under a week and has been tweaking it ever since to deliver a more game-like experience as well as the ability to easily import and export new content, including material developed by other libraries. The game will feature "themes" that will change the look of the game each semester or season. The 10 questions for each training video are randomized from a group of 45, providing repeat players a unique experience. Students will have the option of printing or emailing their results to their instructor as required. Hietpas also hopes to build in an option to allow students to submit their results to their instructor's D2L Dropbox

Mulvey and distance education librarian, **Erin Mischak**, worked to develop the questions and the instructional video content. After answering a question, the student is provided with a short review that expands on the answer. Again something very familiar to bar-trivia devotees.

The subject matter is modularized so that key concepts of information literacy can be approached over time or in the order required by the faculty member. While other University libraries, including UW Madison, have relied on computer-assisted teaching and assessment for these concepts, Polk has found none that have tried this game

approach. Although that might change, web developer Hietpas has been careful to code and document the application to release it as open source software so that it can be used by other libraries. While many of the training videos are specific to Polk Library's database and interface environment, several basic concepts can be applied anywhere. And, of course, the quiz application can be customized for any sort of use.

The final application is still in development, but will be online and publicized before the beginning of the semester. Faculty looking to fulfill the information literacy outcomes of their Quest courses can look no further than Polk Library. Game on!

## Gruenhagen Display

While we may never get the hang of pronouncing his name correctly, there is much to learn about Richard Gruenhagen (GREEN-hagen) in a new permanent exhibit on the ground floor of the conference center that bears his name.

University Archives STEP intern, **Samantha Smith**, took on the task this year after Gruenhagen Conference Center staff requested an exhibit similar to the one installed at Taylor Hall. Smith was in charge of the entire process: researching, writing and installing a physical exhibit on all things Gruenhagen, both man and building.

The exhibit briefly tells the story of Richard Gruenhagen, an educator in the Industrial Arts program at the Oshkosh State Teachers College. In the 1910s-1930s, OSTC operated a fully realized technical education degree out of Harrington Hall. Oshkosh trained hundreds of industrial arts teachers at a time

when secondary schools were adding the programs around the state and beyond. The program also helped with industrial rehabilitation of injured veterans after WWI. While not initially a pedagogue, Gruenhagen was a spectacular craftsman, particularly in wood. Out of school, Gruenhagen nurtured a love of sailing on area lakes. A model boat made by Gruenhagen sits in the display as a testament to his interests and talent.

While the 1971 building that bears his name was built as a dormitory, its current use better suits the spirits of service and self improvement that were Richard Gruenhagen. His educational path was one of a man eager to develop himself, learning to teach while he taught. Today, guests of the Conference Center are similarly motivated as they attend professional meetings and training.

Samantha Smith used numerous records in Polk's University Archives to illustrate Gruenhagen's story. The archives even reached out to the Gruenhagen family who shared some unique photographs and stories. Smith, said her experience as a STEP student helped her realize her career aspiration: to be an archivist in a University setting. "Education means a lot to me," says Smith, "and the archivist's role as an educator is worth developing, as it benefits the University and the public." In that way, Smith found a kindred-soul in Gruenhagen, a man motivated by service.

*The new exhibit can be found in the first floor lobby of the Gruenhagen Conference Center.*



*In his off time, Richard Gruenhagen dedicated a portion of his classroom to building yet another boat for his sizeable armada. Once completed, the only way to remove it from Harrington Hall was out the window. Both students and neighbors learned from Gruenhagen that day.*



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR: Polk Promise

by Patrick Wilkinson



In the fall newsletter, I wrote that Polk Library “is changing towards the future.” The library staff and I are dedicated to making the library an even more important part of the educational, research and service missions of the University. Here is our promise to you: Polk Library will provide research and educational materials, customer services, information instruction and learning spaces to students, faculty, and staff in a modern, responsive and professional manner.

After spirited and thoughtful discussions, we are committing ourselves to ten important strategies to keep our promise to campus.

- Develop and curate high quality resources that support student learning and faculty research
- Provide responsive service to students, faculty and staff
- Implement flexible information instruction programs that improve student information literacy and critical thinking skills
- Create diverse learning environments that support user success
- Foster a culture of assessment, improvement and innovation
- Enhance the discovery of library resources and services
- Engage with campus priorities to help UW Oshkosh innovate in its mission to provide “quality educational opportunities to the people of northeastern Wisconsin and beyond”
- Provide service to and cooperation with professional, campus and public communities
- Develop a knowledgeable, dedicated and service-oriented staff
- Ensure responsible stewardship of university resources

What does all of this mean for you? For example, it means that you can access a broad range of high-quality digital scholarly information almost anywhere in the world, and the library wants to find ways to get you more of what you specifically need. It means our very active and successful library instruction program has grown into a sophisticated information literacy program that will play an important role in the USP. It also means that we have developed a website and a general web presence, with digital branches on other campus websites, that meet or exceed best practices of academic libraries in design, content and web-based services.

Polk Library cannot fulfill its promise and commitments without you. Hold us to the Polk Promise! Let me (or other staff members) know when we fall short.

*Patrick J. Wilkinson*

**Send Your Students to Camp!**

**CAMP POLK-A-BAGO**

**All-Day and All Night Study!**

**STRESS BUSTING ACTIVITIES**

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Working with the Writing Center, the Student Rec and Wellness Center and the University Police's Community Service Officer Program, Polk is offering a safe, quiet, safe and well-supported environment for your campers. Open all day and all night May 3-10.

## 1st FLOOR POLK: Valley of the dolls

Artist Miranda Morrissey has brought her new gothic aesthetic to Polk's first floor gallery in a series of dramatic oil paintings of dolls and their sometimes-violent lifestyles.

And don't you dare call them Barbies. Twisted and writhing, these vampish, ball-jointed dolls (all are female) are dressed not for Malibu, but some nightmarish circus or dance club. But alas, many have been (self)tortured with any number of stick pins and abandoned in small rooms. While they must be in pain, their emotionless faces remain the same. In the series most dramatic painting, a doll stitches up her own mouth. In another, more hopeful scene, two dolls appear to have found comfort in each other's arms. Owing much to the "Big Eyed Child" paintings of the 1960s and 70s, Morrissey's works are powerful, spectacularly rendered and impossible to ignore.

In her artist statement accompanying the works, Morrissey, who graduated last spring from UW Oshkosh, muses on the contradictory ways people see dolls: simultaneously representing ideals of beauty but also disquieting and creepy. She sympathizes with



the dolls that are forced to look one way while they may feel another.

Be sure to visit 1st floor, north hallway to view these impressive and powerful examples of UW Oshkosh student work.



## New Computer Availability Web App

When it comes to time management, mobile technology gives with one hand (syncing calendars, reminders, etc.) but takes with the other (Plants vs. Zombies anyone!?). For its part, Polk Library has just scored another victory for the side of productivity. Polk's new computer availability web app provides users up-to-the-minute information on the number and location of available workstations and laptops in the building. Users can save time and frustration by knowing--before they even enter the building--if there is a computer available in Polk and exactly where that vacant machine is located. This need for such a tool came out loud and clear through surveys conducted with students: knowledge of availability was second only to location as the factor most likely to influence students' decision to choose one computer lab over another.

You can find the application on Polk Library's mobile website along with traditional tools like the catalog and GroupFinder.

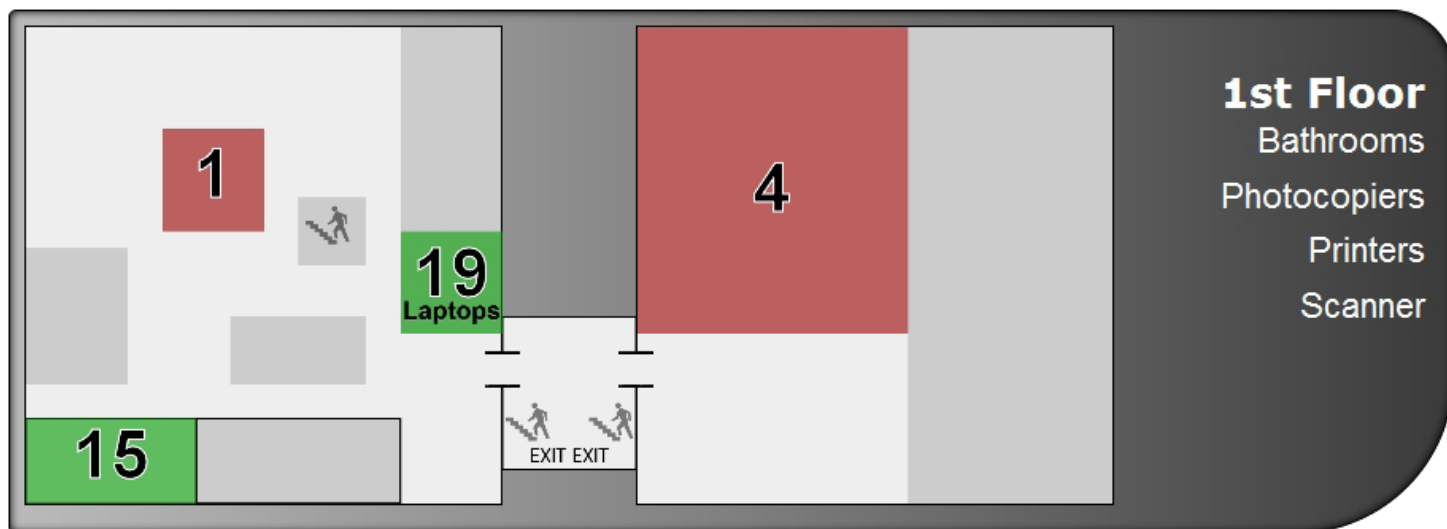
Library STEP Intern and computer science major, **Brian Gallops**, started the computer availability project in September and worked throughout the

semester writing code, making improvements and user testing the beta version. Gallops built the tool under the supervision of Polk web developer (and former STEP student) **David Hietpas**. Gallops employed vector graphics so the tool scales to whatever sized screen is used, from phone to tablets to desktops. The application features color-coded maps of each floor and oversized numbers tell users quickly how many workstations are free. Individual computers can be isolated, too, to check their status. The tool relies on the network to report only if a computer has been logged in and not who is using it. The app also displays how many laptops are available for check-out as well as the location and availability status of group study rooms.

By far, this application was the biggest Gallops has tackled. He is the latest of several STEP interns employed by Polk library to create innovative tools and services. A STEP student since 2011, Gallops' projects help him augment his education as he works toward a professional career in web development.

### Computer Availability

[Polk Library](#) > [Computer Availability](#)



## STAFF PROFILE: Crystal Buss

No disrespect to the Radio-TV-Film program, but Polk Library counts **Crystal Buss** as a successful convert. After earning her bachelor's degree in RTF in 2003, Buss found advancing from her student employee position to the night circulation lead rewarding and worth further investigation. Simply put, library work suited her and soon she began working on her master's degree through the innovative, online program at UW Milwaukee's School of Information Science. Juggling full-time work at Polk and part time courses wasn't easy but Buss found the online environment familiar to traditional classes: discussions, papers and deadlines. Buss graduated in 2009 and a year later was hired as Polk's Circulation Services Librarian.

Buss is responsible for supervising three other full-time staff in the circulation department. Together, they make sure that all manner of research materials come in and out of Polk smoothly and that reserves

are ready when students and faculty need them. Best of all, Buss no longer works the red eye shift which makes her three year-old Boxer, Olive, happy. In addition to her duties at Polk, Buss has just been elected to the Senate of Academic Staff.

With a combined 14 years experience working at Polk in a variety of positions, Buss has been witness to--and part of--a major transition in staffing. "I think only half of the original staff is still here and I am now supervising people who used to supervise me, so it's interesting...." The results of this new wave of hiring have been exciting for all staff members at Polk as it has contributed to the library's strategic evolution to meet the demands of the 21st century campus.



## STAFF NEWS

**Crystal Buss**, Circulation Services Librarian, has been elected to her first term on the Senate of Academic staff.

**Ted Mulvey**, Information Literacy Librarian and **Maccabee Levine**, Head of Library Technology Services presented "Instructional Videos on the Library Website: Process and Challenges" at the Library Technology Conference in St. Paul, MN.

**Joshua Ranger**, University Archivist, was appointed as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee of the Midwest Archives Conference (MAC). He has completed his two terms as MAC Secretary.

**Sara Stichert**, Coordinator of Interlibrary Loan, attended the 44th Annual Colorado Interlibrary Loan Conference in Colorado Springs, April 18-19, 2013.

**Michael Watkins**, Head of Government Information, has been elected to a second term on the Senate of Academic staff.



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