

# Polk Library Newsletter

Fall 2012



## polk is golden

### 50 years at 801 Elmwood

by Joshua Ranger

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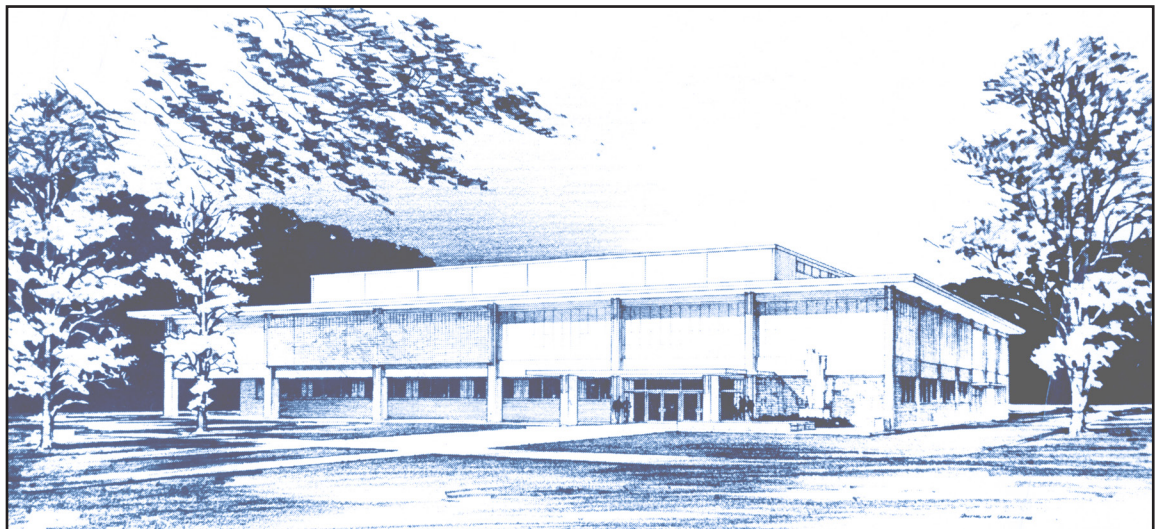


UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

OSHKOSH

Born out of great need for a broader collection and study space for a larger student body, Polk Library officially opened its doors in the autumn of 1962. Oshkosh firm, Irion and Reinke, designed the modern, International Style building built for \$1.5 million. With its large panels of white Valders, Wisconsin limestone and aluminum windows, it was a great departure from the largely Institutional Gothic buildings that dominated campus at the time. Inside, modern furniture from Oshkosh's own Buckstaff Corporation gleamed with orange, aqua and white vinyl. It was no wonder, then, that the College's first free-standing library would catch the attention of the Wisconsin Library Association which presented Polk with its annual award of recognition a year and half later. The seeds of the new library, however, began much earlier.

Between 1946 and 1961, the campus of Oshkosh State College saw steady and substantial growth. A major promotional campaign was made to rebuild the student body and state teacher corps that had thinned during World War II. Meanwhile, veterans of that war, and later the conflict in Korea, took full advantage of their benefits under the GI Bill becoming, for many, the first in their families to attend college. These men, with their diverse interests, helped expand the curriculum beyond the teacher training the school had provided since 1871. The expansion of the campus in both student body and mission put enormous pressure on its facilities (including the school's library). The charming yet cramped library in the 2nd and 3rd floors of Dempsey Hall could not hold the collection needed to support the liberal arts degrees the campus was adding. Similarly, study space was at a premium with a student body in 1960 of just over 2500



and only 250 seats in the library reading room. The new building would offer 990 seats.

In November 1962, the namesake of the new library stood proud at the building's August dedication ceremony. Forrest R. Polk, the longest serving leader at Oshkosh, was president from 1931 to 1959. He was an active witness to and participant in major changes in higher education in Wisconsin. Although a fierce defender of teacher training, Polk also pursued expansion. According to campus lore, he even lobbied to pull stakes and move the entire campus north of the city where the state prison sits today. Polk saw the campus through the Great Depression and a World War. It was fitting, therefore, that this new heart of the campus would bear his name.

President Polk, must have been full of pride when he toured the new library which, at that time, consisted of only the north wing of the building we know today. The entrance, just to the left of the Guardian statue, featured an impressive cantilevered terrazzo staircase that led to the circulation and reference desks on the 2nd floor. The first floor was designated as the reserve book room along with multiple classrooms.

Areas familiar to Polk Library users today were very new and exciting in 1962. An enlarged government documents section in the basement allowed the library to more fully take part in the Federal Depository Program. Sharing this space was the Area Research Center, also debuting in 1962, which allowed the campus unique access to primary resources of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Also found in the new building were some anachronisms that most students today might not recognize. The card catalog used a lot of space. A textbook library was located in the basement that allowed students to rent, rather than purchase, their textbooks. Smokers were well cared for with an interior lounge on the 2nd floor (today's Large Group Study Room) complete with an independent ventilation system. Fears of any fire were quick put to rest by the architects' assertion that the building was "fireproof." Built on pillars, the building features no load-bearing interior walls. This provided much flexibility in the organization of the spaces. Fitting with modern practices, the use of cubicles and removable panels allowed the library opportunities to change layouts.

At the dedication, amongst the grand and triumphant remarks, Oshkosh State College system director Eugene McPhee struck a sober tone, stating he found the library "adequate" and he issued a challenge: libraries need to grow to remain relevant to further the College's mission. Better than anyone, perhaps, McPhee knew that the mounting tide of students wanting a place in the state's colleges was increasing. The original Polk Library was designed for 10 years growth. The campus predicted a 1968 enrollment of 5,000. It proved to be twice that.

By 1968 the south wing of Polk Library was completed more than doubling the size of the building. New entrances with doors from both the Elmwood and mall sides made the grand staircase less necessary. Twenty years later the building underwent a substantial remodel, removing many of the faculty offices it once hosted on the 3rd floor and enlarging stack areas. Still, this remodel was done pre-internet. The changes did not anticipate the needs of library patrons in an online world. And so, in the past 6-7 years the building has enjoyed strategic remodels like Polk 101 and the new University Archives and Area Research Center. These projects reflect how modern research and school work is done as well as position better the unique material of the library as the internet makes traditional collections more homogenous across institutions.

Today, as the building reaches it's half century mark, Polk looks to make more improvements. While the library does not need to expand, as it did in the past, it will continue to become a better environment to support the research, teaching and learning so crucial to the University's mission.



See more images on page 7.



by Patrick Wilkinson



As **Joshua Ranger** noted in the lead article, this fall Polk Library will celebrate its 50th anniversary. This is certainly a time for pride in our past and even some nostalgia. It is also a great time to celebrate the library's present and future.

Polk Library is not only changing from the past; it is changing toward the future. This evolution includes collections, people, environments and services. It involves getting the right resources into the right hands at the right time, hiring people into innovative positions with innovative skills, creating good physical and virtual learning environments and developing appropriate services that meet current and future needs.

Just consider, this is the **FIRST** fall that begins with all current scholarly and educational journals online. This is a boon for students and faculty especially for all involved in distance learning. In addition, we provide not just digital text. The library delivers streaming video of educational films and documentaries through Films on Demand, and we have just subscribed to the Paley Center for Media's iCollection for Colleges and Universities. This exciting new product gives us streaming access to over 15,000 programs from Paley's extensive collection of television and film archives.

Polk Library has had great people in the past that provided the campus with exceptional services. We are building on this tradition. In the past two years, the library has experienced many retirements. We have viewed each vacancy as an opportunity to move towards the future. Hence, we have created new full-time positions such as a library web developer, systems librarian, information literacy librarian, an electronic resources librarian and a distance education coordinator.

Today's students need and expect much more from libraries than fifty years ago: a decent collection, a quiet place to study and people who can answer a factual question. They want places where they can work in groups with good technological access and also quiet places to study. They need people who can not only answer simple questions but help them understand how to find, evaluate and use information in a complex environment. With Polk 101, the library has created a great place for group and individual study, learning and research. With library course pages, we have and can help faculty get the right resources into their student's hands at the right time. With library instruction/information literacy, we play an important part in helping students understand and effectively use information. Currently, we are working with the University Studies Program to see how the library can help faculty help their students with information literacy.

What are some new library services for this fall? The library's new web presence is out of beta and into full release. Some of its new features include a single, multi-function, search box. There are quick links to resources that can be set by role (student, faculty, etc.) and research interest (anthropology, physics, etc.). Also, there is more use of short, targeted videos that assist students deal with specific questions.

A significant improvement in searching the library catalog and its many databases is coming this year. The library term is "resource discovery." This will allow you to search the catalog and our databases with one search. It will be more inclusive, accurate and faster than any "one search" than we have offered before now. This will be implemented in phases during the academic year. The first phase will go live later in the semester.

Yes, after 50 years, the staff of Polk Library is proud of its history; but our focus is moving toward the future.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Patrick J. Wilkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# EXTRA! EXTRA! Historical Campus Newspapers Now Online!

Polk Library has partnered with NewspaperArchive to make over 110 years of the Advance and Advance-Titan newspapers fully searchable and accessible online. UW Oshkosh is the first in UW System to provide such access to its campus papers, providing rich documentation of the University for student, alumni and staff alike.

University Archivist, **Joshua Ranger**, said students have already begun using the resource. "Late last semester, Gabriel Loiacono's public history students used the newspaper to research buildings on campus. The search-ability of the paper made this possible. With no index, browsing decades of papers would have been an incredibly time-consuming chore."

Beyond academic research, Ranger sees plenty of administrative uses for the paper. University offices, especially the Alumni Office, now have a unprecedented level of access to stories about former students and staff. This allows UW Oshkosh to form even greater ties to the individuals who once called the University home. WRST director and lecturer, Randall Davidson, has probably logged more hours than anyone on the site in his efforts to create a collection on the history of the radio station.

Ranger said another use for the paper presented itself August when a former Advance Titan reporter called looking for examples of her work. "She needed them to show a perspective employer. She was ecstatic that access was so simple."

The existence of the digital images allows the University Archives to "retire" the print versions so that they can be better preserved. Ranger said that previously, photocopies of the papers were not permitted as they could rip easily on the machine. "For this project, we had the originals microfilmed and then scanned from the film." Since properly stored microfilm lasts longer than newsprint, the film serves as a secure backup to the original or the digital format. "The digital scans are the most fragile format of them all," Ranger said. "I am very grateful to the student technology fund for understanding the need to both provide digital access and preserve the paper."

The 1894-2010 backfiles of the Advance and Advance-Titan are available via the library's link to NewspaperArchive. Through this resource, researchers can search the campus newspapers along with the Oshkosh Northwestern for more detailed coverage of campus news. Researchers can also access just the school papers via the free, stand-alone link at: <http://forrestpolk.newspaperarchive.com/Default.aspx>.



In its inaugural issue dated September 1894, the editors of the Normal Advance newspaper established the mission of the publication as a conversation between and among students and former students. As many of the 4000+ alumni were still working teachers, the paper sought to print essays, tips, reports on school conditions and other information that would aid in the development of educators. They also asked individuals to submit news both personal and professional, asking readers to consider "everything worthy that comes to (their) net, fish for the paper." Over time, the paper changed its mission to become a more traditional newspaper and after the University established a journalism minor in the mid-1950s and a major in 1968, the paper flourished, winning many awards over the years. The paper changed its name in 1967 to the Advance-Titan.



# GO GLOBAL WITH PASSPORT GMID

By Jeff Brunner, Electronic Resources Librarian

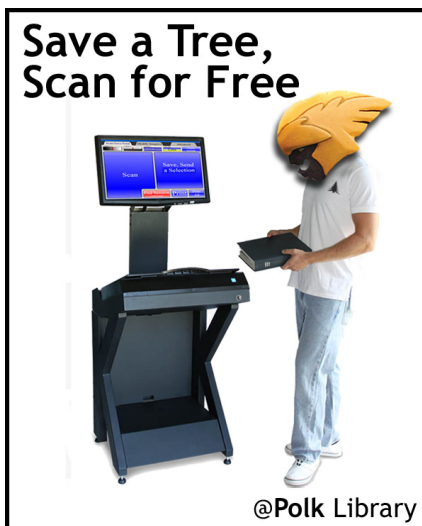
Polk Library is happy to announce the addition of another powerful tool to help business research. Passport is a global market analysis software platform. It monitors industry trends and provides strategic analysis and a market size and market share database for all product categories across all key countries.

With an easy-to-learn interface, users can easily retrieve data about the markets for various categories such as food, consumer electronics, automobiles and even dog food. It's easy to find information about a market's size, how it's trending and who the power

companies are. Accompanying the raw data are articles by industry analysts interpreting the information and predicting future changes.

All data and analyses can be run by geographic area including the ability to compare industries and regions against each other. So, if you're just dying to compare the gardening equipment markets of Indonesia and Romania, Passport GMID is the product for you.

Give it a try at: <http://www.remote.uwosh.edu/login?url=http://www.portal.euromonitor.com/portal/server.pt>



## KIC OUT THE PAPER

Going paperless got a little easier with Polk's new alternative to photocopying: the KIC Bookedge scanner. This rapid, tricked-out scanner combines the speed of a photocopier with the powerful tools of digital technology. Through a touch screen, a user guides the device to make digital copies of book selections, articles, etc., saving the images directly to a USB drive (with automatically created file names) or sending them to an email address. Load these into your mobile device or laptop and leave the paper clutter behind. The scanner saves in multiple formats including .pdf, .jpg, .tiff and even audio files for the visually impaired. It can make searchable files with the on-board optical character recognition tool. The scanner is further optimized for library materials by automatically dividing pages of a book into two images and removing "gutters" and white or black space. Users can use the scanner's edit tools to make more surgical crops and adjust the quality of the images.

Paid for with student technology fees, the KIC Bookedge scanners can be found in the lobby area outside of Polk 101 and soon in the University Archives and Area Research Center. The service is free to users as part of Polk's commitment to provide a professional and efficient work space for students and faculty alike.



Monday - Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Polk Library  
Main Lobby

**Starbucks Coffee, Hot Food Options, Simply to Go Sandwiches and Salads, Bottled Beverages, Snacks, Gum and more!**





## Get SMART with Polk's New Group Study Room

You can find them in many elementary classrooms across the state and country. SMART Boards and similar technologies allow teachers and pupils a unique and engaging way to interact with learning objects and web-based tools. Essentially a large, projected touch screen, SMART Boards work with specialized software or other, more familiar applications. And now, thanks to a UWO freshman, Polk has one.

Bryan Nothem, a UW Oshkosh student from West Bend, made a

request to the Student Technology Committee to bring the popular device to the library to improve group studying. In looking for a secure location for the specialized equipment, the library re-purposed a staff meeting room in the North wing. In the newly created "3rd Floor Group Study Room", the SMART Board is available to anyone in need of its unique capabilities. With great views of the library entry and "bridge" area, the attractive room seats over 20 people. The SMART board can be employed as a

useful collaborative tool for groups as applications can be manipulated not just from the computer but the screen itself. In addition the SMART Board's Notebook application is available for education students to develop or refine their SMART Board programs. Use Polk's GroupFinder tool <http://www.uwosh.edu/library/groupfinder> to reserve the room. Once reserved, keys to the room and special digital "pens" are checked out at the circulation desk.

## STAFF PROFILE: CRAIG THOMAS

Polk Library has filled an important vacancy in its Library Technology Services department with the hire of Craig Thomas, Polk's new Systems Librarian. Now with four employees, Polk's newest department is well positioned to keep the library's online resources humming while it experiments with new digital services. Thomas recently received his library science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but he comes to Oshkosh with over fifteen years of library experience at major universities. Thomas worked for both MIT and Harvard libraries before trading in Boston's pricey, big-city life for the friendlier, more relaxed pace of Northeastern Wisconsin. Thomas's wife, Jill, also a librarian, took

a job at Lawrence University in Appleton after hearing positive reviews from a close friend who taught there for years.

"Jill and I enjoyed thirty years in Boston.," Thomas said. " But we both grew up in the Midwest, so we're delighted to be back. The pace is sane. People are friendlier. Moving to Wisconsin feels like a homecoming."

The Polk job came up at a perfect time for Thomas, who was just finishing his library degree. His experience with metadata, digital projects, online services - along with a strong background in university





archives - made him a great fit for Polk's upcoming needs. Thomas is responsible for keeping most of the library core services running, including the catalog, interlibrary loan, and electronic reserves. With the new Polk website now live, Thomas will team up with web developer **David Heitpas** to redesign the Archives and Area Research Center web site, which has operated somewhat independently until now. Finally, Thomas will be in charge of usability testing, a process that will allow him to gather feedback from

students and faculty to make Polk's online services even better.

"We're at a pivotal moment in university libraries, when our users are living more and more of their academic life online. Our challenge is to be where users are, understand their needs, and do what libraries have always done: provide ready access to well-organized, high-quality information. What sets Polk apart is that we've got the talent and leadership on board to do this right. I'm excited to be here."

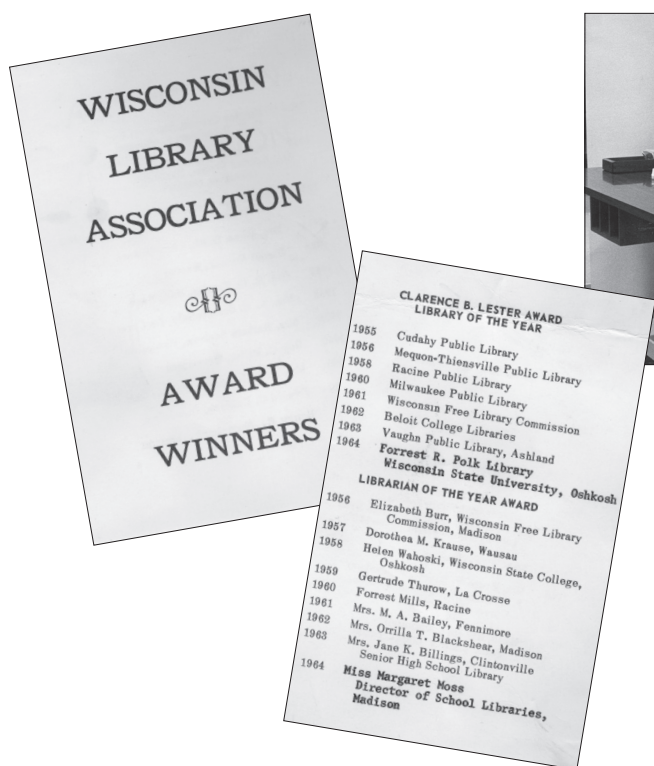
## STAFF NEWS

**Patrick Wilkinson** (Library Director) was appointed by the Governor's Office to the Wisconsin Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND)

**Sarah Neises** (Head of Public Services) and **Ron Hardy** (Head of Collections and Technical Services) returned to the Wind River Tribal College in Wyoming, continuing their work helping the college further develop its library and sweating it out in a local sweat lodge.

**Maccabee Levine** (Head of Library Technology Services) presented at the annual Library Technology Conference at Macalester College. He discussed Polk Library's partnerships with other UW Oshkosh departments to provide relevant library services on their digital platforms: the MyUWO student portal, D2L, and the UWO iOS and mobile Android apps.

**Joshua Ranger** (University Archivist) attended the Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists in San Diego.



# Polk's New Subject Pages

Bringing together a Universe of Information on Your Discipline

**?** "Where to start my research?" the intrepid student asks.  
"New and improved subject pages!" Polk answers.

With edited lists of resources and dynamic content updating visitors on new materials, it's THE place to start a project.

The mockup shows a website layout for 'Polk Library'. At the top, there's a 'search catalog' bar and a 'library news' badge. Below the search bar is an 'Academic Department Subject Page' section. To the right, there's a 'hours' button and a 'mini subject page to go' box. A large yellow box in the center is labeled 'searches top databases'. To the right of this box is a 'new books' banner. Below the yellow box is a 'background sources' banner. To the right of that is a 'films on demand' banner. Below the background sources is a 'K-12 teaching resources' banner. To the right of that is a 'featured database' badge. Below the K-12 banner is a 'Gov't Info' badge. A circular badge with a 'P' and 'POLK' logo is labeled 'Library Approved'. A large gear icon is positioned near the bottom left. A box at the bottom left contains a bar chart showing '240% fresher content\*' and a note: 'new site means automated on-the-fly updates so that each visit offers something new'. A box at the bottom right contains an illustration of classical buildings and the text: 'Polk's subject pages are like having 45 small, disciplinary libraries open 24-hours a day.' A small note '\*not independently verified' is at the bottom left.

**Polk Library**

search catalog

library news

hours

Academic Department Subject Page

mini subject page to go

searches top databases

new books

background sources

films on demand

K-12 teaching resources

featured database

Gov't Info

**240% fresher content\***

new site means automated on-the-fly updates so that each visit offers something new

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Polk's subject pages are like having 45 small, disciplinary libraries open 24-hours a day.