

Society of American Archivists
“Make an Impact!” Contest

Best Successfully Implemented Campaign

Submitted by

Students of LIS 754: Archives User Services and Outreach*
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with support from the

UW-Madison Student Chapter of SAA

Submitted electronically to
saahq@archivists.org

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Background

In the fall of 2008, the Archives and Records Administration students at the University of Wisconsin—Madison School of Library and Information Studies first launched an outreach campaign in celebration of American Archives Month. Lead by students enrolled in Dr. Ciaran Trace's "Archives User Services and Outreach" class, the project revolved around the creation, development, and marketing of a blog centered on a specific topic or theme. The topic for October 2008 was the dissemination of information "about the various institutions around the state that act to preserve and make available for use the records of Wisconsin's rich heritage."¹ The blog proved to be such a success that it continued again in 2009.

This Make an Impact! contest submission for Best Successfully Implemented Campaign describes the topic of our blog, briefly explains the information gathering and advertising strategies we used to populate and market our blog, and reports statistics and other data on visits to the blog.

Topic

In light of the Wisconsin Historical Society's "Scrapbook Wisconsin" theme for Archives Month 2009, we focused this year's blog on scrapbook gems available in archives throughout Wisconsin. We knew from personal experiences that many of the local and county historical societies throughout Wisconsin house scrapbooks. Additionally, we figured many of these scrapbooks would be photogenic, informative, unique, and just plain neat.

Information Gathering and Posting

Our goal was to have 24 postings in October, one for each business day. In early September, an initial list comprising 63 county historical societies was compiled using a list from the Office of Field Services at the Wisconsin Historical Society. A letter was sent to the presidents of each organization (Appendix A). Due to the extensive number of local historical societies at all levels in the state it was determined that, for the initial effort, county historical societies would be the focus. After an initial period of about two weeks when we had heard back from only a few organizations, a team of three students divided up the list and began calling and emailing individual groups. It is fair to say that close to two hundred phone calls, and probably an equal number of emails, were made. As we got close to the beginning of October, it became apparent that we would not reach that number. Efforts were then expanded to include historical societies at the city and town level.

One example of these efforts involved some of the students traveling to a few of the historical societies. In one case, a student's residence was near a historical society; in another case, the repository was located in one of the student's nearby home towns. Both of the aforementioned students coordinated visits with representatives of the societies to choose a viable scrapbook, gather background information, and take photos. Fortunately, by the middle of October, we had reached our scrapbook quota.

Once a historical society made a commitment to the project, it was assigned to a student in the class who acted as liaison during the month. Each participating historical society selected at least one noteworthy scrapbook or collection, wrote a brief description of its contents, and took

¹ The purpose of the 2008 blog is explained in the blog located at <http://archivesmonth.blogspot.com/2008/09/october-is-american-archives-month.html>.

digital images of the item(s). Entries were submitted by the staff of county and local historical societies, and members of our class edited the text and cropped the images, where necessary. Two of our classmates posted entries each weekday during the month and provided technical support throughout the project. Appendix B provides two examples of blog entries.

Contributors

Ultimately, we gathered entries from historical societies in 13 Wisconsin counties (Appendix C and D). Those that committed to the project provided beautiful examples of the ingenuity and inspiration Wisconsinites display when showing off their history. The historians, archivists, and volunteers with whom we worked were truly gatekeepers as they knew most, if not all, of the contextual details about the scrapbook creators without having to consult a catalog or accession record. In fact, were it not for the volunteers and employees of the historical societies, very few, if any, blog entries would have been possible.

Advertising and Outreach

We used a multi-media approach to get the word out about the 2009 Archives Month Blog to local groups and the broader archives community. Members of the student chapter composed a press release (Appendix E) announcing the blog and sent it to the Wisconsin State Journal, Capital Times, Wisconsin Public Radio and each of the area newspapers of the historical societies involved. The press release was also posted on professional listservs of the Special Library Association, Wisconsin Library Association, and Society of American Archivists (Archives and Archivists). A link to the blog was posted to a scrapbook community on Facebook. Many students also posted the link on their personal Facebook pages. Information was posted to web sites and blogs of SAA and the Wisconsin Historical Society. Finally, SAA Student Chapter members also posted flyers (Appendix F) at the Wisconsin Historical Society and in public library locations throughout the greater Madison community in order to reach the greater public. In all, the advertising and outreach campaign was successful in generating interest as reflected by the blog statistics.

Results and Blog Statistics

The success of the 2009 Archives Month blog is readily apparent in light of the traffic it received (Appendix G). In its first year (2008), the blog topped out at around seven-hundred and fifty total page loads and five hundred unique visitors for the month of October; this year (2009) saw the traffic more than double, and triple in some categories, topping out at over twenty-five hundred page loads at the time of this writing, and over fifteen-hundred unique visitors. In 2008, the blog logged fifty unique visitors a day only twice; in 2009, the site logged less than fifty unique visitors a day only four times. While the majority of visitors (68.4%) were from the state of Wisconsin, the blog attracted a wide variety of visitors from across the nation and the globe. Out of its last five-hundred visitors as of this writing, 4.6% were from Texas, another 2.2% from New York, and visitors came from Switzerland, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, Colombia, and Israel.

Appendices

- A. Letter of invitation sent to county historical societies
- B. Sample blog entries²
- C. List of contributors
- D. Map of Wisconsin counties covered by the blog
- E. Template press release
- F. Flyer
- G. Blog statistics

² For the complete text of all blog entries, please visit <http://archivesmonth.blogspot.com>

Appendix A - Letter Sent To Historical Societies

Dear _____,

Did you know that Wisconsin Archives Month is quickly approaching? Did you know the theme this October is: "Scrapbook Wisconsin"? Does your historical society have scrapbooks within its collection? What do they look like? How old are they? Do they contain interesting memorabilia or pictures? Are they important research tools?

Every weekday during the month of October, the Society of American Archivists Student Chapter at UW-Madison wants to showcase the hidden gems and unknown treasures that exist in scrapbooks within the holdings of historical societies throughout the state. We also want to describe the repository where these hidden gems are housed.

We are asking for your help identifying scrapbook gems in Wisconsin. To participate is simple. All we need from you are a few things:

1. A description of your scrapbook gems: who created them? When? What do they contain?
2. A selection of images, three or four pictures (in .jpg or .gif format) that we can feature on each blog post. If a member of your society has a digital camera, a few nice pictures could easily be taken and sent through e-mail.
3. A photograph of your repository if one is not already available on your website.

Each blog post would contain a brief sketch of your repository, a link to your website (if your organization does not have a website, that's okay. We are still very interested in your scrapbook gems), a photograph of your institution, and of course, a description and images of the scrapbook gem(s) you provide.

We hope you will join with us in this exciting project. It is a great way to show off your society to the larger archival community and to the general public. Our blog will be linked to the Wisconsin Historical Society's website and through listservs. If you agree to participate, you will be contacted by a student from our group who will provide you with further details about the project.

If you would like to see last year's SAA-SC blog, which focused on various archival institutions in Wisconsin, here's the link: <http://archivesmonth.blogspot.com/>

Wisconsin Archives Month is only a few weeks away. Please let us know as soon as possible if you wish to participate in this project

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Warmest regards,

Emily Johnson and Pete Shrake
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608-278-1619 (evenings)
peshrake@wisc.edu
608-355-9884 (evenings)

Appendix B - Sample Blog Entries

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2009

Gerald Brooks Cruise Album Scrapbook-Monroe County



Gerald Brooks Cruise Album Scrapbook
 Monroe County Local History Room & Museum
 200 West Main Street
 Sparta, WI 54656
 Phone: (608) 269-8680
 E-mail: mchr@centurytel.net
 Website: <http://monroecountyhistory.org/MCHS.php>
 Jarrod M. Rdl, Director - County Historian

Gerald "Jerry" Brooks-- a longtime Sparta resident-- (pictured on right, with unknown soldier, 1942) was stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, with the Navy from 1942 to 1945. While there, he created this cruise album scrapbook, collecting material related to his tour of duty. It includes photographs, postcards, letters, matchbook covers, patches, original drawings, and assorted keepsakes. This scrapbook highlights the experiences of a Sparta local during wartime; it draws on both items he collected and materials he created himself to tell the story of his time in Cuba during the war.



Scrapbook 2: Postcards and beer label close-up



The Monroe County Local History Room's purpose is to tell the story of Monroe County and its people, as experienced yesterday and today. MCLHR is dedicated to documenting Monroe County life in all periods through collecting artifacts, documents, photographs, and genealogical resources. MCLHR shares its collections with the public through the Monroe County Museum

and the Research Library.



Scrapbook 3: Tickets, stamps, and receipts



Images courtesy of Monroe County Local History Room & Museum, Sparta, Wisconsin

Entry compiled by: Emil Hoelter

MCHS: Exterior of Monroe County Local History Room

Posted by UW Archivists at 12:01 AM
 Labels: [monroe county](#), [sparta](#)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2009

Helen Bulovsky World War I Nurse Scrapbook-Wisconsin Veterans Museum Reserach Center

Helen Bulovsky World War I Nurse Scrapbook
 Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center
 30 W. Mifflin St.
 Madison, WI
 53703

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum collects materials from the brave men and women from Wisconsin who served in the military.



Some of the scrapbooks at the Research Center give a glimpse into the lives of these men and women before they entered service. Helen Bulovsky was a Madison native who served in the Army Nurse Corps during World War I and provided medical care to injured soldiers in field and evacuation hospitals that were often very near the front lines. Her letters home and diary entries described the horrendous conditions she faced and the intense nature of life near the front lines.



Before she treated doughboys in France, Bulovsky helped the men, women and children of Dane County at Madison General Hospital (now known as Meriter Hospital). Helen trained at and was graduated from Madison General's nursing program. Bulovsky used a method still popular with scrapbooking today: cutting words and phrases out of newspapers and magazines, using them to caption her



photographs. This resulted in some very humorous pages, but also relied on inside jokes that leave current readers feeling a little out of the loop. Photographs show the nurses and doctors of Madison General in

serious and silly poses, babies from the relatively new obstetrics wing, and some candid shots of the nurses having fun outside of the hospital. Aside from providing some insight into Bulovsky's pre-military life, this scrapbook is a great source for images from Madison General Hospital, which was less than two decades old at this time.



Entry compiled by Emily Johnson
 Great thanks to Russell Horton, Reference Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum

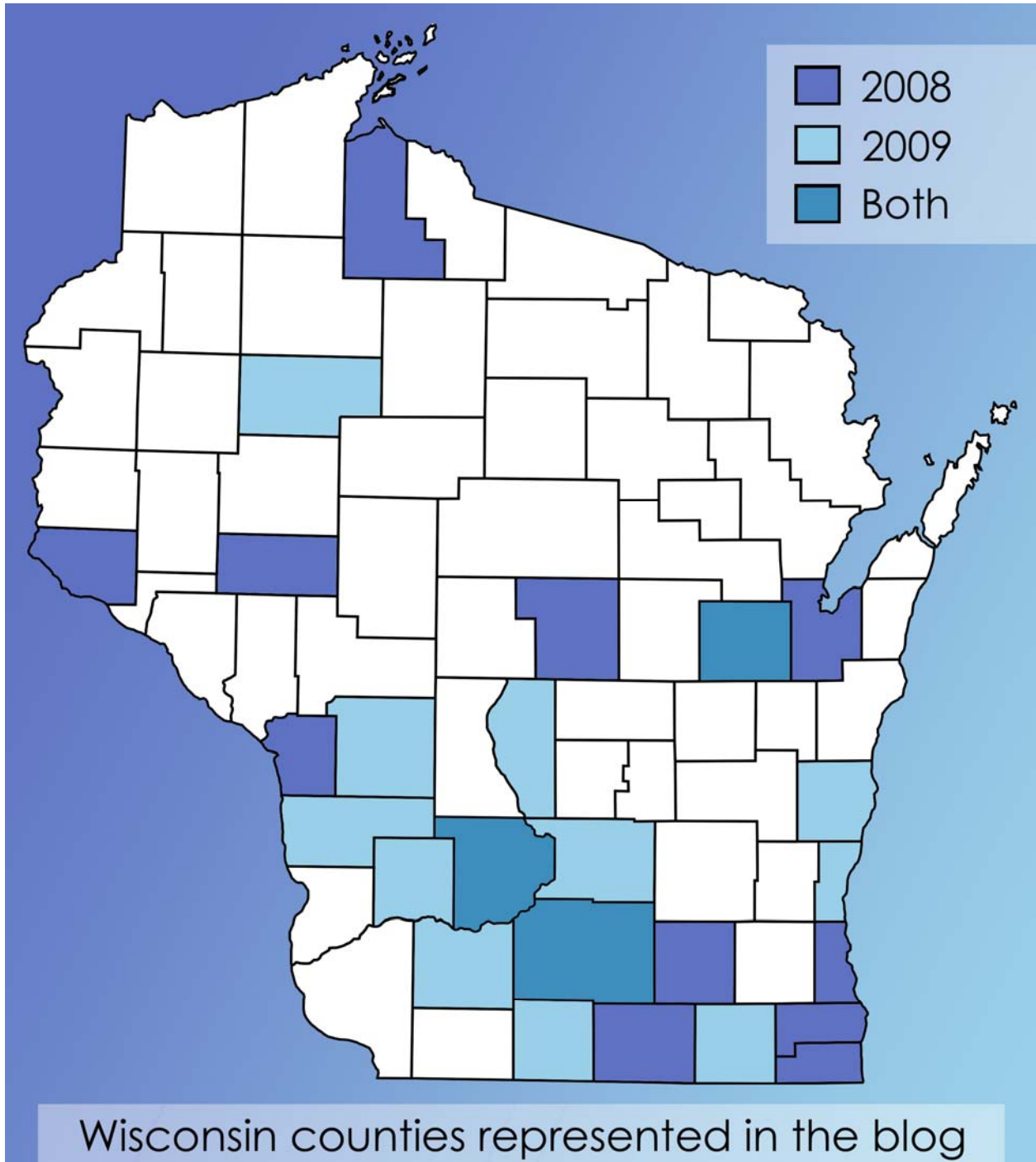
Citation: Helen C. Bulovsky Papers and Photographs, 1914-2001. WVM Mss 536.

Posted by UW Archivists at 12:01 AM
 Labels: [Nurse](#), [scrapbook](#), [veterans](#), [WWI](#)

Appendix C - List of Contributors

- October 1, 2009: Monroe County Local History Room & Museum
- October 2, 2009: Sauk County Historical Society
- October 5, 2009: Adams County Historical Society/Historic McGowan House and Archives
- October 6, 2009: Iowa County Historical Society
- October 7, 2009: Wisconsin Historical Society
- October 8, 2009: Vernon County Museum
- October 9, 2009: Richland County History Room in the Brewer Public Library
- October 12, 2009: Walworth County Historical Society
- October 13, 2009: Sauk Prairie Area Historical Society
- October 14, 2009: Sheboygan County Historical Research Center
- October 15, 2009: Rusk County Historical Society
- October 16, 2009: Lodi Public Library
- October 19, 2009: Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center
- October 20, 2009: University of Wisconsin Digital Collections
- October 21, 2009: Caledonia Historical Society
- October 22, 2009: Dane County Historical Society
- October 23, 2009: Albany Historical Society Museum
- October 26, 2009: Badger History Group
- October 27, 2009: Wisconsin Historical Society
- October 28, 2009: Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center
- October 29, 2009: The History Museum at the Castle
- October 30, 2009: Dane County Historical Society

Appendix D - Map of Wisconsin Counties Covered by the Blog



Appendix E - Press Release

School of Library and Information Studies
University of Wisconsin - Madison
600 N. Park Street
Madison, WI 53715

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Meredith Lowe
608-890-0364
mclowe@wisc.edu

SCRAPBOOK WISCONSIN: REVEALING HIDDEN GEMS IN THE ARCHIVES

In Celebration of American Archives Month in October

MADISON, WI, October 2, 2009 – Did you know that October is Archives Month? The Archives and Records Management students at UW-Madison's School of Library and Information Studies are pleased to announce the second annual Archives Month Blog at <http://archivesmonth.blogspot.com/>. Follow along with us as we spotlight some of Wisconsin's lesser-known archival treasures!

This year we celebrate "Scrapbook Wisconsin," the Wisconsin Archives Month theme sponsored by the Wisconsin Historical Society and the Wisconsin Historical Records Advisory Board. Starting October 1st, we will showcase scrapbooks held by participating historical societies across the state. Our posts display images of scrapbook contents, describe the creators and events surrounding the scrapbook, and provide information about the archive where the scrapbook is held.

American Archives Month is a collaborative effort by professional organizations and repositories around the nation to highlight the importance of records of enduring value. Archivists are professionals who assess, collect, organize, preserve, maintain control of, and provide access to information that has lasting value, and they help people find and understand the information they need in those records.

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Appendix G - Statistics

Figure 1. October 2008 Page Loads and Visitors

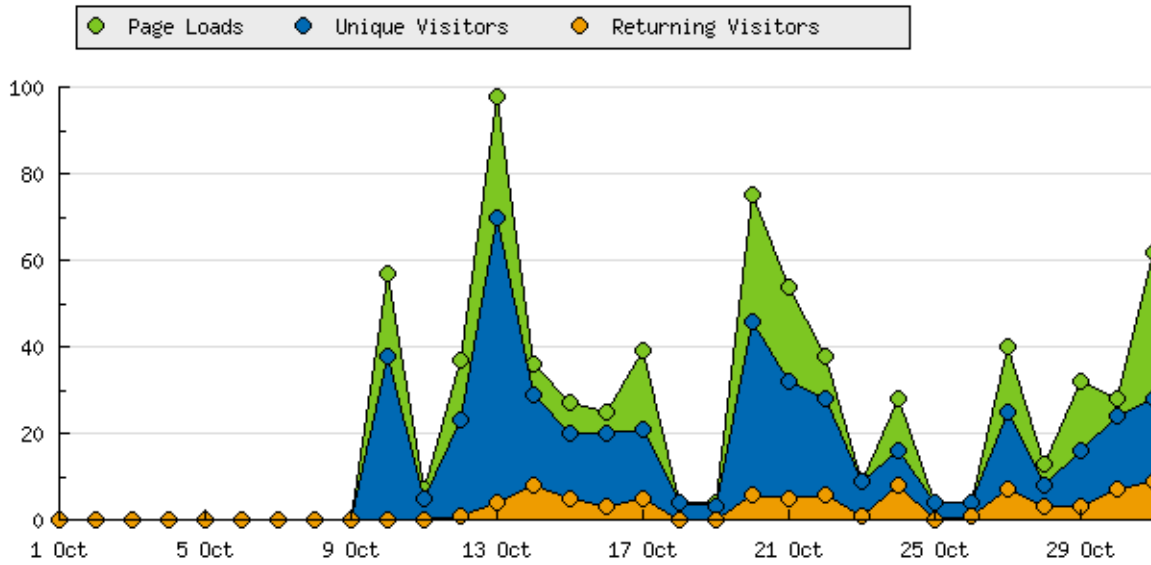


Figure 2. October 2008 – October 2009 Monthly Page Loads and Visitors

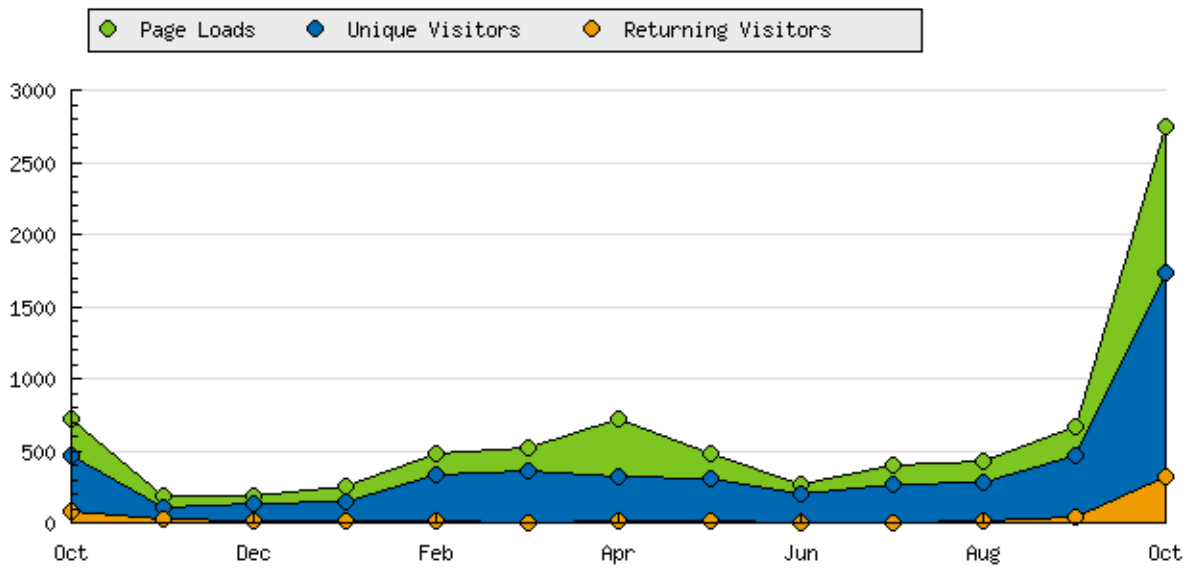


Figure 3. October 2008 – October 2009 Daily Visitors

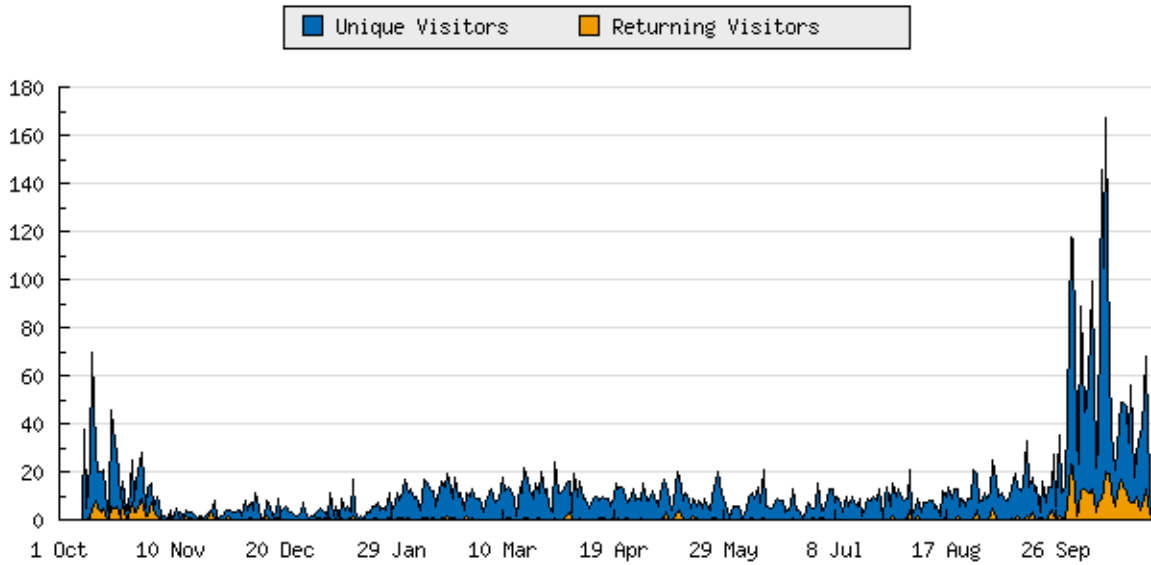


Figure 4. Geographic Span of the Last 500 Visits in October 2009

Num	Perc.	State/Region	Country Name
▼ 342	68.40%	Wisconsin	United States
▼ 23	4.60%	Texas	United States
▼ 12	2.40%	Illinois	United States
▼ 11	2.20%	New York	United States
▼ 11	2.20%	Michigan	United States
▼ 10	2.00%	California	United States
▼ 9	1.80%	Indiana	United States
▼ 8	1.60%	New Jersey	United States
▼ 6	1.20%	Virginia	United States
▼ 5	1.00%	Florida	United States
▼ 4	0.80%	Utah	United States
▼ 4	0.80%	Basel-stadt	Switzerland
▼ 4	0.80%	Iowa	United States
▼ 4	0.80%	Ontario	Canada
▼ 3	0.60%	Washington	United States
▼ 3	0.60%	Rhode Island	United States
▼ 3	0.60%	Montana	United States
▼ 3	0.60%	Minnesota	United States
▼ 3	0.60%	Ohio	United States
▼ 3	0.60%	East Sussex	United Kingdom
▼ 3	0.60%	Tennessee	United States
▼ 2	0.40%	Massachusetts	United States
▼ 2	0.40%	Maryland	United States
▼ 2	0.40%	Antioquia	Colombia
▼ 2	0.40%	Lombardia	Italy
▼ 2	0.40%	British Columbia	Canada
▼ 2	0.40%	Oklahoma	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	Alaska	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	Georgia	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	North Carolina	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	Unknown	-
▼ 1	0.20%	Kentucky	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	Nuevo Leon	Mexico
▼ 1	0.20%	Tel Aviv	Israel
▼ 1	0.20%	Lagunes	Cote D'ivoire
▼ 1	0.20%	Noord-brabant	Netherlands
▼ 1	0.20%	Dublin	Ireland
▼ 1	0.20%	Haute-normandie	France
▼ 1	0.20%	Missouri	United States
▼ 1	0.20%	Bristol	United Kingdom
▼ 1	0.20%	Oregon	United States