Display Fails & Favorites
RENEE KINER
KELLY SAFIN
MILLSTEIN LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – GREENSBURG
What do we mean by "fail"?

- Displays with (legit) complaints
  - Ugly, confusing, just not working
  - Lack of consideration for fragile or symbolic items
    - Flags, quilts, archival materials
  - Creating a display makes some people miserable
    - Display is then miserable-looking
  - Viewing display sets off an alarm
The Pinterest Disclaimer (Know Your Audience)

- A display that works well at one library might be a fail elsewhere.
- For instance:
  - I Don’t Remember the Title, but the Cover was Blue
  - Blind Date with a Book
  - Some holiday themes
  - Score with a Good Book
  - Popular music or personal interests
‘Other Duties As Assigned’

- Working with creative, crafty projects may not be specialty
- Time, energy and skill levels vary among your team
- Some colleagues may not be interested or inspired
- Consider collaborations, coaching or other guidance, especially for prominent displays
Location, location, location

- Consider your display’s location. High traffic? Viewing potential?
  - Disabled “wrong way” alarm so that people could view entrance display in peace

- Space limitations
  - Case behind glass: Consider using book covers or prominent sign indicating books are available for checkout
  - Large space: Fabric, large props, posters can provide visual interest
Vertical displays
Make it pop

- Pop-ups: Table with topical books, DVDs, other materials
- Advantages:
  - Access
  - Timeliness
  - Easy assembly
Tried and true

- Repeating display themes is often better with a “twist”
  - Different spin or subtopic for Women’s History Month, Banned Books Week, other yearly observances
  - Students may be new every few years, but staff/faculty appreciate new ideas
  - Helpful for collection development
Women’s History Month
Capture it

- Don’t forget to take a photo!
  - Useful to promote your collection on social media, other communication
  - Helpful to document what to do/avoid, year-end assessments, etc.
Ideas are everywhere

- Pinterest, Instagram, social media
- Collaborate!
  - Faculty and staff
  - Campus clubs and organizations
  - Library student workers
- Calendar
  - Campus events: plays, lectures, programs
  - Current events: award shows, news, xyz month
  - General reading or observations outside the library
Examples

Constitution Day campus event tie-in
Promo/link for more books
4th of July decorations

Database promotion
Themed, but split, display
Backdrop is a tablecloth
Pinterest search: library book displays
Questions? Tips to share?

We’re compiling ideas here: http://bit.ly/wpwvdisplays