

Check It Out! Podcast Transcript

Episode #1, "Welcome to Check It Out!"

Sno-Isle Libraries, July 31, 2018



Ken Harvey: Welcome to episode number one of Check It Out, the podcast for lifelong learners with inquiring minds. This podcast is brought to you by Sno-Isle Libraries and the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation. We hope to cover a wide range of topics in these weekly podcasts reflecting the rich diversity of the area. Along the way, we'll introduce you to librarians and other fascinating individuals such as authors and CEOs, TEDx speakers and educators, musicians, leadership consultants, and a few inventors, scientists, and a few surprise guests.

Ken Harvey: I'm your host, Ken Harvey, and along with a talented group of co-hosts, we have some library staff working behind the scenes also to produce this program. And now, on with the show.

Ken Harvey: I'm your host. My name's Ken Harvey and I am the Communications Director for Sno-Isle Libraries and I happen to be surrounded by a talented group of co-hosts who are going to be helping me with this podcast. And there are also some individuals who we won't be chatting with in today's episode who are the team that are working behind the scenes to make this podcast possible. We're going to be trying our best to get this podcast out to you weekly and we hope that you'll help us spread the word about the podcast, because we want to build a huge listener base because we think that we've got some very interesting things to share with you about what libraries offer, and we know that we have some fascinating individuals to bring to you and to share their stories with.

Ken Harvey: I am hoping to spend the time on this first episode giving you an opportunity to meet our co-hosts. And we're gonna be chatting with each other to provide some kind of background on who we are and also what we are hoping to accomplish with this podcast. I am going to go around and just do a name and title introduction, and then I'm gonna ask us all to kind of explain a little bit about what we do for Sno-Isle Libraries, and then we'll get into some revealing histories about ourselves. And we'll be asking each other questions as we go.

Ken Harvey: Jim Hills is our Public Information Manager. He actually works with me in the communications department of Sno-Isle Libraries. So, welcome Jim.

Jim Hills: Thank you very much. It's great to be here.

Ken Harvey: Cindy Tingley is in our HR, human resources department and she is part of our talent development.

Cindy Tingley: Talent development group, yes.

Ken Harvey: Yeah, talent development group, which is a very interesting phrase that maybe not everyone in our listening audience may be familiar with, so she's gonna have an opportunity to kind of explain what that means.

Cindy Tingley: Sounds good.

Ken Harvey: And then our last co-host, but not least, is Paul Pitkin, who is the Executive Director for the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation, and they are working with Sno-Isle Libraries to sponsor this podcast. So, hi Paul.

Paul Pitkin: Hi, Ken. Thanks for the plug.

Ken Harvey: And you are very welcome, and we just very much appreciate Sno-Isle Libraries for the work that they do ...

Cindy Tingley: Absolutely.

Ken Harvey: ... in supporting the work of Sno-Isle Libraries. So, Paul, I think I want to start with you.

Paul Pitkin: Oh, lucky me.

Ken Harvey: Yeah, well, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Jim Hills: Better you than me.

Cindy Tingley: Yes.

Ken Harvey: Tell us a little bit about yourself and what you do at Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.

Paul Pitkin: I'm the Executive Director of the foundation, so me and my staff of one, we basically raise money and fund programs that the library system needs. A lot of times, that's a seed project. A lot of times it's capacity building. And we fund projects and programs that kind of go across the entire system. We're a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We have our own board of directors and I kind of came to this after I've had a career in nonprofits for about the last 15 years. So previous to this, I was Vice President at Easterseals Washington, which is another nonprofit that serves people with disabilities.

Ken Harvey: Yeah, I think we've all heard about Easterseals.

Paul Pitkin: Yeah, so I did that and before then, I was thinking about maybe going into academia. And I've also been a musician ...

Ken Harvey: Whoa, whoa, whoa ...

Paul Pitkin: ... and I've also been a bum at various times in my life.

Ken Harvey: Academia. What do you mean by academia?

Paul Pitkin: I have a degree in political science and I almost went in to try to pursue a doctorate so I could basically write meaningless articles and sit on my butt. So once I realized that that is what I would do, I changed career course and so that kind of brings me here.

Ken Harvey: Wonderful. And the little piece at the end of that, I think we'll ... You said something about ... Did you say "bum?" Was that the ...

Paul Pitkin: Oh, yeah. Just some periods where I was just lollygagging around after college and being a ... Let's see, I would do river guiding. I would do other ... you know, just sort of ... I did some landscaping. Just the kind of stuff ... While other people might have been in Europe, I was just eating macaroni and cheese and hanging around at a group house telling jokes.

Cindy Tingley: Nothing wrong with that.

Ken Harvey: All right. Well, Cindy, let's go to you next.

Cindy Tingley: I knew if I looked at you, you'd pick me. Okay, so my official title here at Sno-Isle is Training Technician, and really, what that means within our group is I develop learning experiences for our internal customers, our employees. And that includes both in-person training and e-learning that I develop as well. Prior to coming here, I really began my training career with Seattle Goodwill for a couple years after having left a pretty long IT background. I always loved teaching. I always love that light bulb that goes off when people grasp some new information and for many years I had been attempting to switch the focus of my career. And any time I would have an IT job, it was, "Can I train people how to do that?" Instead of just doing my job. And that's just ... Yeah, you know, "I wanna do the fun stuff, too. I don't wanna run the network administration today. I'd like to go show people how to use their computer."

Cindy Tingley: So those are just the last two kind of careers that I've had in my life. I'm kind of like Paul, a Jackie of all trades, and I still don't know what I want to be when I grow up, I believe.

Ken Harvey: So multi-careered.

Cindy Tingley: Yes, yes.

Ken Harvey: Well, good. We're gonna plumb the depths of that a little bit later.

Cindy Tingley: I was afraid you'd say that, yeah.

Ken Harvey: So Jim, what about you? Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Jim Hills: Well, before I get into myself, I can hardly wait to get back to Cindy 'cause I have seen her list and on that list is law enforcement, so I really wanna hear more about that.

Paul Pitkin: You better behave, Jim.

Jim Hills: Well, I better learn whatever she's teaching me ...

Cindy Tingley: I'm watching you.

Jim Hills: ... that's what I think I better do.

Jim Hills: So I've been at Sno-Isle for three years. My career has always been based in the skills that come out of journalism. My education was at the University of Washington, a degree in journalism. My father was in journalism, I have an uncle who was in journalism, so it was kind of the family business for at least part of the family. And a variety of jobs, I worked as a reporter and an editor in Utah. I worked for the United States Ski Association, but doing journalism kinds of things with their membership newspaper. I started out at the Seattle Times, which is kind of you start at the top and, you know, everything else goes downhill from there, but it was ...

Paul Pitkin: Very, very inspiring.

Jim Hills: Yeah, there you go.

Jim Hills: Most recently, before coming here to the library, I was at Shoreline Community College, which I really enjoyed. I think the commonality ...

Ken Harvey: Not as a student.

Jim Hills: Well, I actually was a student there originally, but then I came back to work there. The common thread for me is community service. I really feel like journalism ... There's a phrase where newspapers and journalism is the fourth estate, and I came to know that in running newspapers at the community level. You're really there working hand in hand with community members who are interested in building their community, with those who are stepping up and wanting to be elected officials, and playing the journalism role, you're getting that information to the community so they can make better choices about where they live.

Jim Hills: And it's not that much different when you're at the community college. The community college is really about making community connections and coming here to the library is really the same. Public libraries and the depth of

connection that happens at the library and through library services with communities and the customers is really rewarding.

Jim Hills: So if the skill set has been the same, the connection and the values and where I'm using those skills has also been a common thread throughout my career.

Ken Harvey: So, before we move on, I just want to circle back to the Shoreline Community College. You mentioned that yes, in fact, you were a student there, but that wasn't the real reason or the first reason you were there, right?

Jim Hills: No, I was a public information officer and member of the senior leadership team and helped move the college through those very difficult times in the late 2000s when economic issues were coming to bear and people were flocking back to community colleges for training and education so they could try and move through that. They were trying times for a lot of people. I was really fortunate to be there during that period. It was very rewarding.

Ken Harvey: So, now, I don't need to give any personal history of myself, right?

Jim Hills: Negative, no.

Cindy Tingley: No. Wrong answer.

Paul Pitkin: We'll just project all the answers onto you.

Ken Harvey: All right, so a little bit about my background. I've been at Sno-Isle Libraries since 2011 and this is actually the second library system I've worked for. I served, many years ago, at Tacoma Public Library. So that was a municipal library system, which is different than what Sno-Isle Libraries is, since we are officially a two-county rural library district. Although we do happen to serve over two dozen cities and we have community libraries in 23 different cities. And with Sno-Isle Libraries, I'm very, very fortunate to work with so many talented individuals who are very public service minded.

Ken Harvey: Before Sno-Isle Libraries, my career goes back and covers public transportation, local government, regional transportation and even some radio and television. So it goes back a ways and I've been very fortunate everywhere I've been to really work with a lot of talented people, caring people. The opportunity with this position and this podcast is to really share a lot more about what Sno-Isle Libraries does in serving customers in communities, and the amazing people who are served by it as well as who are working to make those services happen.

Ken Harvey: In terms of some of the interesting things, kind of, in my background ... I've had opportunities to work with FEMA as an instructor. I was an instructor at their Emergency Management Institute, which is their national school back in Maryland. I've had opportunities to work in local government and city government with really dedicated individuals who put their lives on the lines in

fire and police and so that's been really fascinated. And worked through a lot of different kind of crises that have come up for various cities and counties and to help people get through those things and found a lot of interesting work in that area of emergency management and crisis management.

Ken Harvey: If you don't ask me any follow-up questions, I'm not gonna go any farther into that.

Paul Pitkin: I was gonna ask you what we do if there's an earthquake.

Ken Harvey: So here are the answers to that question. If an earthquake occurred right now, all of us are sitting here in the studio. What we would do is, some of us should immediately drop to the ground and go under the table and the rest of us, as many as can, should run to the doorway and be in the doorway holding onto the frame. 'Cause typically, what'll happen in an earthquake is what's in the ceiling shakes loose and falls, and it's surprising some of the stuff that's up there that's typically out of sight. It can really do a number on you if it hits you in the head or shoulder or back or something and so you want to be protected from those things. And even though, in an earthquake, the table would be dancing around, what you do is you would be dancing with it, but underneath and holding onto the legs and moving with it so it protects you from stuff falling.

Ken Harvey: And the doorway is actually one of the sturdiest things in an earthquake, and so it will definitely protect you from a lot of harm that would otherwise occur. If you are in a building, as soon as it's done shaking, you get outside and get out into the open.

Cindy Tingley: I've also heard during quakes if you don't open the door, they can jam because of the shifting.

Ken Harvey: That's right. Yeah, you want to make sure that you get that door open if you can. If you can't get it open because you're too busy holding onto the table legs, then what you're gonna have to do is take a chair or something and you're gonna have to break the window if there's a window in the door, or you're gonna have to do something to get that thing dislodged, like pop out the hinges.

Jim Hills: Well, let's hope that never happens.

Jim Hills: Sounds to me, though, like we're just a bunch of vagabonds.

Cindy Tingley: Very true.

Jim Hills: We have a ton of experience doing a variety of things around this table.

Paul Pitkin: Yeah, that could be the case.

Ken Harvey: Not everyone's looking at Paul when you're saying that.

Ken Harvey: What I think is fascinating is kind of the varied backgrounds that we have and how those have all brought us to where we are today. And I actually would like to have Jim follow up on his question about law enforcement to Cindy.

Jim Hills: So, yeah, on your list of things, it says law enforcement and next to it is Florida. Were you in law enforcement in Florida?

Cindy Tingley: Key West, Florida. That's my hometown.

Jim Hills: That's what I thought. Hometown?

Cindy Tingley: Hometown. A 7th generation Key West Conch.

Jim Hills: Oh my gosh.

Cindy Tingley: On my mother's side.

Ken Harvey: Wait a minute, you said Conch?

Cindy Tingley: Conch.

Ken Harvey: What is that?

Cindy Tingley: That's what the natives are called. So it's the queen conch that represents ... If you've ever seen the queen conch shell.

Jim Hills: So that's what we should call you, is Queen Conch?

Cindy Tingley: Sure. I like that. I like that royal title. I'll take it.

Ken Harvey: So for homecoming, it's not a king and queen conch, is it?

Cindy Tingley: No, thankfully not. But in front of the high school, there is a huge, welded metal, painted, gorgeous, queen conch.

Jim Hills: There's a sculpture of a conch shell, is what you're saying?

Cindy Tingley: Yes. Yes.

Paul Pitkin: Okay, great.

Jim Hills: I have been there. I've been to Key West and sat on the seawall there and watched the sun go down on the ocean.

Cindy Tingley: Mallory Square, yeah, sure.

Jim Hills: Yeah, it's really fun. So what's law enforcement in Key West like?

Cindy Tingley: Very different now than it was when I was doing it, 'cause we're talking years ago. I was about three at the time. No, back then, you didn't have a lot to be concerned about. Our biggest problem back then was what we referred to as "square grouper."

Jim Hills: "Square grouper?"

Ken Harvey: Which means?

Jim Hills: Is that drunk tourists?

Cindy Tingley: No. I'm looking around to see if anybody has an idea.

Jim Hills: Square grouper ...

Cindy Tingley: No ideas, huh? Floating bales of marijuana.

Jim Hills: Oh.

Paul Pitkin: Floating bales?

Cindy Tingley: Floating bales. Well, you know, when the guys would ... You know, coast guard's coming up on them and they're tossing stuff overboard ... That's a lot of square grouper washed ashore.

Paul Pitkin: We've got a ... Square grouper. This is gonna become a new saying.

Cindy Tingley: That could be the name of your next band.

Paul Pitkin: There you go.

Cindy Tingley: Yeah, I think so.

Paul Pitkin: They're gonna use that in the pot stores. "We got a square grouper for you."

Cindy Tingley: I'll take the patent on that.

Cindy Tingley: No, but now, of course, there's a lot of crime that comes down from Miami and I can't really speak to it fully because I'm not in it these days, but certainly it's ...

Ken Harvey: You still have family there?

Cindy Tingley: My mother, yeah. And extended from her family. My cousin, actually, I could give a shout out to. He's an iconic guitar player in Key West, Carl Wagner.

Ken Harvey: Really?

Cindy Tingley: Caffeine Carl, yeah. He is well known.

Ken Harvey: Caffeine Carl?

Cindy Tingley: Caffeine Carl.

Ken Harvey: There's gotta be a story behind that name. Is there?

Cindy Tingley: If it is, he hasn't told me. I just know he likes coffee as much as I do. But yeah, so I get down there every once in a while and like I say, things have changed quite a great deal, and I cannot send enough admiration to the folks that are still down there doing the job. I do know a lot of people who are still employed there and it's challenging.

Ken Harvey: Yeah. So given that you mentioned Caffeine Carl and that he's a guitar player?

Cindy Tingley: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ken Harvey: Electric or acoustic?

Cindy Tingley: Both.

Ken Harvey: So we've got some other kind of musical talents.

Cindy Tingley: We do. Did you like that segue setup?

Ken Harvey: Yeah. And here at the table.

Jim Hills: Here in the room.

Ken Harvey: So Paul, you're a singer, musician?

Paul Pitkin: Correct.

Ken Harvey: And I'm also singer, musician.

Cindy Tingley: Fantastic.

Jim Hills: I'm not.

Cindy Tingley: I'm waiting for a song to break out now.

Paul Pitkin: That's not gonna happen.

Jim Hills: So if it's Caffeine Carl, what's your nickname onstage?

Paul Pitkin: I can't repeat that. This is a family podcast.

Jim Hills: Oh, okay.

Ken Harvey: Tell us about your career in music.

Paul Pitkin: I guess if you could call it that.

Ken Harvey: Well, how'd you discover the passion and start pursuing it?

Paul Pitkin: I really loved music from a really young age, you know, just from when I was a little kid. I always loved it and then I played a little bit of guitar, a little bit of some other stuff, and then like a lot of people, I started singing in the shower and in my car. And my sister's an opera singer.

Cindy Tingley: Wow.

Paul Pitkin: So we have this freakishly ... We have long vocal cords. And so even though I didn't know what I was doing, I could hit every note that I wanted to, so that kinda got me started. And then I could just sing with stuff, so it was really easy to practice.

Ken Harvey: So every note you wanted to is like every note known to man, or what?

Paul Pitkin: No. I mean, just pretty much I could sing really high notes and low notes and stuff like that.

Ken Harvey: Oh, wow.

Paul Pitkin: So I wasn't limited by range, so I could just go from there.

Ken Harvey: So like a female Mariah Carey? I mean like a male Mariah Carey? Since she's a female.

Paul Pitkin: Well, that's not how I chose to sing. And also, when I started out, it's not like it sounded good. I just was able to do it. I really didn't have this concept of things like tone and pleasant singing was not part of the equation. But I was able to start doing that and then start singing with bands and stuff like that, so I got better as I did it. Then I was really interested in composing music, so I got better at playing the guitar and the bass and learning how to program drums and play keyboards and all those kind of stuff. And I was in a lot of bands for a long, long time. Played all over Seattle.

Ken Harvey: Any names we'd recognize?

Paul Pitkin: Possibly. One of them was Anabret. We had quite a good run. That would be the one most ... Another band was Linear North. We played quite a bit as well. But we made a lot of Eps, made ...

Ken Harvey: EP, EP ...

Paul Pitkin: Extended play. So basically, it's like ... You know, an album is typically eight to ten songs. An EP is like three to five. Basically, if you see something that says EP, it just means the band didn't have enough money to cut an album.

Ken Harvey: Oh, okay.

Paul Pitkin: So that's what that really means. But yeah, we played a lot and got songs on the radio, which was really great. Had a song that was on a national TV show, which was great. Did a couple showcases for labels and stuff like that.

Ken Harvey: Wow. Congratulations.

Paul Pitkin: Yeah, and I still do it, so it's ... I release music under the name Valter, which is just all me. Play all the instruments except for the drums, so that's really fun, too. Sometimes it's fun, sometimes it's horrible. But yeah, I've enjoyed it quite a bit.

Ken Harvey: Interesting.

Cindy Tingley: I wanna know why it's horrible.

Paul Pitkin: Oh, when you're writing music and recording it, it's just the worst experience there is, 'cause you're trying to ... You're writing parts and then you're recording on a multi-track recorder at the same time and then you're ... So you're writing this part, you record it, then you write another part, then you record that, then you start singing over, you're recording that. So you're recording and writing at the same time and it's just drudgery, it's horrible. The whole time, you're having kind of a ... What's the word? An existential crisis, 'cause you think you're horrible as you're doing it. So there's a voice in your head saying, "You are terrible," the whole time you're doing this.

Cindy Tingley: Wow.

Paul Pitkin: Yeah, and it does get a little ...

Ken Harvey: You're your worst enemy.

Paul Pitkin: Oh yeah. And it gets kind of obsessive, 'cause when I start doing it, I really can't stop until I have a demo. So a lot of times I'll start and then I do it for 20 hours straight and I can't stop.

Ken Harvey: So that explains the look on your face some days when you come to work.

Cindy Tingley: He's been recording.

Ken Harvey: That really does explain it.

Jim Hills: He's been cutting a demo.

Paul Pitkin: The fresh look of joy and excitement that I walk in with every single day?

Jim Hills: Yeah, that's it.

Ken Harvey: Well, I do understand this issue of obsession and compulsion, because as kind of a lyricist, songwriter myself ... and singer ... there are times when you get a melody or a set of lyrics in your head and you don't have any peace until they're out of you.

Paul Pitkin: That's what makes iPhones fantastic. It used to be a lot worse. You might get a melody in your head and you can't do anything with it until you get home, so you have to sit there and sing it out loud for the thirty minutes you're driving home.

Ken Harvey: And then by the time you've gotten home, you can't quite remember it the way it first hit you, but you know it's there, so then you sit there trying to revive it. Yeah, it can be tough and it is, I think, something that is both wonderful and terrible about people who are really creative. But creative can show up in lots of different ways. So for musicians, there's a certain way.

Ken Harvey: So what are your passions, Jim?

Jim Hills: Oh, I don't know. It's really interesting to hear you guys talk about music in a creative piece. If I've got something that I do for work, it's the writing piece, and I'm very comfortable in doing that, but it is that same kind of process of creation and stop and start.

Jim Hills: Funny story. I was at the University of Washington and they had internships at the Seattle Times. And so I had an in there through family, which got me the interview for the internship. That's as far as it went that time. And one of the questions was, "How many times do you rewrite a story?" And it had never occurred to me that ... I just had no clue. And I looked at him and I go, "Well, once. I write it the way I want the first time. Doesn't everybody do that?" And that was the wrong answer.

Ken Harvey: So if any listeners are out there trying to start a journalistic career ...

Jim Hills: Don't say that.

Paul Pitkin: At least don't say it to the professor.

Jim Hills: Yeah, or the hiring authority.

Paul Pitkin: Oh, the hiring, yeah.

Jim Hills: Don't say it to the job ... Yeah, no. That's bad. So I ended up, I did get an internship there, but it wasn't writing. They stuck me on the copy desk.

Ken Harvey: Well, Jim, you have had experience running newspapers and starting up newspapers. Describe that experience.

Jim Hills: That is really fun. I've had an opportunity to start two different publications. One was a membership publication for the United States Ski Association, which was my first trial. And it was fun, we were doing it-

Ken Harvey: Trial meaning a life trial or what?

Jim Hills: Yeah.

Paul Pitkin: What don't we know about you, Jim? What other trials have you been through?

Ken Harvey: Was it a criminal trial, or what?

Cindy Tingley: [crosstalk 00:26:56] these people.

Jim Hills: Yeah, no ...

Ken Harvey: Yeah, was this community service work, or ...

Jim Hills: A personal trial. And we did that from the offices of the Ski Association in Park City, Utah, which is ... awesome place to go skiing, but a terrible place to be a publisher. So we'd do it all in the offices there, and then we'd send the copy off to some place in Minnesota and some place in California for publishing and distribution across the US. So it was really interesting ...

Paul Pitkin: Do you ski yourself?

Jim Hills: ... logistics.

Jim Hills: That was an alternate career path for me.

Paul Pitkin: You were one of those hardcore, "I'm gonna ski down the mountain from a helicopter" guys, right?

Jim Hills: This was kind of ... I'm a little older than that. There weren't helicopters then. No I'm just kidding.

Jim Hills: No, my alternate career path was skiing. I was a ski racer when I was young and I was a ski coach, and the ski industry was my alternate career.

Ken Harvey: So when Paul was talking about people here at the table started off as bums, he was looking at you.

Jim Hills: Oh, yeah. I was definitely a ski bum for a while.

Paul Pitkin: Ski racing. That is like downhill skiing, right?

Jim Hills: Absolutely, yeah. And actually ... So there are multiple disciplines. There's slalom, giant slalom, downhill. I was actually better at downhill. I ended up quitting 'cause I fell going very fast and damaged some nerves in my shoulder and ...

Paul Pitkin: I was just about to say you're crazy.

Jim Hills: Yeah, so there's no protection when you fall at 70 miles an hour. And yeah, so you decide, "I think I'll coach rather than do this again."

Paul Pitkin: "I think it's time for a career transition."

Jim Hills: "I'll tell other people how to do this."

Ken Harvey: Did you say 70 miles an hour?

Jim Hills: Yeah.

Ken Harvey: Oh my goodness.

Paul Pitkin: Yeah, that's incre-

Cindy Tingley: Forget it.

Paul Pitkin: I love watching it when the Winter Olympics come around. I mean, it terrifies me through the TV but it's just ... I don't know how anybody has the guts to do that.

Ken Harvey: There's no airbag that magically appears in front of you?

Jim Hills: No, no, no, no. Well, you have to build up to it, that's for sure. But it is exciting.

Paul Pitkin: I'm sure it's exhilarating.

Jim Hills: Yeah. When you get to stop and you're alive.

Paul Pitkin: That's a bonus.

- Jim Hills: You know in The Incredibles, the movie The Incredibles, when the kid falls out of the sky and he goes, "Yahoo! I'm alive!" Yeah, that's what it's like when you go through the finish line.
- Paul Pitkin: Wow. Listeners can't see, but Jim looks like a very even-keeled guy and you just would never ... It's hard for me to picture you just careening down a mountain.
- Ken Harvey: Living on the edge of insanity.
- Cindy Tingley: Yeah, I'm sitting here ...
- Jim Hills: So I haven't actually ... I go to Whistler sometimes and I go some other places, any other little recreational, you get to go run some gates. End of last summer, I bought myself an approved helmet. 'Cause you have to have all the right stuff these days. You can't just go out there and do it. When I did it, you didn't even wear helmets. No, that's not true.
- Paul Pitkin: Back in the day.
- Jim Hills: Back in the day, yeah. But now I'm getting the itch again to get back into it.
- Paul Pitkin: It actually isn't all that surprising. It always seems like the adrenaline junkies are the most calm when they're not being junkies.
- Jim Hills: Yeah, there you go.
- Paul Pitkin: When not feeding their adrenaline addiction, they're completely sedate.
- Jim Hills: There you go.
- Ken Harvey: So, we've all found ourselves now here, working in and around Sno-Isle Libraries, and none of us here at the table are librarians. I want to ask you all, when you've told others that you worked for Sno-Isle Libraries or Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation, have people been surprised that ... How people reacted to you? Anyone some kind of ... I know with me, I say I'm Communications Director for Sno-Isle Libraries, they're like, "The library needs communications people?" Do you find people are sometimes surprised about the jobs that we have?
- Paul Pitkin: Yeah, I think people think that you walk into a library and there's a bunch of books, and the only people that the library employs are somebody who's going to check out your book for you, or maybe tell you where a book is. And it's always really enjoyable for me, actually, to set people straight and say, "That's just a tiny, tiny, tiny part of a library, is going and checking out books." And when I start talking about all the different things that we do, people are just like, "That's incredible. I can't believe that there's ... You're providing business services, you're providing early literacy services. You're bringing different

services to low income areas. You're doing all these different things. I can get digital content from the library. I can get audiobooks."

Paul Pitkin: All these different things, they just can't believe it, and it's really fun for me, like I said, to set them straight, because the library is actually the most complex organization I've ever worked for by far. There's way more going on here than any other place I've worked at and the different things that the library does and the way that they provide equal access to all of our materials is pretty extraordinary. I mean, just to have that level of complexity and have it free and open to the public, anybody who wants it, is just amazing to me.

Jim Hills: Yeah, I would agree with that and agree with you, too, Ken, that there is this sense of the library. There's a building and you walk in and there are books. And the thing that I love most about my job is being able to tell all of those different stories. We have a business librarian. We're one of the few public library systems in the US that has a business librarian. And we have services that are available and databases that are pretty sophisticated databases that are available for business use.

Jim Hills: I'm reminded of a story that we did of a real estate agent in Mill Creek who contacted the library system, got in touch with our business librarian, better understood the databases that were available to her, how she could tailor her marketing and her outreach to prospective buyers and sellers and was really making a successful business as a result of the connection with the public library. Just a couple of weeks ago I was at one of our bookmobiles in a very rural part of the Snohomish County and a car pulls up and there's seven kids and a mom and it's clearly a homeschool situation, and they pile out and they have milk cartons full of library materials that they're returning. And they return then check everything back in and they fill up these milk cartons again ... those plastic crates ... with DVDs and books and they're going through in a very intentional way and there's a seven year old who's got the card and he's checking out something for his five-year-old brother and it's like, "How does that work?" I mean, just the level of connection.

Jim Hills: One more. I go to a meeting in Snohomish County government with one of our librarians here and it's a meeting with ECEAP, early childhood opportunities for pre-kindergarten. And I didn't know, and as we're driving to this meeting, our mobile library services go to every one of the 22, I think, ECEAP sites in Snohomish County and provide library services at those ECEAP centers. I had no idea. It's that kind of service that's everywhere that most people don't know about unless you're getting the service.

Paul Pitkin: Just as a shameless plug, do you know who paid for those mobile services?

Cindy Tingley: Would that be the foundation?

Jim Hills: Would that have been the foundation?

Paul Pitkin: It might be the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation. Well, it's funny. Another one that, kind of on the other end of the spectrum a bit ... Another program that we fund ... Check out our website ... is the Explore Summer Program, which is basically a program that is meant to have kids continue to learn and read when they're not in school. One of my favorite stories is at the Mariner Library, there was a single mom who would bring in her two kids. One was about 15, the other was about 12. And basically, she had no place for them to go during the summer, and so every day she'd bring them to the library and they fully participated in Explore Summer. So they were going and checking out books, but also there was a lot of different activities that went along with it, like going to the Future Flight, which is over in Mukilteo and they actually saw the eclipse with library-administered eclipse glasses.

Paul Pitkin: But a story like that is like, it's not just two kids gaining all this knowledge, it's also a parent being able to go to work and enrich her children at the same time, which I think is really ... It shows you that the library isn't just about going in, looking at a book. It helps families, which I think is wonderful.

Cindy Tingley: Absolutely. And of course, we have Issues That Matter, we have the children's programs that are run. There's so many things, not just at our, what I'll call our brick and mortar locations. But one of the things I was fascinated to find out about when I first started working here was the fact that if you have a Sno-Isle Library card, you have access to so much more learning ... 'cause hey, I love that ... online. And one of the biggest things I think is such a great perk, just something wonderful for our customers, is the connection we have to lynda.com.

Ken Harvey: Right on.

Cindy Tingley: There is so ... What a wealth, what a value of knowledge that's out there. I used to pay for that service.

Paul Pitkin: We're actually connected to lynda.com?

Cindy Tingley: Yeah.

Paul Pitkin: Okay, I'm thinking I know. I had no idea ...

Cindy Tingley: See? You see what I'm saying?

Paul Pitkin: ... and I'm really excited about that.

Cindy Tingley: I mean, this is a perk and a half for me. I used to subscribe to Lynda.

Jim Hills: And it's not cheap, either.

- Cindy Tingley: No. And I've been living in Snohomish County for 13 years now. I had no idea, with a library card, I would have had free access. And that's kind of my number one thing I tell people. "Do you have your card? Do you have your card? 'Cause here's what you can have." But normally when I talk to neighbors or people that I run into in the community, it's just ... The one thing I hear overwhelmingly, "I love the library." And if I ask them to elaborate, it's on these things we've been talking about. It's the different programs. It is the resources we have, the genealogy that people can go and research on. Just everything we've said and so much more that we haven't even touched on.
- Ken Harvey: Well there is so much that Sno-Isle Libraries offers that I think ... Well, I know that I am typically surprised almost every other week to discover something else I didn't realize we offered. So you mentioned lynda.com. For me, there have been a number of things that have surprised me. A to Z Database, the business resource. It's just so powerful and for someone who's been an entrepreneur when I've had time to do that, knowing that there's a business resource out there like that that typically costs \$1,000 or more a year to subscribe to but with a library card I have access to it ... I mean, that just blows me away. And so for business people, it's like, oh my gosh. Take advantage of what the library offers you.
- Ken Harvey: Have others ... Have you found things that surprise you that we have, too?
- Jim Hills: My wife and I just got back from vacation. We were down in the Cabo area. It was wonderful. So I had Mango Languages on my phone. And if you're there for a couple of weeks, you start to pick it up a little bit, but neither of us speak Spanish. But it's really helpful. We just pulled up Mango Languages and the first chapter and there's everything you need to know to get around as a tourist.
- Ken Harvey: [Spanish 00:39:24]
- Jim Hills: Yeah. That was helpful at times, yes. And so we just finished using Mango Languages to help us get along when we were in Mexico.
- Paul Pitkin: I've been surprised by resources that we've had. There's this incredible resource that's called lynda.com that ...
- Jim Hills: Where you can learn stuff.
- Ken Harvey: Oh my gosh, lynda.com?
- Paul Pitkin: Yeah, you can learn stuff and you usually have to pay for it ...
- Ken Harvey: I'm gonna write that down.
- Paul Pitkin: ... but with out library card, you can just access it for free.

- Cindy Tingley: And may I just say, I was paying close to \$40 a month for that back in the day.
- Ken Harvey: Well, and, you know, I was surprised when I discovered that the library stocked Consumer Reports online. And that I could take advantage of that.
- Jim Hills: Oh yeah.
- Ken Harvey: Just get it ... Essentially, just by having a library card I could access it online in a library building and it's like, oh my gosh, there are so many ways to save money.
- Cindy Tingley: I'm hearing cash registers going off out there in podcast land right now. It's like, "Ooh, cha-ching."
- Ken Harvey: Well, I definitely have learned that if I'm using my Amazon app and it's something that I'm looking to read or something I'm looking to watch or whatever, it's like, "Okay, before I hit that add to my shopping cart, let me go to the library website and see if we've got it in our collection first."
- Paul Pitkin: One of the things that I think the library can bring that I'm really excited about is this podcast. I mean, as we go along ...
- Ken Harvey: Well done, Paul.
- Paul Pitkin: Thank you. It's important to circle things back here. But it's really true, is that the library comes across so many interesting people. The Foundation, we put on author events every year where we have prominent authors like Kristen Hannah and Maria Semple coming up and things like that, and ...
- Ken Harvey: J.A. Jance.
- Paul Pitkin: J.A. Jance, yeah. Art Thiel has been at one of our events. And the individual libraries do those as well. So we run into interesting people, we are involved in our community to the extent that we know everybody that is doing something anywhere in the community and then also we are this treasure trove of information about books and video and audio and all these different things. So we are like the perfect curator for information. As we go through, it's like, we don't need a booking agent for this podcast. Everything that we wanna talk about, the people we wanna talk to, are already here and I'm really excited about that because I think it's just gonna be really interesting, and I think it's also ... Unlike some podcasts, it's gonna be very broad. We can cover so many different subjects that are so interesting, I think, to different people.
- Ken Harvey: Just thinking about what you just said, we are hoping to have guests on this podcast who are authors and performers that the Foundation either is planning to have an event around or has had a past event around. We are so thankful to the Foundation for being a sponsor our Issues That Matter community forum

series, and so we are looking to have some of those panelists who have been part of those discussions on this podcast.

Paul Pitkin: And TEDx speakers.

Ken Harvey: And the TEDx Noel Libraries, which again, Foundation was was a founding partner for. And over the course of the last three years of TEDx events, we've had over 50 speakers who've stepped on the red circle of the stage. Many of them we're hoping to have back as part of this podcast and have a chance to really explore what their idea was and what the experience was like for them and what's happened to them ... life after being picked up by TEDx.

Ken Harvey: So there's a lot that is in store for our listeners. And maybe kind of last round for the group ... What do you see that's important about the library and its mission and kind of the scope of things that it provides? Why is that personally important to you?

Jim Hills: I'll jump in on that one, because I think ... If I look at the larger society, I think, a fundamental issue that crosses a lot of different problems, I guess, is an unequal access. I think the disparity between the haves and the have nots. The library is an evening of that. It levels the playing field, regardless of income or education. It's there for everyone, and when we can have those kinds of influences in our communities and available to citizens, to anybody who walks in the door, that's of real value. And I think it's of especially important value now, these days.

Cindy Tingley: Yeah, you said that very eloquently and I would only add to that the fact that I'm really proud of how we are so on top of intellectual freedom. We're not censoring our content in any manner either, so that the folks that are coming into our welcoming spaces have access pretty much to any topic or subject that they would have an interest in. And, you know, one size doesn't fit all and we hopefully have a size for everyone. It really does feel like we do.

Paul Pitkin: I would definitely agree with both of those points. I also would emphasize that the library is one of the last few public spaces in our society. Twenty years ago, people were saying the shopping mall has become the new public space, and that's sad, 'cause all people do at a shopping mall is shop. When you think about just the building space of the library, but also the internet space, basically it's the intellectual space. It is a place where people can come and learn different things that is not necessarily part of some job, not necessarily part of a degree. They're just following their curiosity and learning things, and they're doing it together. And in this society, I completely agree with Jim that there is not equal access to different tools and different educational pieces, and to have that in this sort of public place, it's kind of like a ... It's a community builder, and that's what I see the library as. It's a community builder and we are not only a stakeholder, we're a creator in our communities and I'm incredibly proud of that.

- Ken Harvey: Well, I would add to what each of you have said by just saying that the values and purposes behind the libraries that ... They help govern this organization, provide guiding principles to us ... Leads us to have this whole set of core services that gets materials and services and resources to individuals from newborns to 100 year olds and older. And I do say older, because some people, when they sign up for a library card and it asks them for their date of birth, they put in something that puts them over 110 years old or whatever, so that's why I say older.
- Jim Hills: It could be.
- Ken Harvey: It could be.
- Paul Pitkin: It's part of the Foundation's mission ...
- Ken Harvey: That's right. Of trust.
- Paul Pitkin: ... that we support lifelong learning.
- Ken Harvey: That's right.
- Paul Pitkin: And I think that's my fourth plug in a single podcast.
- Cindy Tingley: Good job, Paul.
- Paul Pitkin: I'll see if I can beat that next time.
- Ken Harvey: Yeah, well. We have this level of core services that we provide, and we also have these strategic priorities as an organization around really helping prepare children for kindergarten, because if they can be successful, kindergarten, first, second, third grade, they're typically successful the rest of their lives. To help small businesses and entrepreneurs start up their work and for the success, the economic vibrancy of the region. And then really trying to help push and encourage citizens to be really engaged in their communities.
- Ken Harvey: So when I put all that together, it just gives me this sense of Sno-Isle Libraries as this very vital part of this region and the communities that we serve. And it really makes me excited about what we're gonna be sharing through this podcast in future episodes, through the guests that we have, the staff that we're gonna be interviewing, and the things ... maybe some of the surprises that we have to share with people about what we offer that they may not be aware of.
- Ken Harvey: So, I just wanted to thank each of you for the amount of self disclosure or shameless plugging. But no ...
- Paul Pitkin: Well you're welcome, Ken.

- Ken Harvey: Not shameless at all because, again, this wouldn't be happening without the Foundation's help and so we so much appreciate that. And I just wanna remind listeners that we'll have some links to some of the things that we've been talking about in this episode on our show notes, which will be available on our webpage. And you'll find that at sno-isle.org/podcast. So I'm gonna spell that out. All lowercase. S-N-O dash I-S-L-E dot org and then slash podcast.
- Ken Harvey: So coming up next, book notes.
- Ken Harvey: In this book notes segment, I'm delighted to welcome a member of our Reader Services team, Lindsey Anderson.
- Lindsey Anderson: Hi, I'm Lindsey.
- Ken Harvey: Hey, Lindsey. Thank you for joining us. Our Reader Services team comes with suggestions for our podcast listeners with a passion for any of the things that we offer in our collection.
- Ken Harvey: So, Lindsey, what would you like to offer our listeners?
- Lindsey Anderson: Well, I would love to tell you about *Circe*, by Madeline Miller. It was recently a Library Reads pick. The tale of Circe, the misunderstood witch from Homer's epic *Odyssey* reinforces something I've always known. The Greek gods are jerks. Eccentric and despised by her parents, the sun god Helios and a vapid nymph, Circe develops a talent for witchcraft which ultimately gets her banished to an island all on her own. I always felt that Circe had a raw deal, like most women in Greek mythology and literature. But the intimacy of Madeline Miller's writing transforms her into a fully-fleshed character.
- Lindsey Anderson: Miller's retellings are rich with magic, myth, and ancient history and after reading *Circe*, I guarantee you'll ache to read whatever she publishes next.
- Ken Harvey: Excellent.
- Lindsey Anderson: Yeah. And I do actually have another pick. I thought I'd talk about non-fiction book as well. It's actually a popular science non-fiction. It's called *The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs: A New History of a Lost World*, by Steve Brusatte. Because, like many kids, I was a dinosaur kid. The sauropods, the Brontosaurus, the Brachiosaurus, the lumbering big ones ... Those were always my favorite dinosaurs. And author Steve Brusatte never outgrew his passion. He worshiped paleontologists like rock stars and now he's one of them. He shares all kinds of fascinating tidbits about dinosaurs, Earth's evolution, and life in the field as a paleontologist. Did you know that some Tyrannosaurs had feathers, not for flying but for warmth or display? Because I didn't.
- Lindsey Anderson: Any seasoned paleontologist will already know most of this information, but for the average person with an interest in dinosaurs, it's simply a fantastic read.

Ken Harvey: Thank you very much for those suggestions.

Lindsey Anderson: Yeah, you're welcome.

Ken Harvey: Our special thanks goes to our legacy sponsors: Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation. Your private tax deductible gift to the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation provides seed money to expand and foster extra early learning and lifetime learning opportunities through innovative library classes, activities, and civic engagement events. Type Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation into your internet search engine to find out more about how your donation can change the lives of preschoolers, third graders, teens, and lifelong learners like you or someone you care about.

Ken Harvey: If you enjoy this podcast, we'd love you to subscribe so you can receive episodes automatically. Also, please consider leaving a rating and a short review of iTunes and Google Play. Your rating and review will make it easier for others to find us. We love hearing from our listeners and subscribers, so drop us a line at sno-isle.org. That way you can let us know you left a rating or review, and you can also send us questions and comments, especially if you were enjoyed or were fascinated by one of our guests. Or maybe, you might suggest someone you'd like us to interview. Don't be surprised if we read your comment or answer your question on a future podcast episode.

Ken Harvey: And, if you have a great library experience you'd like to share, we'd love to hear it. We might even invite you on the show one day to have an on-air conversation. By the way, e-mailers will automatically be entered into drawings for library swag and other potential prizes. "Prizes like what?" You might ask. Well, we may have promotional giveaways from sponsors, so we'll be offering books autographed by authors and event posters with a performer autograph. There may be free theater or performance tickets from time to time. Keep in mind, these are prizes provided by our sponsors. No actual public dollars were killed or harmed or used in the making of these prizes.

Ken Harvey: Be sure to visit us at sno-isle.org/podcast for the show notes and the links discussed in this episode. You may discover some other fantastic bonus content in the process. And finally, we always invite you to stop by your closest library, or visit the library online to find thousands and thousands of titles of books, music, movies, and resources from our friendly, helpful, professional librarians just waiting for you. Check it out today. Thanks for listening.