Check It Out! Podcast Transcript
Episode #27
“What’s new at the libraries, reading with children, summer events and Kurt Batdorf”
Sno-Isle Libraries, June 13, 2019

Ken Harvey: 00:00:00 Okay. Welcome to Check It Out! We’ve got a nice little episode, maybe a little surprising episode ahead of us. What do we have in store?

Paul Pitkin: 00:00:09 We’re going to learn about all the days of the next two months that mean something. Chocolate Eclair Day.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:16 And other things.

Paul Pitkin: 00:00:18 And other things.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:19 Yeah, something like that.

Paul Pitkin: 00:00:19 Yeah, something like that.

Jim Hills: 00:00:21 New things that are coming to the website, new information about what’s available at Sno-Isle, how to engage with the library.

Cindy Tingley: 00:00:28 And we have an awesome guest coming up, too.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:30 All right, all that and more, right up next.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:42 Welcome to season two and episode 27 of Check It Out! The Sno-Isle Libraries podcast for life-long learners with inquiring minds.

Cindy Tingley: 00:00:50 The views and opinions expressed on this podcast may not necessarily reflect the official position of Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:57 Hi, I'm Ken Harvey.

Jim Hills: 00:01:02 And we didn't decide who is going to go next.

Paul Pitkin: 00:01:04 Oh, that's why you have cues. I'm Paul Pitkin, Executive Director of the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.
Cindy Tingley: 00:01:12 And I'm Cindy Tingley, the Learning and Development Specialist for Sno-Isle.

Jim Hills: 00:01:15 And I'm Jim Hills, Communications and Marketing Manager, of course, Sno-Isle Libraries.

Paul Pitkin: 00:01:19 Yay, we did it.

Ken Harvey: 00:01:19 Well, that was pretty funny. Okay, we started it.

Cindy Tingley: 00:01:19 We're off to a great start.

Ken Harvey: 00:01:20 Yeah, we've started another episode of Check It Out! And this episode is a really fun one called, "Hmm, I didn't know that."

Jim Hills: 00:01:34 And boy, have we got some people here who don't know things.

Paul Pitkin: 00:01:37 I know everything. In fact, this segment is pretty much useless for me. I know everything.

Ken Harvey: 00:01:44 Hey, let's start out this segment by talking about the month of June, which we are into. And this is a really interesting month. A lot of different celebrations and events going on, and... What are some of the things you know June to be? Opportunities for celebration?

Paul Pitkin: 00:02:02 First month of summer.

Cindy Tingley: 00:02:03 Yeah, summer equinox.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:05 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:02:05 It's Pride Month.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:06 Yep. Gay Pride Month. Did you know that it's also Candy Month?

Cindy Tingley: 00:02:12 Where's the candy dish?

Paul Pitkin: 00:02:12 Every month is candy month.

Cindy Tingley: 00:02:14 We don't... We're missing our candy dish!

Ken Harvey: 00:02:16 Yeah, it's pretty sweet, isn't it?

Paul Pitkin: 00:02:17 Does that mean that we have permission to eat as much candy as we want without any guilt, because it's Candy Month?
Cindy Tingley: 00:02:24  Works for me.
Ken Harvey: 00:02:25  You can tell yourself that, and indulge. It's also Dairy Month, so how many of you drink milk or use lots of milk?
Cindy Tingley: 00:02:36  No.
Jim Hills: 00:02:36  So what's that little pill for dairy intolerant people [crosstalk 00:02:40]?
Cindy Tingley: 00:02:39  Lactaid, or...?
Jim Hills: 00:02:39  Yeah, Lactaid. So, it's that month, too.
Ken Harvey: 00:02:40  Yeah.
Cindy Tingley: 00:02:41  Right. Soy Milk Month.
Jim Hills: 00:02:44  Yeah.
Paul Pitkin: 00:02:46  Should I eat more cheese? I mean, what does this mean?
Cindy Tingley: 00:02:48  You're cheesy enough.
Paul Pitkin: 00:02:49  Ah!
Jim Hills: 00:02:51  Ooh!
Paul Pitkin: 00:02:51  Ah, somebody give us the rib shot.
Ken Harvey: 00:02:54  Well, it's also National Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Month, so I guess, that balances the candy, right?
Jim Hills: 00:03:01  And the cheese?
Cindy Tingley: 00:03:01  Yeah.
Ken Harvey: 00:03:01  Yeah, and the cheese. It's Turkey Lovers' Month.
Cindy Tingley: 00:03:06  Oh.
Jim Hills: 00:03:08  Oh. Why is... Wait a minute.
Cindy Tingley: 00:03:09  Everybody will be sleeping.
Jim Hills: 00:03:10 How can Candy Month not be the end of October, first part of November on Halloween? And how is Turkey Month not Thanksgiving?

Paul Pitkin: 00:03:18 Well, clearly these things haven't been thought out, because...

Cindy Tingley: 00:03:21 Not at all.

Paul Pitkin: 00:03:22 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:22 Evidently not universal agreement that it's the right month-

Jim Hills: 00:03:24 We know, but somebody else doesn't know.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:25 ...for some of these things. Hey, there's another...

Paul Pitkin: 00:03:28 Keep them coming, Ken.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:30 Well, there is another celebration. It's called Fight the Filthy Fly Month.

Cindy Tingley: 00:03:34 Say that three times fast.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:36 Fight the Filthy Fly.

Cindy Tingley: 00:03:37 Ooh. Very good.

Jim Hills: 00:03:38 What does that mean?

Ken Harvey: 00:03:40 Fight the filthy fly.

Jim Hills: 00:03:42 I mean-

Paul Pitkin: 00:03:42 As opposed to the clean fly?

Cindy Tingley: 00:03:43 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:03:45 Literally? I don't even get that.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:46 Well, that's-

Jim Hills: 00:03:46 Is that a problem somewhere?

Ken Harvey: 00:03:48 ... that's where the song Shoo, Fly, Don't Bother Me came from.

Jim Hills: 00:03:52 But I'm confused about the filthy part. Is it-
Cindy Tingley: 00:03:54 I know.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:56 Well, I think it's been scientifically proven that flies can carry a lot of germs, and are considered filthy because they land on everything, and they pick up what they land on, and then transfer it-

Jim Hills: 00:04:08 Hmm. I did not know that.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:11 Hey. So let me just throw out some other special and wacky days celebrated in June. There is Flip a Coin Day, National Bubba Day-

Paul Pitkin: 00:04:24 You got to... Is that, like, a Southern thing? What is that?

Ken Harvey: 00:04:27 Well, Southern Washington? Southern Idaho? Southern Oregon?

Paul Pitkin: 00:04:29 No.

Cindy Tingley: 00:04:29 US?

Paul Pitkin: 00:04:30 Like, Southern United States.


Cindy Tingley: 00:04:36 Aww. Be careful.

Jim Hills: 00:04:37 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:38 There is National Cheese Day in there.

Paul Pitkin: 00:04:41 Hey.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:41 Hot Air Balloon Day. So, anyone ever been on a hot air balloon here?

Cindy Tingley: 00:04:45 No. I'm a chicken.

Paul Pitkin: 00:04:46 I am, too.

Cindy Tingley: 00:04:47 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:48 But they are beautiful from a distance.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:51 D-Day. [crosstalk 00:04:53] D-Day this month for World War Two. National Yo-Yo Day. Anyone here ever do yo-yos?
Cindy Tingley: 00:05:01 Many years ago.

Paul Pitkin: 00:05:01 Not in a long time, no. I actually attempted it about a month ago because one of my co-workers had a yo-yo, and I couldn’t do it.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:06 And that’s where that nod on your head came from? Doing around the world with it-

Paul Pitkin: 00:05:10 And the amputated finger.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:11 Oh. This one, I think, most of us, even with Lactaid tablets... National Chocolate Ice Cream Day.

Jim Hills: 00:05:22 Oh, yeah. There you go.

Cindy Tingley: 00:05:22 Ooh.

Paul Pitkin: 00:05:23 I’m pro that.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:25 National Donut Day.

Paul Pitkin: 00:05:26 I’m pro that as well.

Cindy Tingley: 00:05:26 Yeah. Chocolate donuts, even better.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:29 Okay. And then for all of us who’ve been around for more than a few years, National VCR Day. So, we-

Cindy Tingley: 00:05:39 Beta or VHS?

Jim Hills: 00:05:42 I still have a VCR.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:45 Do you want to explain for our millennials in the audience what VCR stands for?

Jim Hills: 00:05:49 Video Cassette Recorder.

Cindy Tingley: 00:05:51 Ding ding ding. Yep.

Jim Hills: 00:05:52 But it doesn’t actually record anything. It just plays them.

Paul Pitkin: 00:05:54 Do you use your VCR still?

Jim Hills: 00:05:58 We have a serious collection of VCR tapes, yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:06:02 Wow. Is it like out of print movies, and things like that?
Jim Hills: 00:06:06 Probably. By now, yeah.
Cindy Tingley: 00:06:08 Yeah.
Ken Harvey: 00:06:09 Well, and some of the... I have a VCR at home, too. I have-
Cindy Tingley: 00:06:12 Same, yeah.
Ken Harvey: 00:06:12 ... to admit. It's a VCR to DVD converter, and some of the VCRs, Video...
Cindy Tingley: 00:06:25 Cassette Recorder?
Ken Harvey: 00:06:26 Tapes.
Cindy Tingley: 00:06:27 Okay.
Jim Hills: 00:06:29 The things that go in.
Ken Harvey: 00:06:30 Actually were ones that came from the library. I didn't borrow them, and not return them.
Paul Pitkin: 00:06:36 Sure.
Ken Harvey: 00:06:38 They were ones that were discarded by the library when the library started to really transition out of VC... video tapes to DVDs. I'm not accustomed to saying to video tapes anymore.
Jim Hills: 00:06:53 Well, I was going to ask how often do we say, "I'm going to tape that?"
Cindy Tingley: 00:06:58 Right.
Jim Hills: 00:07:00 Like, are we taping this?
Cindy Tingley: 00:07:01 No.
Jim Hills: 00:07:02 No. But we say we are taping it. And then we have to think about it, and go, "Oh, no. We are recording that."
Ken Harvey: 00:07:06 Oh, that's right. We are not taping anymore.
Jim Hills: 00:07:08 No.
Paul Pitkin: 00:07:08 No, but I would say I'm taping some.
Jim Hills: 00:07:10 Yeah.
Paul Pitkin: 00:07:11 I think... do you guys have any video discs?

Ken Harvey: 00:07:18 Oh, I remember those.

Cindy Tingley: 00:07:18 Wow. I never got those, but yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:07:19 A friend of mine’s dad had a video disc player.

Cindy Tingley: 00:07:21 Oh, wow.

Paul Pitkin: 00:07:22 I remember it was the most amazing thing I’d ever seen.

Jim Hills: 00:07:24 Weren't those, like, three feet wide?

Paul Pitkin: 00:07:26 Gargantuan, yeah.

Cindy Tingley: 00:07:27 Really? I thought they were the size of an LP.

Paul Pitkin: 00:07:30 Well, the discs themselves were the size of an LP, but the actual TV that you had to play them in had like this bank of lights, and it was huge. Oh, yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:07:40 Hey. I'm going to throw out just a few more for June. Juneteenth is a celebration.

Cindy Tingley: 00:07:47 Oh, yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:07:47 How many of you know about Juneteenth?

Jim Hills: 00:07:48 I do not know about that.

Cindy Tingley: 00:07:49 I have heard a bit.

Ken Harvey: 00:07:50 So, Juneteenth is, was on June 19. It's in, I think, June 19 every year, and it actually celebrates the freeing of the slaves in the civil war.

Cindy Tingley: 00:08:05 Right.

Ken Harvey: 00:08:05 I almost said World War Two because I was still thinking National D-Day, but no, in the civil war. And it was actually, I believe, if my memory serves me correctly... was first started in Texas when people down there heard that the emancipation proclamation had taken place, and the Union soldiers came through and announced it. And they started celebrating, and they commemorated it, and started doing it every day there. And, then, it just spread across the United States.
Cindy Tingley: 00:08:35 Very cool.
Ken Harvey: 00:08:36 Juneteenth. Few others. National Selfie Day.
Cindy Tingley: 00:08:40 We need one of those. Isn't that every day?
Paul Pitkin: 00:08:44 Yeah, I'm not down with that one.
Ken Harvey: 00:08:46 How about Finally Summer Day? Otherwise, known as Summer Solstice? And let's see, Take Your Dog to Work Day. So, that's always the Friday after Father's Day.
Cindy Tingley: 00:08:58 Oh.
Ken Harvey: 00:08:59 National Chocolate Éclair Day.
Cindy Tingley: 00:09:01 That's a lot of chocolate.
Ken Harvey: 00:09:04 International Body Piercing Day.
Jim Hills: 00:09:05 There you go.
Ken Harvey: 00:09:08 That always seems painful to me.
Cindy Tingley: 00:09:10 Me too.
Ken Harvey: 00:09:11 And Waffle Iron Day.
Jim Hills: 00:09:15 I like waffles.
Cindy Tingley: 00:09:16 I like the product-
Jim Hills: 00:09:17 I'm in favor of waffles.
Cindy Tingley: 00:09:17 ... I don't know about the iron.
Paul Pitkin: 00:09:19 Nice tie-in. That's good.
Ken Harvey: 00:09:21 And Meteor Day. This is the last day of the month.
Paul Pitkin: 00:09:23 What was the last day?
Ken Harvey: 00:09:24 Meteor.
Paul Pitkin: 00:09:25 Meteor Day. Okay.
Jim Hills: 00:09:26 All right. So, I have a day in June that wasn't on your list, I don't think. I'm going to quiz the group, and because there's not a librarian in the room, I fully expect to stump us. But I have Wikipedia on my phone at the moment.

Paul Pitkin: 00:09:41 Well, it's got to be true then.

Jim Hills: 00:09:42 June-

Cindy Tingley: 00:09:42 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:09:44 Yeah. So, I have just been banished from the library for saying that one. Okay. What is June 16th?

Ken Harvey: 00:09:53 June 16th...

Cindy Tingley: 00:09:55 The day after the 15th.

Jim Hills: 00:09:57 It is.

Paul Pitkin: 00:09:58 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:09:58 Okay, so I will tell you what it is, and then you got to tell me what that means. It's-

Paul Pitkin: 00:10:03 Okay. Are you going to give us a hint or are you going to tell us what it is?

Jim Hills: 00:10:05 I'll tell you what it is because I think you will still be stumped. It's Bloomsday.

Cindy Tingley: 00:10:09 Oh.

Jim Hills: 00:10:09 So, what is Bloomsday?

Paul Pitkin: 00:10:11 Is it like, some flowers that are blooming?

Jim Hills: 00:10:13 See, so... If you grew up in Seattle, you always know that everybody goes to Spokane for the Bloomsday run, right?

Ken Harvey: 00:10:21 It's the marathon.

Jim Hills: 00:10:21 But why... And see, so I grew up in Seattle. Everybody goes to Bloomsday in Spokane. I thought it must mean things blooming. That has nothing to do with it.

Cindy Tingley: 00:10:32 No.
Jim Hills:  00:10:32  Nothing.

Ken Harvey:  00:10:33  So, who said it had nothing to do with it? Wikipedia?

Cindy Tingley:  00:10:37  Wikipedia.

Jim Hills:  00:10:37  No, June 16th and Bloomsday, because Bloomsday in Spokane is also on June 16th.

Ken Harvey:  00:10:42  Yeah.

Jim Hills:  00:10:42  Bloomsday, a lot of places, not just Spokane.

Cindy Tingley:  00:10:45  Huh.

Jim Hills:  00:10:45  It’s Bloomsday everywhere on June 16th.

Paul Pitkin:  00:10:48  And it has nothing to do with flowers?

Jim Hills:  00:10:50  Nothing. But it has a lot to do with books that might be in a library.

Ken Harvey:  00:10:56  Judy Bloom, or something?

Jim Hills:  00:10:57  No.

Ken Harvey:  00:10:58  Okay. I give up.

Jim Hills:  00:11:00  James Joyce and his protagonist in his book, Leopold Bloom, and on June 16th in the book, he-

Ken Harvey:  00:11:11  He was hit by a meteor.

Jim Hills:  00:11:13  Yeah.

Cindy Tingley:  00:11:14  While eating chocolate.


Paul Pitkin:  00:11:25  And that’s across the country?

Jim Hills:  00:11:27  Yeah.

Ken Harvey:  00:11:27  Is it across the world?

Paul Pitkin:  00:11:28  Across the world.
Jim Hills: 00:11:29 It's huge.
Ken Harvey: 00:11:30 I didn't know that.
Cindy Tingley: 00:11:31 I didn't know that.
Jim Hills: 00:11:33 Really?
Cindy Tingley: 00:11:33 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
Jim Hills: 00:11:34 There you go.
Cindy Tingley: 00:11:35 Let's just hope it's accurate.
Paul Pitkin: 00:11:36 Yeah, we have misled thousands of listeners about Bloomsday.
Jim Hills: 00:11:44 At least a hundred.
Paul Pitkin: 00:11:47 Think about all the people that are going to be talking about Bloomsday, and then be embarrassed.
Jim Hills: 00:11:50 Yeah. There you go.
Ken Harvey: 00:11:51 Hey. So, let's just look forward to July, some important celebrations coming up in July. Anything come to mind?
Jim Hills: 00:12:00 My birthday.
Cindy Tingley: 00:12:00 Oh. Fourth of July.
Ken Harvey: 00:12:02 Congratulations.
Jim Hills: 00:12:02 Yeah.
Paul Pitkin: 00:12:03 Your birthday is the fourth of July?
Jim Hills: 00:12:05 Second.
Cindy Tingley: 00:12:06 Oh. There you go.
Ken Harvey: 00:12:06 Congratulations.
Jim Hills: 00:12:07 Didn't know... Hey, here's a thing. They actually agreed to... whatever they signed on the fourth of July... on July second, but because they had to get everybody there to actually sign it, it wasn't signed until the fourth.
Paul Pitkin: 00:12:21 So, your birthday is actually very important.

Jim Hills: 00:12:23 Very, very important.

Paul Pitkin: 00:12:24 That's the agreement day.

Jim Hills: 00:12:26 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:12:26 They probably had to wait to get the VCR recorder there.

Paul Pitkin: 00:12:31 Yeah. And they had to document it.

Ken Harvey: 00:12:33 Yeah. So, yeah, your birthday, July fourth, the Independence Day in the United States. It's also Canada Day, July first, and World UFO Day is actually on your birthday.

Cindy Tingley: 00:12:46 Oh.

Jim Hills: 00:12:47 I have been accused of... seeing things.

Ken Harvey: 00:12:50 Being from another world. Very lovely. That's good to know.

Paul Pitkin: 00:13:00 Was it after one of your skiing accidents?

Jim Hills: 00:13:04 And I have skied on my birthday. Yep. There you go.

Ken Harvey: 00:13:06 So, let's talk a little bit about some of the things that have been going on around Sno-Isle Libraries, or that have been either just really noteworthy or that were maybe a little surprising to us. Jim, you have something you want to throw off?

Jim Hills: 00:13:21 I do. There are a couple of things that we just launched recently. We had been doing a series of videos. Internally, we are calling them explainer videos, and the two most recent additions to this group of videos had to do with countdown to kindergarten, which was based on the idea of a list of books that we have in the library. It's a 100 books that we say you should read to your child, or your child should be exposed to before they go to kindergarten. That's how we launched it, and then as we started talking to the librarians, we learned a lot about early literacy, and getting your child ready for kindergarten. One is that yes, we have the countdown to kindergarten list, but our librarians who are well-steeped in early literacy practices say, "That's a cool starting place, and use it if you want. But that's not the important thing. The important thing is to engage with your child, read with them anything, could be a grocery list, could be anything. Sing with them, talk about words, interact with them,
engage with your child, could be scribbling on the sidewalk, and talking about the images, and engaging with your child or words."

Jim Hills: 00:14:36 And that was... I didn't know that, right? We have this list of a 100 books. Yes, we encourage people to use that list, but the most important thing in the piece that we try to get across in this explainer video about getting your child ready for kindergarten is, engage with your child around words.

Paul Pitkin: 00:14:56 It's basically just get verbal.

Jim Hills: 00:14:57 Yeah. Absolutely.

Paul Pitkin: 00:14:59 And whatever the content is, is secondary. It's-

Jim Hills: 00:15:01 Absolutely.

Paul Pitkin: 00:15:02 ... using words.

Jim Hills: 00:15:02 Yeah. Yeah. There was a off-shoot at that one, so we did two. The other one is about book lists, and this was a really interesting thing. So, as we have, here in the library, talk to librarians all the time. They are all about making lists of books, and ensuring... This came up as an idea from one of our lead librarians, and they said, "Hey, could you do something around book lists?" And we thought, "That seems, kind of, obvious." And they said, "No." One of the questions they get... One of the aha moments for customers coming into the community libraries is that librarians there will make suggestions about what they can read, and provide book lists. And they make book lists all the time. So, it's not only about the availability of book lists and what the librarians create, but the customers themselves in our catalog can use the online resource to create their own list, and share that with other customers, and share that back and forth.

Jim Hills: 00:15:56 It's a very rich environment, and how to go about doing that and learning how to use the library, and learning what may or may not appeal to you, that piece was really interesting to me because I had this assumption that would know that. And then, we went on and talked to the librarians and the folks in the library. They were, like, "Yeah, no. Let's talk about that."

Jim Hills: 00:16:19 So, I'm really excited to see the traffic that those two videos get as we are promoting them to our customers and non-customers. It's going to be fun.
Cindy Tingley: 00:16:28 Yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:16:29 Yeah. What better place to get a book list than from a librarian?

Jim Hills: 00:16:33 Well, yeah. You would think, right? But it's one of those... Apparently, it's not a thing that a lot of people understand.

Ken Harvey: 00:16:41 Well, what's nice is that you can get both, some standard popular reading list suggestions, and you can also work with librarians to come up with a fairly personalized-

Paul Pitkin: 00:16:55 Absolutely. I was thinking about, like, the genre deep-dive would be... We've actually talked to people here about some of their favorite genres, and they have become experts in them. If you want to do, like, a real deep-cut from a genre, then what a great place to get that information.

Ken Harvey: 00:17:11 Well, what does genre mean? Is that like... are you speaking French or...

Paul Pitkin: 00:17:13 Didn't you know I am fluent? I'm thinking of like whether you might be... maybe you want to try out science fiction, but you've never... You've thought about it but you haven't read it, or you want to get into romance novels, and you've thought about it but you haven't read it. You kind of want to talk to somebody who really knows about the genre, and knows what the good stuff, and what the not so good stuff is. What a great place to start.

Cindy Tingley: 00:17:38 Yeah. And they can take it even deeper than that. Style of sci-fi, or... I mean just really drill down.

Paul Pitkin: 00:17:44 Yeah, exactly. That is a great resource. There's genres I would like to explore that... but once you look at it, you don't know anything. You don't know if you are just reading something awful until you've read half of it.

Jim Hills: 00:18:00 This was a huge aha moment of me when I started working here. So, that guilt of stopping in the middle of a book, and-

Ken Harvey: 00:18:07 Or after just the first few pages.

Jim Hills: 00:18:09 First few pages. I was talking in the lunchroom there at the service center with the librarian, and they looked at me like I was nuts, like I would have guilt about that. They said, "No." I remember the line of the librarians said to me was like, "Life is way too short for bad books." That's the whole piece of the
library. It's there, you can try it, and if you don't like it, you give it back, and get another one.

Ken Harvey: 00:18:34 No guilt.

Jim Hills: 00:18:35 No guilt. No guilt at all. Just try it, you don't like it, give it back.

Paul Pitkin: 00:18:39 The only thing worse than stopping a book halfway through is stopping at three-quarters of the way.

Jim Hills: 00:18:47 There you go.

Cindy Tingley: 00:18:48 Yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:18:49 I'm just speaking the truth.

Jim Hills: 00:18:55 Yes, you are. That is a truth.

Paul Pitkin: 00:18:57 Well, I have something. I just wanted... Since we are talking about things that are new, the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation, thanks to a lot of you guys in here, has a new website.

Cindy Tingley: 00:19:09 Yay.

Jim Hills: 00:19:10 Congratulations.

Paul Pitkin: 00:19:10 Yeah, we are all very, very excited about it. We've had the same website for quite some time, but the foundation to so many different things, and reaches out to so many different people, and touches so many different people. We've got so many great donors and great stakeholders. And this new website really, really reflects that. Jim, you've done a ton of work on this, and I want to just thank you and Ken. It's a really... We're just very excited about it, and I would encourage everybody to go check it out. If you have ever wondered what does this Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation do, go check out the website. It will really show you a lot, and that is www.sno-islefoundation.org. So please check it out. I think-

Cindy Tingley: 00:19:58 Yeah. You're going to love it.

Paul Pitkin: 00:19:59 Yeah. You're going to love it, and I think it's going to really show... If you are a donor, it's going to show you what your money has done, a lot of what is has produced. And if you are not a donor, and you just want to find out more, it's a great way to learn things. It's super visual. There's great stories, very, very engaging. So, I encourage you to check it out. And since I'm
always talking about it and plugging it on this podcast, why don't you go check out the website?

Ken Harvey: 00:20:22 Well, I am one of your donors, and I think that it's a neat experience going to this new website, and just getting a sense of how my investment in the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation impacts others, children and teens and families with children, and senior citizens, and just anyone who is a life-long learner. I think it's pretty inspired when they come to this website. I just love what I'm seeing there.

Jim Hills: 00:20:58 The thing I like about it... It was really your direction to go ahead and move and make the change, but understanding the kind of work that is supported by the foundation... It's easy to tell a great story if it's a great story to begin with, and the foundation supports a ton of great stories. When we looked at revamping the site, there are great images of kids and adults, all having a good time, all making a difference in people's lives. And that's awesome. That's an awesome story to tell.

Paul Pitkin: 00:21:34 It's one of the things I'm proud about. We serve the entire district, all ages, all people, people with different goals... People want different things from the library. We serve them all. And that really does show up in the website.

Jim Hills: 00:21:49 Yeah. I think one part that we were able to add to the site was the people who support the foundation. Just the process of supporting and being involved in the foundation is fun, and there are fun activities... people of like mind who want to make a difference in the community, and there you are with friends, making a difference and having a great time, hearing great speakers, going to great events. And that's another facet of the foundation that we are able to tell on this new site.

Paul Pitkin: 00:22:22 Yeah. We are always trying to give our donors something special, and I think that you can... again, that shows up on the website. Kudos to you, and we're just thrilled about it.

Jim Hills: 00:22:32 Well, congratulations on the foundation.

Paul Pitkin: 00:22:34 Thank you.

Cindy Tingley: 00:22:34 Definitely. You know, one thing I would like to touch on, especially since I'm wearing my t-shirt today is-

Ken Harvey: 00:22:40 And which t-shirt is that?
Cindy Tingley: 00:22:41 The Seattle Storm, three time champion shirt. Yeah. Last month, I got to go see their home opener in Everett, which was awesome, their ring ceremony. But we have a new partnership with them.

Jim Hills: 00:22:53 We do.

Ken Harvey: 00:22:54 Yeah, that's great.

Jim Hills: 00:22:56 The Seattle Storm and the Sno-Isle Libraries are working together on our summer learning program called Explore Summer, and the Storm is helping to support that. During launch events of Explore Summer, which happened at all of our libraries, the Storm is providing vouchers for tickets for young people and adult, that then they will be able to redeem online. And there are two games happening in August that those vouchers can allow people to go see-

Ken Harvey: 00:23:30 In Everett, Washington.

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:31 Yes.

Jim Hills: 00:23:31 In Everett, yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:23:32 Where are they playing in Everett? They're playing at the-

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:34 At Angel of the Winds, yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:23:35 Yeah. So, this is a new deal for Sno-Isle Libraries-

Ken Harvey: 00:23:39 Well, let me just jump in. Angel of the Winds Events Center, not casino.

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:45 Correct. Yes.

Jim Hills: 00:23:46 Did I say casino?

Ken Harvey: 00:23:47 No.

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:47 No, but...

Ken Harvey: 00:23:48 You just said Angel of the Winds, and so there's more than one Angel of the Winds-

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:51 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:23:51 Right. Right. Right.
Ken Harvey: 00:23:51 ... locations.

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:51 Thankfully not in Everett, so hopefully that will clear it up.

Paul Pitkin: 00:23:55 It doesn't really fit the summer learning-

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:57 No.

Jim Hills: 00:23:58 It's odds, you know.

Cindy Tingley: 00:23:59 True.

Jim Hills: 00:24:01 There's math.

Ken Harvey: 00:24:01 Well, that's really exciting.

Jim Hills: 00:24:04 Yeah, it's very exciting that we get to partner with somebody like the Storm, and they are very supportive of early literacy, which is the-

Ken Harvey: 00:24:15 They are.

Jim Hills: 00:24:15 ... the whole idea of Explore Summer. There is an underlying purpose to Explore Summer, too. During the summer, our traditional school year has the summer vacation, and because of that, there is a thing, and it is a real thing according to research called summer slide. And I think most parents are aware of that, most school teachers... My wife is an elementary school teacher. She is certainly aware of that. It is a... but there’s research on it too. The student who stops in June, and starts in September, and does not continue to read actively or otherwise participate in learning opportunities, will not progress and move ahead as their peers might for those who are reading actively during the summer, and going to learning events, like, Explore Summer supports. And it doesn't take much. Explore Summer... the reading logs is... our plan is to read ten hours over the summer for a child. And we have reading logs, and there’s a prize of a free book at the end of that. It's a real serious purpose. That makes it a ton of fun, and then to be able to bring on a partner like Seattle Storm is fantastic.

Paul Pitkin: 00:25:35 Well, you also have another partner, which is the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.

Jim Hills: 00:25:37 Oh, wait. Wait. Let me think. We, the foundation?

Paul Pitkin: 00:25:41 Yeah. Now, we don't play basketball but we are there.
Ken Harvey: 00:25:44 I’d like to see a grudge match between the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation board and the Seattle Storm.

Cindy Tingley: 00:25:50 That would be awesome.

Paul Pitkin: 00:25:51 I’ve played basketball my whole life, and I wouldn’t want to be part of that game. One of the great things about the Storm being involved is... that’s a really fun experience.

Cindy Tingley: 00:26:02 It really is.

Paul Pitkin: 00:26:03 The basketball is great, and they are very fan-friendly. You can get close up, and see the athletes. That’s a really good experience.

Jim Hills: 00:26:14 Yeah.

Cindy Tingley: 00:26:15 Yeah. I know Seattle is going to hate me for saying this, but I wish we could keep them permanently.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:20 Well, they are up in Everett for many other summer home games because of construction happening at Key Arena. Is that right?

Cindy Tingley: 00:26:30 Right. Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:31 And we are just thrilled to have this partnership with the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation and the Seattle Storm. Both organizations, very, very-

Jim Hills: 00:26:42 Okay, both.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:42 Yeah. Both organizations, very-

Paul Pitkin: 00:26:46 Both, great at basketball.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:47 Great at basketball, and very committed to children, and ensuring that children are learning and becoming successful in life. So, hey, we’re going to take a break. And then when we come back, we are going to introduce our audience to a new member of the Sno-Isle Libraries staff, someone who maybe known to a number of folks out there. A gentleman named Kurt Batdorf, and he is a very, very interesting guy. We are glad to have him on staff, and we’re going to learn a little bit more about him when we come back.
Speaker 5: 00:27:26 Join business people from around the region, who are taking advantage of free expert business advice through business pros' classes from Sno-Isle Libraries. Find a business pro class at a library near you by searching online for events at Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 00:27:43 We love hearing from our listeners and subscribers, especially if you enjoyed a guest, or have a suggestion for a future topic. Drop us a line at CheckItOutPodcast@sno-isle.org. Again, that's CheckItOutPodcast@sno-isle.org, and let us know what you're thinking. Don't be surprised if we read your comment, or answer your question on our future podcast episode.

Ken Harvey: 00:28:17 Cindy, Paul, Jim, and I are really glad to share a microphone with Kurt Batdorf, who has joined Sno-Isle Libraries team, and has come aboard as one of our communications staff. Hey, Kurt, thank you for joining us for this episode.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:28:34 It's my pleasure. Thanks.

Ken Harvey: 00:28:36 So, we will spend maybe about 20, 30 minutes chatting with you about who you are, all of the dark, dirty, sweaty stuff... No. No. Seriously, we want to know more about who you are, and this role that you are playing in Sno-Isle Libraries. My understanding is that you have got a real local connection. So, where were you born, and where did you grow up?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:29:09 That's a long story. I was born in Fort Louis, and except for three misspent years of my youth in Southern California, I've lived in western Washington my whole life. I spent 25 of my 30 years in journalism, working at newspapers inside the library district.

Ken Harvey: 00:29:28 Wow. So, any namedropping? Any newspapers we might or our audience members might know?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:29:35 Yeah. I worked at the Monroe Monitor. Then, I went to the Lake Great North Snohomish Weekly, which is no longer around, but some people still remember it fondly. I was at the Whidbey News-Times for a few years as a copy editor, and then I spent 13 years at the Everett Herald as a copy editor on the news desk, working four nights a week. And then three years as... three or four years as the community business editor-

Ken Harvey: 00:30:01 Wow.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:30:02 ... which was a new position that they created.
Jim Hills: 00:30:06 So, community business editor, if I get it out...

Kurt Batdorf: 00:30:11 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:30:11 Yeah, yeah. So, what does that mean? How is that different? Why the community in front of that? Why not just business editor? What was the thinking there?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:30:18 The thinking was that the Herald had the existing daily business page, and Mike Benbow was editor at that, and continued in that role. But we also had the Herald... At the time, it was the Snohomish County Business Journal, which was an in-house publication that covered all sorts of business news around Snohomish County. But the two groups were never really integrated there. There was always a separate newsroom for the daily business side, separate staff for the business journal. And this was in 2010, when we'd already gone through multiple rounds of lay-offs. So, the idea was to get more integration between the two publications, save money, generate more content that we could share between both publications. So, that was the impetus for adding the community to that job title.

Jim Hills: 00:31:16 When I think of community journalism and then, the word media, especially these days, I think of those as really different animals. Talk to us a little bit about your experience as a community journalist, what that means. What does that mean you do? How does that feel? What is community journalism?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:31:40 Community journalism is really being tied to the communities you work in and you serve. I guess when I started, I never really put the two together... a long time ago. It was just sort to like, "Well, you're just the weekly newspaper guy." And I guess it sort of became in vogue when newspapers were starting to say, "Hey. We serve you people, and we love you people. And we hope that you continue to read us."

Kurt Batdorf: 00:32:13 I have always looked at community journalism as a way to continue to connect with a community and the people who live and work and play in the regions that we had news, and covered news.

Ken Harvey: 00:32:26 Well, you know, the way I used to think about that, Kurt, is... I remember the time when... especially with daily newspapers, they essentially... and maybe like, almost part of their mantra was, "We bring you the world. We tell you what's going on in the world." And for me, the weekly or... Excuse me, the weekly or really community-based newspapers, their mantra was, "We
bring you your community. We're letting you know what's going on in your community." And it seemed like the daily newspapers... In bringing the world, there was always still a little slice of what was happening in the community, but it was really a small percentage in some ways, in terms of what got the most attention was on the front page or the first section or whatever. And yet, that seems to be flipped, when you come to community newspapers.

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:33:26 Yeah, that's true.

**Ken Harvey:** 00:33:27 Okay.

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:33:27 Yeah.

**Jim Hills:** 00:33:29 My background is also in journalism, and when I think about community journalism versus what I went to school for, what you think about a daily newspaper or a national reporter, as an observer, when doing community journalism, you are sitting close to your source.

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:33:52 You are sitting with your source.

**Jim Hills:** 00:33:55 You are sitting with your source, and it might be the city council and the mayor, and you might be six feet away from them, and it might be 2:00 AM when that council meeting runs long. Maybe not 2, but at least midnight. And it's late, and they are tired, and you've heard everything they have said, and they know you've heard everything they said. And then now, you have to go represent that fairly to the community that they are there to serve, also.

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:34:23 Right.

**Jim Hills:** 00:34:24 And you know you are going to see them next week too, right?

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:34:27 Yeah.

**Cindy Tingley:** 00:34:28 Right.

**Jim Hills:** 00:34:29 This is not about being able to be a fly on the wall, and... dispassionate. You are part of the system in developing that. I would love to hear maybe some stories from you about your experiences in sitting through that, and how you learned that.

**Kurt Batdorf:** 00:34:51 Yeah. Boy, I can't count how many different school board and city council meetings I've had to cover over the years that
inevitably, either ran long... Some of them were so boring I actually did nod off during a couple, and-

Paul Pitkin: 00:35:10 How do you write about that part?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:35:12 Well, the secretary at the Sultan School Board just sort of looked at me and winked, and said, "I know. I'm sorry." So, I think some of the sources that I was covering, and the boards and the commissions and the councils and everything, there is always sort of this acknowledgment that it's not a perfect system, and we'd like to get this done quicker. But it's just how we make the sausage.

Paul Pitkin: 00:35:40 I mean, this leads to something I'm thinking about, and I'm always curious about this with journalists in general. But particularly, you've been in this area so long, and to me, what you guys are talking about is like hardcore relationship building to a certain degree. And when you are this intimate with the community that you are covering... you've been covering kind of this are for a long time. How do you deal with when you make somebody mad? I mean, you're going to write something that's going to be upsetting to these people you're talking to on a weekly or daily basis. How do you manage that? Because I just find it fascinating with journalists how they do that.

Ken Harvey: 00:36:18 Or did you even try managing it? Like, "I am on a mission to... get people upset."

Kurt Batdorf: 00:36:24 No. I really dislike conflict. It was more... There are always going to be times like that, and when those did come up for me, I would try to explain to my source. It's like, "Look. We both know that this is not going to turn out well, but I have my job-"

Paul Pitkin: 00:36:48 Children love hearing that.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:36:49 Yeah. I can't recall any specific example, but it was always kind of this delicate balancing act, where it's like, "I know that what we're saying... What I've got to write about is important. You don't really want to me to write about it, but you know that I have to."

Cindy Tingley: 00:37:05 Right.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:06 So there was always kind of that balance-

Paul Pitkin: 00:37:07 Did you ever the stink-eye? Like, the day after-
Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:10 Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I got a lot of stink-eyes, especially as a weekly editor. It's like, I was the face of the paper, and I am out there representing the paper, but also representing everyone else who lives in the city or the region, the community.

Paul Pitkin: 00:37:28 Did you ever have somebody say, like, "Well, I'm not going to talk to you anymore because you wrote something bad?"

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:31 Oh, yeah.

Cindy Tingley: 00:37:31 Oh, wow.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:31 Yeah.

Paul Pitkin: 00:37:32 Did they ever follow through, or...

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:34 They would follow through for a while, but then they realized, "Oh. I've got something I need to say. I need to get that board out, and you're the only voice I have."

Ken Harvey: 00:37:42 That wasn't your wife, was it?

Cindy Tingley: 00:37:45 No.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:45 No. No.

Ken Harvey: 00:37:45 Okay.

Cindy Tingley: 00:37:47 I'm thinking the flip side there. You have to avoid of appearance of bias as well, right? Because you are always with this group of people, and you're writing about it, and...

Kurt Batdorf: 00:37:56 Yeah. I want to give credit out to Howard Voland, who was the publisher at the Monroe Monitor when I worked there, and he really kind of, gave me the chops to find that balance between using my voice, using the paper's voice, and representing the views of the community, and balancing that with, kind of, getting the news out from sources who by and large, were great about cooperating with us. But every once in a while, something would just kind of go off the rails, and you just had to find the way to get through it, and move on to the next issue.

Paul Pitkin: 00:38:33 Was there a difference... and I can't imagine there not being one. You're talking about the Monroe Monitor, and then you worked at the Everett Herald. One is like a much smaller community... or I think about like, the Whidbey-
Kurt Batdorf: 00:38:47 Yeah, Whidbey News-Times.

Cindy Tingley: 00:38:48 Right. Right.

Paul Pitkin: 00:38:49 Whidbey News-Times, that's right. Yeah. So the smaller communities where people really know each other a lot, and then a bigger one like Everett... Was it harder to manage this cat and mouse game that we're talking about in a smaller community?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:39:01 Yeah. Well, most of the time I was at the Herald, I was a copy editor. So I was designing pages, just basically reading content, reading what the staff reporters had written, and then kind of compiling all of that into a section for the night. So, usually, it was the local section in the business pages. So, there wasn't that conflict on that side.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:39:24 When I became community business editor, then I was back out in the public again. So, it was then relying on "Okay, now. How did I use to handle this?" But the business journal was more oriented towards trying to get out the positive business news that was going on in the county, and especially in the wake of the economic-

Ken Harvey: 00:39:45 Just the business, not the personality-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:39:47 Just the business. Well, we did personality features too, but it was more about... It's like, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and their business, and what they are doing, and what they have created. A lot of entrepreneurial stories.

Ken Harvey: 00:39:59 But I can't imagine, with the personal, kind of behind the scenes stories that you do at the business journal, that those were ones that would result in the stink-eye, I think-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:40:11 Yeah. There was much less stink-eye... although, it was... That was still in the wake of the economic meltdown, so there was still a lot of... We had done a lot of stories about all the banks that went out of business. So, every time there was... The day I started, I think, was the day Frontier Bank was closed down.

Ken Harvey: 00:40:35 Wow.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:40:37 So, all of a sudden, we had a lot of news to cover.

Ken Harvey: 00:40:41 Yeah. Those were tough times.
Cindy Tingley: 00:40:42 Yeah, there were.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:40:43 Yeah. It was definitely tough, and the business journal had really suffered from it because prior to 2008, they had a lot of banking advertising. After that... what was it? Half the banks in the county went out of business in that two years. So, it was definitely tough times, and-

Jim Hills: 00:41:01 Wow. That's an interesting piece that I think... I mean, a statistic that we lose sight of. Half the banks in the county went out of business.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:41:10 Don't quote me, but a lot of Snohomish County-

Paul Pitkin: 00:41:15 Close to half is a huge thing.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:41:17 Yeah. But we lost a lot of financial institutions.

Ken Harvey: 00:41:21 Well, if I was going to quote anyone, it probably would be you because I became aware that some of the... that incredible, kind of, statistical information that would be found within the Puget Sound Business Journal was stuff that you were putting together yourself.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:41:37 Yeah. Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:41:38 Yeah, you were the source for a lot of us in terms of having a sense of what's going on economically in the region, and so, thank you for that previous work. Look, I don't want to lose the opportunity since I've got you and Jim, both with your journalism backgrounds. To just bring up this thing that's been so in the news, especially for the last two to three years, since the 2016 election. But for some of us who go back farther than that, I remember, and I will just say it for myself. I remember when USA Today was first published, and it was a major, kind of, controversy in the journalism world around the type of journalism, or what they considered to be, in some ways, false journalism that USA Today represented, which was not just about the facts but also, kind of, weaving in more commentary and more opinion to really create a more colorful story. And so, since there is so much talk in the... seemingly everywhere, around this whole notion of fake news, and opinion-based journalism, what's your feeling about... How tough is it to essentially do a story that just essentially presents the facts without folding in opinion, and leading the story towards a conclusion that you have?
Kurt Batdorf: 00:43:14 Well, I really feel for my old journalism colleagues, who have to just navigate this minefield every day because it is... I know how tough it is, or I... Well, I don't know. I understand how tough it is to actually get readers to understand that what newspaper reporters present is fact. And by and large, they are not just making stuff up, the outliers where a handful of reporters committed plagiarism. That's kind of painting everyone with the same brush. Reporters just work incredibly hard to get the stories right. And even in this time, when newspapers are so diminished in staff, facts always matter, and they always will matter. I think that it's a tragedy that we have so many elected talking heads now, just decrying actual news as fake that they just don't like.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:44:22 I think that's the real tragedy. I don't have an answer for it. It's just really frustrating as a former journalist, just seeing so many journalists just having their whole careers just erased as "Well, that's fake news because I don't like it." That's really frustrating.

Paul Pitkin: 00:44:43 When you talk to people, I'm always amazed when I hear from people who are saying, "This paper is biased." Or "This is biased." "This is biased." "This is biased." And they assume that journalists are just going around with no standards. They are just like, "Well, he's probably this." Or whatever. And it's like, you guys aren't the only journalists I've known. There is ethical standards. There is professional standards. There is all these different ways that these things that you guys follow. And it must be really frustrating to have some person who knows nothing about what you do, say that you weren't following those standards, or that they don't exist.

Jim Hills: 00:45:24 From my perspective, when I was active as a journalist, there used to sayings that if everybody complained, you got it right. Like with most sayings like that, there is a kernel of truth there. So, even at the community level in journalism, there are passionate, passionate people about their communities, and they have thoughts and feelings about how they think their communities should grow, or not grow. As a journalist sharing that story, sometimes when you’re in that kind of a setting, just including the other perspective in a story is fake news... today, it would be called fake news. Then, it was called bias, right?

Cindy Tingley: 00:46:25 Right.

Jim Hills: 00:46:28 And the trick was to make sure that there was a fair representation of voices in the community about a particular issue, so that our reader... so who wasn’t at the meeting, who isn’t up to speed on any particular issue can read and see a
variety of perspectives about whatever it is you are writing about. And I always thought that that was my goal, that yes, I was performing, I was working as a journalist, but my role was citizen. And, I was getting paid to be places, where most people didn't have time to be. I was getting paid to relay a story that is someone else had time to be there, they would get that same story. So, I really wasn't any different than anybody else. There's no license to be a journalist. You sign on to perform a certain story, perform at a certain level, to follow certain ethical standards, and you are judged by your readership, you are judged by results of your work every time.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:47:42 And on every single story.

Jim Hills: 00:47:44 Every single story. That's where your license comes from, by the coin that you develop and put out there into the community and its truthfulness. That's where the license comes from. And so, I always viewed myself as just a citizen, who was fortunate enough to be able to be there, and then tell other people about what was going on in their community. You do that in a fair fashion to your reader. That doesn't mean your sources are always going to be happy because they had a perspective. "Why did you include that idiot who clearly doesn't agree with me?"

Ken Harvey: 00:48:22 Well, I want to just remind the audience as we are talking about this that at the start of the show, you actually hear Cindy Tingley's voice saying that the opinions you hear voiced on this program do not necessarily represent the official positions of Sno-Isle Libraries-

Cindy Tingley: 00:48:35 You just read my mind.

Ken Harvey: 00:48:38 And because I would go kind of further and say, as Jim just said, reporters, regardless if they are print-based or electronic-based, are just individuals, normally trying to do their job. But you are judged not just by the story, but sometimes, by every word in the story, and by what you choose or what is chosen to be reflected in the story. And so, there is an incredible reliance often on sources. How tough is it... And I just want to say that I've had instances in my career having been trained in journalism myself, and knowing that there's these higher level ethical principles that we were trained on that are really meant to train or meant to help provide guidelines around keeping my own biases out of the story.

Ken Harvey: 00:49:42 But, often times, we are getting information from sources who have their own motivations. How tough did you find it at times
to help skate through that, or sail through those waters, so that it didn't unfairly color a story?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:50:07 There is always going to be... You always ran into that, and really you just kind of... I just had developed a spidey sense on when I felt like I was getting played for something.

Ken Harvey: 00:50:21 That's shorthand for Spider-Man, right?

Cindy Tingley: 00:50:23 Yes.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:50:23 Yes, it is.

Paul Pitkin: 00:50:25 It also sounds like shorthand for experience, like, it's learning what the... when-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:50:30 Oh, yeah. I mean, early in my career, I was gullible, and I was 23. It's like, "Okay. If you say that's true, I'll just go ahead and write that down."

Paul Pitkin: 00:50:41 And that worked, right?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:50:43 Yeah. That worked until... Then it's like, I would learn from that. I was like, "Oh. Okay. Well, that is not necessarily a trustworthy source." And really, it is just a matter of experience, and knowing... As a journalist, it's like, "This is my reputation. This is my professional reputation, and I am the only one who can really protect it." And it's up to me to maintain that. Reporters today, no matter what field they are working in... all of them value that, and that's... It's so easy to just denigrate it but it's something that... No reporter is out there who wants to just... intentionally spreading a lie or false information. They are all out there to get out accurate news and fair news.

Cindy Tingley: 00:51:35 Do you know that some of the conflict or confusion arises because some people are actually reporters, they are journalists, and others are commentators? And there's no real break in the definition, when you see Person A and Person B. They don't go, "Hey. This is just my opinion." Do you think that muddies the waters?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:51:54 Oh, definitely. I think you've got a lot of... at least, on round the clock cable news now, you've got a lot of people doing analysis, that is really, kind of, their opinion, and it's not necessarily based in fact.

Cindy Tingley: 00:52:10 Right.
Kurt Batdorf: 00:52:13 That hasn't really helped journalism much.

Ken Harvey: 00:52:16 Well, you've got a long record of being a storyteller, and now you are on board here with us at the Sno-Isle Libraries. With the work that you are doing for us, anything that's surprising you? This episode is called "Hmm, I Didn't Know That." So anything that you're coming across that you're like, "Hmm. I didn't know that" about Sno-Isle Libraries?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:52:45 Yeah. Before I interviewed for the job, I actually talked to a couple of the Stanwood branch employees, just like, "Hey. What's it like working with Sno-Isle?" And they were both... just like dropped everything to talk to me on a Sunday afternoon when the branch was busy, and there were a lot of people in there. Just the fact that everybody from top to bottom is just so willing to just go out of their way to help anybody, it's just really refreshing.

Ken Harvey: 00:53:19 Are guys not like that everywhere you work?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:53:21 No. No, it is not like that everywhere I work.

Paul Pitkin: 00:53:24 Are you saying it's weird to work in an environment where there is not stink-eye?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:53:26 Yeah. Yeah, especially not if it's my... [crosstalk 00:53:30]

Kurt Batdorf: 00:53:30 Yeah, no. But it's just such a... The "Hmm" is like I didn't expect to be so welcomed, and to feel like immediately part of the team. That's what's been really eye-opening for me, and that's really what's driving me now to find all of these great stories that we just have hidden within the library district. And it's fun to be able to write again. I kind of miss that.

Cindy Tingley: 00:54:03 Yay.

Ken Harvey: 00:54:04 So, any great... Jim?

Jim Hills: 00:54:06 No, go ahead.

Ken Harvey: 00:54:07 Any great stories that you started to uncover to had an opportunity to talk about or write about yet?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:54:13 Well, yeah. At the Snohomish Library, somebody had asked about the Hobbit painting that was in the old Carnegie Library. And they had been in the new library since 2003, I think.
Ken Harvey: 00:54:26 So, the old Carnegie Library is the historical Carnegie Library?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:54:30 Correct. Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:54:31 In the town of... In the city of-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:54:32 In the city of Snohomish. So, when the library moved out of the Carnegie and into the new branch... Apparently this city owned the old Carnegie building, so Sno-Isle was not able to move any of the attached fixtures, and one of those attached fixtures was the Hobbit painting. A few months ago, a patron asked, "Hey. Where did the Hobbit go?" And the institutional knowledge was getting kind of dim, and the staff there did some research, and they realized, "Oh, that Hobbit painting." Giant six feet by nine feet, I think.

Ken Harvey: 00:55:11 Wow.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:11 It's a big painting.

Cindy Tingley: 00:55:12 Huge.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:13 Well, the City of Snohomish had just put it in a heated storage in the public works warehouse, and it had just been sitting there for 16 years.

Cindy Tingley: 00:55:21 Oh, my goodness.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:25 Help me with the name, Jim. Who...

Jim Hills: 00:55:28 At the library?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:28 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 00:55:29 Jude?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:30 Yeah. Jude...

Paul Pitkin: 00:55:31 You talked to a Terry Lippincott by any chance?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:33 Yes. That's right. Jude and Terry.

Paul Pitkin: 00:55:34 Terry is the president of the foundation board-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:55:37 I knew you would find a way to get that [crosstalk 00:55:38]

Paul Pitkin: 00:55:38 Any opportunity to [crosstalk 00:55:40]
And Paul, funny thing, I interviewed Terry for a story in the Monroe Monitor in 1989-

Wow.

... when she was a middle school teacher. And she remembered me.

She had a really good memory.

Yeah, which was kind of... which shocked me. It was like, "Oh. I don't-"

She remembered you, and there was no stink-eye?

No stink-eye, no.

Good.

It was a nice feature at the time about how teachers have to make ends meet during the summer, and she was happy to help me.

Well, she had told me. She left one of our board meetings... After one of our board meetings, she was in a huge hurry to go to the unveiling of the Hobbit painting.

Yeah.

That's so awesome.

So, she and Jude helped... They basically found it, and then Terry kind of took the lead on figuring out how to get it mounted back in the new library.

I have got to go check that out.

Yeah.

Me too.

Yeah.

Well, that's a great story. Thank you for telling us.

Sure.
Ken Harvey: 00:56:39 We've actually pretty much run out of time.

Paul Pitkin: 00:56:41 I got one more quick question, and it's for-

Ken Harvey: 00:56:45 Just for you, Paul.

Jim Hills: 00:56:48 Do I have to say the word foundation again?

Cindy Tingley: 00:56:48 Foundation. Yes.

Paul Pitkin: 00:56:51 Seven times each. This is both for Kurt and Jim, probably is yes or no question. Are you guys disappointed that you're not breaking news every day on Twitter?

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:02 I am not. No.

Jim Hills: 00:57:04 No. No.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:07 I'm just grateful that I get to write great things about great people doing great stuff here at the library.

Paul Pitkin: 00:57:12 With more than 140 characters.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:13 With more than a 100-

Cindy Tingley: 00:57:13 Yes.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:14 ... or yeah, whatever it is on Twitter now.

Paul Pitkin: 00:57:16 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:57:16 Right.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:17 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:57:18 Well, Kurt, it's fantastic having you on staff. It's also fun to essentially reveal you to hopefully audience members who remember you from-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:29 Yeah. Thanks, Ken.

Ken Harvey: 00:57:30 ... past stories that you have done, work that you have done with some incredible organizations that help serve the community and the region. We're made better by having individuals like you on board-

Kurt Batdorf: 00:57:45 Thank you.
Ken Harvey: 00:57:45 ... so, thank you for helping us serve your region. And I want to just invite all of our listeners to stay tuned for things that come from Kurt as we talk about some of the incredible work happening at Sno-Isle Libraries. Thanks for joining us.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:58:03 You're welcome.

Cindy Tingley: 00:58:03 Thank you.

Kurt Batdorf: 00:58:03 My pleasure.

Ken Harvey: 00:58:12 Hey, that was a very interesting interview.

Cindy Tingley: 00:58:14 That was fun.

Jim Hills: 00:58:15 I love having Kurt on the team. He just brings such a wealth of experience, and he's a great guy. He's just a really nice guy-

Ken Harvey: 00:58:24 Yeah, that comes across. That comes across.

Paul Pitkin: 00:58:27 The discussion we were having just about journalism in general and about sources and keeping sources, and-

Ken Harvey: 00:58:33 And the foundation.

Cindy Tingley: 00:58:34 Oh, yeah. Of course.

Paul Pitkin: 00:58:34 Well, that's my favorite subject in any podcast, but I just thought the whole discussion was fascinating. The fact that Kurt has worked in this area for so long, what an interesting perspective. He hasn't been all over the country. It's like, those roots are deep.

Cindy Tingley: 00:58:53 Right.

Paul Pitkin: 00:58:53 And so, it's kind of, who better to get stories about Sno-Isle Libraries than him-

Ken Harvey: 00:59:00 Than a guy who knows the community-

Paul Pitkin: 00:59:02 Yes, who has been there for... and talked with the players for so long. I think it's really great.

Ken Harvey: 00:59:06 I think that's a really important point because sometimes, the things that we think might be important to tell may not be as important to our audience members. And Kurt, with his background in community journalism, I think has a unique sense
of what might be interesting to individuals and various communities. His story about the Hobbit painting, I think, is a great example of that. I just loved it that he knew Terry Lippincott [crosstalk 00:59:38]

Paul Pitkin: 00:59:38 I've actually seen Terry. Like, she will be at an event, and she will see somebody that she hasn't seen in years... She actually knows my cousin somehow. When she was teaching, he was at one of her schools, like, 20 years ago or something. And she remembered him, and it's just like... It's amazing.

Cindy Tingley: 00:59:55 That's awesome.

Jim Hills: 00:59:55 So, speaking of podcasts, recently we put this podcast on the home page of sno-islelibraries.org, and-

Ken Harvey: 01:00:06 Oh, wow.

Jim Hills: 01:00:08 ... we've been an awesome-kept secret, and now we are out in the open right there in the-

Paul Pitkin: 01:00:12 So, this is on the home page?

Jim Hills: 01:00:13 On the home page. Right-

Paul Pitkin: 01:00:13 You don't have to go into your Apple iPods or... your podcasts or anything? Obviously, you can't listen to it in the car that way, right? Or can you?

Jim Hills: 01:00:21 Depends on what you have in your car, I suppose.

Paul Pitkin: 01:00:25 You probably need the Internet connection, but that's pretty great. You can just go on and click on it and start listening.

Jim Hills: 01:00:29 Yeah. So, we're officially launched. We've done 25, I think, episodes-

Ken Harvey: 01:00:33 Yeah, almost 30 episodes.

Jim Hills: 01:00:36 Yeah, somewhere in there. And out on the homepage of the sno-isle.org site, it's going to be exciting.

Paul Pitkin: 01:00:45 That's great.

Ken Harvey: 01:00:46 Well, you know what? I think that we should consider inviting Kurt back sometime to chat with us some more, and he is pretty cool to talk to.
Paul Pitkin: 01:00:54 I'm really looking forward to hearing his... The more stories he gets, I'm looking forward to hearing those.

Cindy Tingley: 01:00:59 Right. The longer he is here, and-

Paul Pitkin: 01:01:00 Yeah. The longer he is... he is digging them up. It's going to be great to hear them.

Ken Harvey: 01:01:04 All right. Well, nice episode, everyone.

Jim Hills: 01:01:06 Awesome.

Ken Harvey: 01:01:08 If you enjoy this podcast, please subscribe, so you can receive every episode automatically. And until next time, remember your library has a lot to offer you. So, what are you waiting for? Check it out.