Jim Hills: 00:00 We're here today with two of my favorite people, Ken Harvey-

Ken Harvey: 00:04 And Ken Harvey, right?

Jim Hills: 00:05 And Ken Harvey and Darlene Weber, who I'm very excited to speak with today. Darlene is managing librarian at the Mill Creek Library. I have a couple of stats, but I want to wait to get into those about the Mill Creek library. But really excited to talk to you about your experience as a librarian, maybe some of your experiences as a child growing up in Yakima. I think I read that in your bio. I happen to know that you've traveled some. I have traveled almost none, so I want to have some vicarious thrills.

Darlene Weber: 00:36 Oh, thrilling. Okay. Yes. Happy to.

Jim Hills: 00:38 We'll be back in just a minute here with Darlene Weber.

Speaker 4: 00:50 Welcome to season two and episode 41 of Check It Out!, The Sno-Isle Libraries podcast for lifelong learners with inquiring minds.

Speaker 5: 00:58 The views and opinions expressed on this podcast may not necessarily reflect the official position of Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 01:05 We're back in the studio. We're going to have this great conversation with Darlene Weber who manages one of the libraries that we have in a community that is just a jewel of a community, Mill Creek, Washington. Which for listeners who may not know the area as intimately as people who live in Mill Creek do, Mill Creek is nestled in the foothills of the Pacific Northwest in what they might call these days the greater Seattle area north of ... North of what? North of Bothell, Washington.

Jim Hills: 01:44 North of Bothell.

Ken Harvey: 01:45 North of Seattle.

(Continued)
Jim Hills: 01:46  North of [crosstalk 00:01:46]. North of Seattle.

Ken Harvey: 01:47  North of Lake Washington, which is next to Seattle.

Jim Hills: 01:50  So while we're doing geography lessons I'll add a little bit of history. I grew up in North Seattle, proper North Seattle. For a long time we would drive north. Well actually, so I actually predate the freeway. Once the freeway was in, we drive north on the freeway and there would be this sign for Mill Creek. There were nothing but trees around. I mean, we were way out in the sticks. There's this big sign on the freeway for Mill Creek and we would say to each other and laugh like, "Who would live this far out? Oh, that's so funny." Now it is ...

Ken Harvey: 02:26  It's different now.

Jim Hills: 02:27  It is different now.

Darlene Weber: 02:28  Now it's everyone.

Jim Hills: 02:29  Yeah, yeah.

Darlene Weber: 02:30  Now, it's everyone.

Ken Harvey: 02:31  Darlene, we are delighted to have you with us ...

Darlene Weber: 02:33  Oh, thank you.

Ken Harvey: 02:35  ... just for the audience's sake, more proper introduction. Managing librarian of the Mill Creek libraries. Been with Sno-Isle Libraries a number of years. We'll get into that in a minute. You have some other claims to fame, world-class hiker happen to know that about you, a mountaineer, and delighted to hear that you are postgraduate, almost a lifetime Everett Community College student.

Darlene Weber: 03:08  Correct.

Ken Harvey: 03:09  Nine years of Everett Community College after your master's degree.

Darlene Weber: 03:14  That is correct.

Ken Harvey: 03:15  Wow. That is really something. You talk about lifelong learning, you're a model of that.

Darlene Weber: 03:21  Thank you.
Ken Harvey: 03:22 Let's get into just really sharing more about who you are with our audience. You're a member of this core of professionals that Sno-Isle Libraries has managing a community library. Let's just talk a little bit about the job that you have. We'll go into your personal history a little bit later, but let's talk about the job a little bit. A managing librarian does what?

Darlene Weber: 03:51 Right, a managing librarian, when we have 30 staff members that work there ... We have three main work groups. We have our librarians and they do a lot of our programming. They do our outreach. They provide the services, information services, readers' advisory. Then we have our circulation staff. They do all the processing, making sure materials come in and out of the library for our customers who are requesting materials. Then we have our page staff. They put the books on the shelf and take the books off the shelf for our customers. It's just making sure all those pieces work in order to serve the needs of our community. That's in a nutshell.

Ken Harvey: 04:32 Yeah, if you were actually running a for profit business, you're saying you have 30 employees.

Darlene Weber: 04:38 Correct.

Ken Harvey: 04:39 That's pretty remarkable. I mean, because we're talking about opening and closing essentially a business operation every day, right?

Darlene Weber: 04:47 That is correct, yes.

Ken Harvey: 04:49 Wow.

Jim Hills: 04:51 The Mill Creek Library is a really interesting one out of the 23 within the Sno-Isle system, because the square by square footage, the library is one of the smaller ones, right?

Darlene Weber: 05:04 It is. That is correct, yes.

Jim Hills: 05:06 But in terms of volume of people and materials going in and out, it's either first or second depending on how you measure, right?

Darlene Weber: 05:14 That is correct. For instance, our children's books, all the books in our children's area, they circulate more than any other building that we have. That's our easy picture books, our nonfiction, our readers, our J books, our J fiction.
Ken Harvey: 05:30  J stand for what?
Darlene Weber: 05:32  Oh, good question. Right?
Ken Harvey: 05:33  I'm going to challenge you on any acronyms and shorthand.
Darlene Weber: 05:36  I don't remember. We just use J.
Ken Harvey: 05:39  What a minute. You've been going to school how many years now?
Darlene Weber: 05:42  Juvenile. It's our juvenile collection.
Ken Harvey: 05:43  Juvenile?
Darlene Weber: 05:44  Yes.
Jim Hills: 05:45  Why do you think, why do you think Mill Creek generates that much traffic?
Ken Harvey: 05:51  Yeah, why is it so popular?
Darlene Weber: 05:51  I think it's the location for one. I think a lot of people come to Mill Creek. It's a great community. There's central market. There's the town center with all the great restaurants. There's U-dub bookstore. I think it's the location.
Jim Hills: 06:07  You're right on Bothell-Everett Highway, right?
Darlene Weber: 06:09  Yeah, we are. Also that area is just growing, the area between Mill Creek and Bothell, that South Snohomish County area is growing.
Ken Harvey: 06:18  Well, it's not just growing. It's booming.
Darlene Weber: 06:20  It's booming, yes. That's true. Yes, that's very true. They're building schools constantly.
Ken Harvey: 06:24  I mean there are even fewer trees that Jim was talking about. There's even fewer trees in the world last year or the year before. I mean, it's amazing how much growth is happening there.
Darlene Weber: 06:35  That's true.
Ken Harvey: 06:36  Well, and you also have, as I recall in terms of you saying it's location, you now have a community transit express, not a bus rapid transit line coming by.

Darlene Weber: 06:49  Yes, the green line just began a couple months ago.

Ken Harvey: 06:52  Like every 10, 15, 20 minutes there's a ...

Darlene Weber: 06:55  Yes.

Ken Harvey: 06:55  Wow.

Darlene Weber: 06:56  Yeah, it really does. The green line and the blue line really connects Snohomish County now, which was wonderful.

Ken Harvey: 07:02  Well, it's a wonderful library.

Darlene Weber: 07:06  Thank you.

Ken Harvey: 07:07  It actually used to be the library that I used to frequent all the time, because we lived nearby and always bustling, almost always something going on.

Jim Hills: 07:21  Let me jump in a little bit. We talked about the square footage of the library. Maybe you could speak a little bit about, to our listeners about why that doesn't actually matter to a customer who comes to not only the Mill Creek Library, but any library in the Sno-Isle system in terms of access to the overall collection.

Darlene Weber: 07:39  Right. Well, we're one of 23 libraries. We are open 24/7 on our website. I always tell people, no matter where you are in the world, no matter what time it is, you can access us. They can go look at our collection online, through the catalog. Then they're able to put those books on hold. Then our staff goes out in those 23 libraries, pull those books off the shelf, and they send them to Mill Creek. Our Mill Creek customers are really savvy about that. We have a lot of holds that come into our library, so they know that if they're not going to be able to find something on the shelf at Mill Creek, they can just look online and place a hold for that and then come pick it up when it's ready. It's a great service that all of our libraries provide.

Ken Harvey: 08:25  It's just interesting, that whole sharing economy idea that you're part of something. You have a local outlet there. You can go online, so you have both a physical place you can go. You can see everything online. You can get it delivered to you there. You're sharing with everybody else in the system.
Darlene Weber: 08:48 That that's correct. To me even more exciting are our digital resources. You don't even to wait for that book to come in. Very often when you do a search, you'll see that we have all the formats. I remember a time not too long ago when a collection development would select a book to come into our library district, into our catalog. It would come in in the print format and then later we might get the talking book and then maybe later in a different language. But now you'll see them showing up in our catalog all at the same time. More and more I'm seeing where we actually will have materials, books in digital format and not even in the print.

Ken Harvey: 09:29 Can I just jump in for a second? Because buy collection development you, you're referring to librarians ...

Darlene Weber: 09:34 Correct.

Ken Harvey: 09:34 ... who actually work to help select the different titles that we have available to to customers, right?

Darlene Weber: 09:41 Right. They are monitoring that. They have their selection criteria. They know that more and more people are asking for the digital material rather than the print.

Ken Harvey: 09:53 Well it just seems like between the digital materials and the ability to, if you want to actually hold something in your hands and read it or enjoy it, you can reserve it online. If you don't really have much time to just come into the library and really browse, walk around the collection, you can reserve it online and just swoop into the parking lot, jump out and go to what you call the holds shelf or the reservation shelf.

Darlene Weber: 10:22 Correct.

Ken Harvey: 10:23 Find what you've reserved and check it out and off you go.

Darlene Weber: 10:27 Yeah, a lot of our customers do that. We used to have just a one five minute parking spot. But we know a lot of our customers, they are so savvy about looking at those books and ordering them online, so now we have two, two five minute parkings. People can just come in, get their books, leave.

Jim Hills: 10:44 So it's doubled your traffic, right?

Darlene Weber: 10:46 Yes, yes.
Ken Harvey: 10:46 Yeah, so almost almost as as enjoyable as In-N-Out Burgers, right?

Darlene Weber: 10:53 Yes.

Ken Harvey: 10:53 It's just in and out service.

Darlene Weber: 10:53 Do you want fries with that?

Jim Hills: 10:55 Okay, so wait. I can't let this past because I mentioned that I predate the freeway, but it made me smile when you called it the talking book. I want to a show of hands out there for everybody who remembers the phrase talking book as opposed to audio book or any of the other E anything labels that we put on digital materials these days. You mean one that you get to listen to, right?

Darlene Weber: 11:20 Right.

Jim Hills: 11:20 Yeah, there we go.

Darlene Weber: 11:21 Yes.

Jim Hills: 11:21 I remember that phrase though, the talking book. That's what we used to call it too.

Darlene Weber: 11:25 Yeah, I'm probably dating myself when I use that. It's an audio book or E-audio book or the downloadable audio book.

Ken Harvey: 11:33 Darlene, how long have you worked for Sno-Isle Libraries. Yeah, I'll just stop with that question.

Darlene Weber: 11:41 20 years. Yes, 20 years. I started as a substitute when we had substitutes, which I absolutely loved. I was able to, it's a great way to start your librarian career, because you get to go around to lots of different libraries and rural ones, more urban ones and different sizes. They're all very unique. It's a really great learning curve. Then I was a children's librarian at Stanwood for eight years. Then from there I went to Mill Creek. I've been there for 11 years now.

Ken Harvey: 12:12 When you were a children's librarian, what age ranges where you working with?

Darlene Weber: 12:16 Baby through elementary school

Ken Harvey: 12:19 Baby?
Darlene Weber: 12:20  Yes.

Ken Harvey: 12:21  You're teaching babies to read?

Darlene Weber: 12:22  Yes. Well that's such an important time, right? The nursery rhymes and they're learning to make connections, you know, so like the bouncing rhymes for example, when you say up, up, up and the mom or dad or caregiver is raising that baby up, up, up, when they're saying up, up, up. They can make that connection. Then when you go down, down, down or you place them on their knee and go, bounce, bounce, bounce, all of that and then the rhymes, all of that. The earlier we can get kids started, the better it is.

Jim Hills: 12:51  I was going to say, I'll just jump in for a second because I think that's so interesting. One of the things that I've come to understand and learn about librarians here at Sno-Isle Libraries about our children's librarians and early literacy is that it's really way more. When you go to a story time at a Sno-Isle Libraries community library, there's a librarian there. There's a book. The kids are on sitting there or on the floor and the Story time that comes out. It's way more than that. It's very intentional. The stories that get chosen, the way they get read, the aligning the book with the age group. I have come to understand that librarians here are actually experts at early literacy and early childhood education and model not only the behavior for the child, as you were just saying, it's modeling the behavior for the adult ...


Jim Hills: 13:49  ... that's come with that child.

Darlene Weber: 13:50  Absolutely. Yeah, it really is. It really is. It's marvelous to watch them. It really is an art, part art and part science. Everything is intentional when there are various aspects of those programs that are very intentional in order to provide as much of a learning opportunity for, yes, both the child, the baby, the toddler, the preschooler, and the caregiver.

Ken Harvey: 14:12  And has the added benefit of being really fun.

Jim Hills: 14:15  Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 14:15  So do you have a favorite story or memory of your time as a children's librarian? Any particular child that comes to mind or family that you interacted with?
Darlene Weber: 14:29 Let's see. There were so many. What really comes to mind is my coworker, if I can.

Ken Harvey: 14:37 Oh yes.

Darlene Weber: 14:38 Myra Jones, she's a legend, she was wonderful.

Ken Harvey: 14:43 Up at Stanwood.

Darlene Weber: 14:44 Yeah. She's still there. I'm going to give her a shout out now. Hi Myra. She has been there for so long that there were children that came in to see her as preschoolers who have now become adults and are bringing their children in as preschoolers. We are very fortunate to have a number of children's librarians like that.

Jim Hills: 15:07 That's fantastic.

Darlene Weber: 15:08 Yeah, so when I think of my time as a children's librarian, my heart is warmed by my time with Myra and what she taught me.

Ken Harvey: 15:17 That's almost like having a doctor who delivered you and now is delivering your baby.

Darlene Weber: 15:24 I know, right?

Ken Harvey: 15:24 Yeah, that's really wonderful.

Jim Hills: 15:25 Did you start in public libraries?

Darlene Weber: 15:27 I didn't. I started in an elementary school library for Everett school district.

Ken Harvey: 15:34 I have a question about that. I have heard a couple of librarians say that ... Library at a, at a public school might be a little different, but it still falls under the academic librarian heading as opposed to public librarian, which is a little different. I've heard librarian say that those are two different paths. It's not all that often that you get a librarian who moves from one path to the other. I'm curious about your experience with that.

Darlene Weber: 16:06 Well, when I went to library school, I really wanted to go into public libraries, and I knew that. However, I have a teaching degree. I have a bachelor's in ed and multicultural teaching. I wasn't sure if I wanted to go back to work full time. I was fortunate to be a stay at home mom. I thought, "Well, maybe I'll just substitute for the Everett School District and just to start to
work again." However, when I put my application in, there were four positions, full time positions for elementary school librarians with the school district. They called me up and said, "We see you want to be a sub, but are you interested in a full time applying for a full time position?" I really enjoyed those two years. I did get a job, but I knew that my heart was really in public libraries. After two years with Everett School District, I applied for Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 17:01 What is the attraction to public libraries? Why is there that choice? Built into that observation by other librarians here is that there's something really attractive about being a public librarian. There's something, some kind of calling there. What did that speak to you? How did that speak to you?

Darlene Weber: 17:22 Just my very earliest memories of public libraries and how fort-, I feel like that public libraries really did help me. I attribute much of my success to being introduced at a very young age to public libraries. I am a lifelong learner. It's almost like a occupational hazard. Right? I work at the library. There's so many books. I love the community building, going out and finding who are the people in the organizations that have identified needs in the community. What are the strategies that they're using to meet those needs? Boy, it's just, it's my calling. I love it.

Jim Hills: 18:05 That's great.

Ken Harvey: 18:06 Well, you used a term earlier, and I think that's a great segue. You said multicultural. Let's talk, let's explore a little bit about your beginnings. Tell us about where you were born and some of your early life experience.

Darlene Weber: 18:23 Okay. As I mentioned, I was born in Yakima Valley. I'm the eighth child of 11. We were pretty poor. We did not have indoor plumbing until I was fourth grade. I really appreciate indoor plumbing.

Ken Harvey: 18:39 I do too, because I've lived that as well. I know what that's like.

Darlene Weber: 18:46 We were farm workers. From a very beginning memory, from my very earliest memories, I remember growing up in the summer in the fields. As soon as I could reach up and pick that apple on the bottom of the tree, I was working.

Ken Harvey: 19:01 Was it mostly apple, apple tree, apple picking?
Darlene Weber: 19:04  Everything.

Ken Harvey: 19:04  Everything, like what? You have to describe it for people who don't know what field work is like.

Darlene Weber: 19:11  I have picked potatoes. I have picked onions. I have hoed beets. I have cut hop vines that, which is actually the worst because they snap. It's just like being whipped, so not fun. I've done everything really. I've worked in the warehouses, so did a lot of that hard labor. We were very fortunate though, because we were not migrant workers. We had a home. We went to school year after year in the same place. But we did work really hard in the summers. We learned the value of work ethics.

Ken Harvey: 19:46  But the summers were always cool though in Yakima.

Darlene Weber: 19:48  Oh yeah, we used to get up before the crack of dawn and be out there before the sun came up, so that we can be home by early afternoon. Those were good times. Those were really good times. My family and I, again, coming from a really large family, we're super close, even today. My mom is my bestie. I love her dearly. A great childhood. I think there's a lot you hear sometimes that just because you're poor doesn't mean you're unhappy. I can say that that was the case for us. I mentioned earlier also that I had an early introduction to public libraries. If I may, can I talk about that?

Ken Harvey: 20:29  Yeah, absolutely.

Jim Hills: 20:29  Yeah, I'd love to hear that.

Darlene Weber: 20:33  Now I'm really going to date myself. In 1965, Lyndon B Johnson started this initiative, War on Poverty. In 1965, it was the first year of Headstart. My parents enrolled me in Headstart. In my childhood, having a roof over our head, even if it didn't have indoor plumbing, and food on the table was most important. So really books and learning was unfortunately not a huge priority. Without the headstart program, I would have not have had that kindergarten readiness, the learning how to read. At least I knew the alphabet. I knew my colors and opposites and numbers. I even knew how to write my name. I know that that would not have happened before me. In fact, being the eighth child out of 11, most of my brothers and sisters before me did not graduate from high school. I'm a first generation, the first in my family to graduate from college. I think it was because of that early childhood learning. That's one of my ... I'm very proud of Sno-Isle. We'd go to every across Snohomish and Island
County, our library on wheels goes to every Headstart location. They go to every ECEAP location. That just warms my heart to know that that work is still going on.

Ken Harvey: 21:55 One of the things that you and I have in common that you probably didn't know is that my dad in Mississippi was part of the Headstart movement there, and actually planned, essentially the food and food prep programs that were part of them all the Headstarts as they rolled out in 1965 and '66 in the Mississippi area.


Ken Harvey: 22:19 Yeah.


Ken Harvey: 22:22 In many ways it does. You're right it. For those who have not come from those types of humble beginnings, it's hard to really imagine the impact and the power of the opportunity that Headstart programs provided children who just were not afforded all the opportunities that others had. It was a great equalizer.

Darlene Weber: 22:51 I think so too. I'm happy to see those programs continue and expand.

Ken Harvey: 22:55 Well, from those humble beginnings, I want to go to some of the lofty places that you've gone, because one of the things that you told us in some of our prep materials was that you've completed a Mountaineers scrambling course.

Darlene Weber: 23:11 Yes.

Ken Harvey: 23:12 Tell us about that.

Darlene Weber: 23:14 I did that last year. Honestly I knew it would be grueling, so I put it off a couple of years thinking, "I don't know if I want to make that physical, mental, just that commitment to it." Then I thought, "Well, I just need to get it done." Scrambling is, it's not climbing, so it's not technical with ropes. You're not tied in, but you are off trail. You're starting up a hike. Then you will start navigating off trail to summits.

Ken Harvey: 23:44 We're talking about, it's high. It's not low.

Ken Harvey: 23:52 You’re not strolling along next to the river.

Darlene Weber: 23:54 No, no. That was really fun. I am very proud of that. There were 40 students that started out, 20 of us graduated. The majority of the class were 25 to 35 years younger than me. I just ...

Ken Harvey: 24:14 What makes it tough? Describe what the scrambling means.

Darlene Weber: 24:19 What makes it really tough is the physical endurance. It really just requires a lot of strength and agility to just, you’re doing some bouldering, where you’re basically using your arms and your hands to climb up things and then finding, so it’s like climbing but without the ropes. Then there’s a lot of exposure to get to the peaks. That can be frightening.

Ken Harvey: 24:50 Exposure like publicity, fame, and fortune, or are you talking about exposure to high risk?

Darlene Weber: 24:58 High risk. Yeah, so exposure in mountaineering is that if you take the wrong step, it’s going to be a long way down. Yeah, so you’re exposed to a lot of [crosstalk 00:00:25:10].

Ken Harvey: 25:11 I’m starting to hyperventilate already.

Darlene Weber: 25:12 Yeah, so it’s the physical demand.

Ken Harvey: 25:15 Were you good with heights?

Darlene Weber: 25:16 No, I’m still not, no. It was just really demanding. That's why I’m very, very proud that I did it.

Ken Harvey: 25:24 Wait a minute. Wait, wait. You’re going through this too fast, because ...

Darlene Weber: 25:27 You should take it, Ken, take it.

Ken Harvey: 25:29 No.

Darlene Weber: 25:30 Take the course.

Ken Harvey: 25:33 No, and don't even dare me, please. That actually sounds like trying to overcome fear.
Darlene Weber: 25:41 Yes, yes. You have to overcome a lot and then yes. Then there's ... My biggest fear was, that's a part of it, so you can scramble. There's a lot of scrambling on rock, but then a lot of the scrambles is specifically in the Northwest is it's on ice or snow. Some of the peaks are easier to get to on snow, so I got to learn how to ice ax arrest.

Ken Harvey: 26:06 Ice ax arrest.

Darlene Weber: 26:09 Arrest, yeah.

Jim Hills: 26:09 That means you're using an ice ax on the way up also?

Darlene Weber: 26:13 Yes.

Jim Hills: 26:14 And then the arrest is if you take that wrong step?

Darlene Weber: 26:18 Correct. Yes, and you start to slide backwards.

Ken Harvey: 26:22 And you do what with the ax?

Darlene Weber: 26:25 You dig into that snow as hard as possible to stop yourself from continuing down the slope. Yeah, so that was the biggest, that was the hardest part for me. They start, you, you go on your belly and then you stop yourself. Then they have you, you go on your side.

Ken Harvey: 26:43 When you say go on your belly or go on your side ...

Darlene Weber: 26:44 You lie down.

Ken Harvey: 26:45 You start a slide?

Darlene Weber: 26:47 Yeah, sliding down the hill. They start on a not a very steep slope and not very far. Then you work up a little bit steeper, a little bit faster. You end up passing that part of the class if, when, not if, but when you're able to do it.

Jim Hills: 27:06 That's where the other 20 went, they didn't do it.

Darlene Weber: 27:09 Yes, on your back, head first going down hill on the snow and you're able to flip over and put the ax into the snow and stop yourself.

Jim Hills: 27:21 Oh my gosh.
Ken Harvey: 27:21 I just have to say to the audience, as you're saying that our technical producers pantomiming what that must be like that.

Darlene Weber: 27:29 Yes, and that was a ...

Ken Harvey: 27:31 And freaking.

Darlene Weber: 27:32 That was a really scary part. There were really a lot of parts of that physically demanding, just really overcoming your fears, but I do love the Mountaineers. They have a great leadership program, just as Sno-Isle does.

Jim Hills: 27:51 When you say Mountaineers, this is a capital M, Mountaineer. This is a group, right?

Ken Harvey: 27:54 This is a club?

Darlene Weber: 27:56 Right, the Mountaineers, the main branches in Seattle. Then there are branches throughout the Northwest. Yes, and they are very well known for taking people out safely, returning them alive.

Ken Harvey: 28:09 That's important. I think, that's very important. In addition to mountaineer scrambling or mountain scrambling, ice ax arresting, you're also a world-class hiker. You have been a number of places doing walkabouts.


Ken Harvey: 28:33 Yeah, so tell us about a few of the places.

Darlene Weber: 28:36 The first one, and I didn't even know this such thing existed, but I was invited to do a hut-to-hut trek in the Spanish Pyrenees. So I thought, "Well, okay, I don't know what that's like." I wanted to do it. It's a process where they have all these huts in these very remote areas, and they have them all over the world. You start out. You get to the hut. They'll give you a meal. It's all like family style. You don't get to choose off a menu. Everybody gets the same gruel.

Ken Harvey: 29:09 Gruel, gruel, gru-el.

Darlene Weber: 29:13 Yeah, that's right. It sounds better when you say it in French.

Ken Harvey: 29:15 Does it tastes better in French?
Darlene Weber: 29:21 No, but they're really good at, they know because people are coming in after hiking all day, so they give them ...

Ken Harvey: 29:25 Yeah, they're famished.

Darlene Weber: 29:26 Yeah, so they give them stuff that's really going to be hardy. Then they always have beer and wine for sale afterwards too. I can't do that, because I'm a lightweight and I have to hike the next day. It's there. It's an option. Then the next morning you can have breakfast. Again, everybody gets the same breakfast. Then you can order a sack lunch. Then you take your sack lunch, and you hike to the next place and have your dinner. It's usually dormitory style. The first night that I ever did this hut-to-hut hike, I was in a dormitory, male and female with 25 people, strangers. That's different. I've done that many times since. Then from the Spanish parities I went down to Chilean Patagonia and did tourist alpining, which was beautiful. Then I've been to ...

Ken Harvey: 30:19 When you say beautiful, describe what you mean.

Darlene Weber: 30:24 Tourist alpining has these are really very interesting mountains that are, I don't think they're found anywhere else. They just have a ... the scenery is just gorgeous. A beautiful glacier fed lakes that are just this beautiful teal, just lovely. It's indescribable. I mean, I take so many photos. I print them out. You just have to go. I don't think any photo can really do any of the places I've been any justice.

Ken Harvey: 30:58 Wow.

Darlene Weber: 31:00 That one, I had to take a plane from Seattle to LA, LA to Lima, Peru from Lima, Peru to Santiago, Chile from Santiago, Chile to Punta Arenas, from Punta Arenas I took up us to, Puerto Natales and then from there another bus. You really have to want to go to these places.

Jim Hills: 31:21 Do you make this up yourself or do you go down to Rick Steve's and sign up for that? How does that happen?

Darlene Weber: 31:28 Most of the time it's self-guided, but you know what? I work in a public library.

Ken Harvey: 31:32 You're a librarian, you know how to find out stuff.

Darlene Weber: 31:37 I do. Again, a shout out to our collection development department, because if I find guide books that we don't own, I
can suggest them, and our collection development department is really good about purchasing materials that really helped me get there and back.

Jim Hills: 31:59 You've actually used the guidebooks that we have in the collection to help design your own trips?

Darlene Weber: 32:03 Yes.

Jim Hills: 32:04 If somebody wanted something, oh they could go to the middle Creek library and find an expert at it.

Darlene Weber: 32:09 Yeah, sure. I'd be happy to do that.

Ken Harvey: 32:11 Well, I think that's pretty fascinating. I know that you didn't get through the whole list of places that you've gone, but it's just really fascinating to, and I'm sure that some of our audience members are trying to wrap their minds around librarian, ice ax arrester, hiking the Pyrenees and Patagonia. It doesn't seem congruent and yet here you are.

Darlene Weber: 32:39 Yeah, I'm real.

Ken Harvey: 32:40 World traveler and raised from humble beginnings, so it's pretty remarkable. What would you say to someone who is maybe either coming out of high school or coming out of first four years of college and they're still trying to figure out what they want to do? What would you say to them about choosing librarianship as a career?

Darlene Weber: 33:05 Well, I think that they need to understand that it is a changing profession. In terms of our collections, we talked about that a little bit, we still have all the subject matter, all the reading for entertainment. It's really just the format that has changed. Now we have things digital, our eResources. Our communities have changed though. That is being faced by a lot of different organizations, not just libraries. Our police departments, our health departments, our schools, all are facing the challenges in our communities. It is. Often people think, "Oh, it's the public library. You're so fortunate. It's so quiet, and you're sitting there reading a book." Right? That's not it at all. I remind them about the public in the public library. They really need to think to know and understand that work that we do, creating those partnerships, identifying needs of our community, going out there and trying to find ways to meet those needs. It's really, I think that's the core of our work now. I think again, those collections we've have the. We'll continue to have them and
provide that service. The face-to-face contact with the people in the communities, I think that has changed a lot.

Jim Hills: 34:27 They may be drawn by reading, by books, by the materials, but they really need to love people.

Darlene Weber: 34:33 They do. People don't always realize that about a public library. They're thinking, "Oh, it's just a meekish, introverted type that don't ..."

Ken Harvey: 34:41 Yeah, just sitting around reading the books that [crosstalk 00:34:43] provide.

Darlene Weber: 34:43 ... want to maybe ...

Ken Harvey: 34:44 Deal with anyone.

Darlene Weber: 34:45 Yeah, and we deal with everyone all the time, so I think that often surprises people.

Ken Harvey: 34:51 Well gosh, it has been a delight to have you with us.

Darlene Weber: 34:55 Thank you.

Ken Harvey: 34:56 I would like to just invite the members of the audience, if you've been intrigued by some of the things that Darlene has talked about, you can find more information about those at your library.

Darlene Weber: 35:08 Yes, you can. Thank you. It's been a delight.

Ken Harvey: 35:12 Thank you so much.

Jim Hills: 35:13 Thank you very much.

Ken Harvey: 35:14 [crosstalk 00:35:14] just want to invite people to come and check out what the library offers.

Jim Hills: 35:16 Once we're off the air, can you show us how to arrest yourself with an ice ax?

Darlene Weber: 35:21 I can bring it in next time.

Jim Hills: 35:22 Nice. Thank you.

Ken Harvey: 35:24 Thank you, Darlene.
Darlene Weber: 35:25 You're welcome. Thank you.

Speaker 4: 35:27 Did you know you could download some of the best business and finance magazines for free with your Sno-Isle Libraries card? Learn more online at Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 35:38 If you have a great library experience you'd like to share with us, we would love to know about it. Drop us a line at checkitoutpodcast@sno-isle.org. Again, that's checkitoutpodcast, all one word, @sno-isle.org. Who knows, we might even invite you to share your story on a future podcast.

Jim Hills: 36:02 Well, that was really fun.

Ken Harvey: 36:09 Who would have thought that a librarian would be climbing mountains and and deliberately sliding down them with an ice ax?

Jim Hills: 36:18 Yeah. A couple of the places that she didn't mention, she's a real climbed, hiked, scrambled Montblanc.

Ken Harvey: 36:28 The Dolomite range in Italy.

Jim Hills: 36:30 Yes. It's not like she just wanders around here on Mount Sinai or something. Bobby does that too though.

Ken Harvey: 36:38 I tell you, I don't know that I could do what she's been doing in terms of a sliding and with an ice ax. What does she say? Was it exposing?

Jim Hills: 36:52 Exposure, yeah.

Ken Harvey: 36:52 Exposure.

Jim Hills: 36:54 Exposure to exposure to falling a long ways. The other thing that I thought was really interesting, she mentioned that she's been going to Everett Community College. I don't know all the things she has been taking there, but one of the things she takes there is Tai-Chi. She's not only been doing all this other stuff, she's been doing Tai-Chi for eight or nine years. I'm like, "Oh my gosh."

Ken Harvey: 37:16 Well, pretty amazing. I was also just really struck by what she shared in terms of her beginnings.

Jim Hills: 37:27 Yes.
Ken Harvey: 37:31 It's pretty serious business when you have a large family. It's tough enough being from a moderately sized family and sharing one bathroom, but being from a family where you're, what, eighth of 11?


Ken Harvey: 37:47 And with no bathroom inside.

Jim Hills: 37:51 Yeah, no indoor plumbing.

Ken Harvey: 37:52 Wow. That's ...

Jim Hills: 37:54 And now she's got a masters in library science. She's running a 30 person business called Mill Creek Library and climbing and walking, hiking around the world.

Ken Harvey: 38:07 Yeah, I think she's just another example of some of the tremendous people, amazing people that that work for our communities through Sno-Isle Libraries.

Jim Hills: 38:19 Yeah, that's a really great way to put it, work for our communities, because there's another component, a piece of what Darlene is. She's all about building community.

Ken Harvey: 38:27 Yes, she is.

Jim Hills: 38:28 She's very active in doing it.

Ken Harvey: 38:29 Yeah.

Jim Hills: 38:30 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 38:32 Another shout out to Darlene Weber, managing librarian, Mill Creek Library.

Jim Hills: 38:36 Absolutely.

Ken Harvey: 38:39 This podcast has been brought to you by our legacy sponsors, Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation. Your private tax deductible gift to the library foundation provides seed money to expand and foster extra early learning and lifetime learning opportunities through foundation grants for innovative library classes, activities and civic engagement events. Type Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation into your web browser to find out more about how your donation can change the lives of preschoolers, third
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