

Check It Out! Podcast Transcript
Episode #46
“Books and book’n’em with Alan Hardwick”
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Ken Harvey: 00:00:00 In this episode, we spent some time with Alan Hardwick, sergeant for the Edmonds Police Department, who's the adopted son of a milkman, cheese cutter, and fur trapper, and who recently authored his first novel, *Never Been This Close To Crazy*. When we come back, we get a chance to speak with him about his life in law enforcement and international terrorism.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:30 Welcome to Season 2 and Episode 46 of Check It Out!, the Sno-Isle Libraries Podcast for lifelong learners with inquiring minds.

Speaker 2: 00:00:38 The views and opinions expressed on this podcast may not necessarily reflect the official position of Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 00:00:46 Hi, I'm Ken Harvey, and in this episode of Check It Out!, I am really pleased to be able to sit down with someone whose life I think really reflects great public service and someone who obviously cares about our communities, our neighborhoods, and the nation that we enjoy. His name is Alan Hardwick. Alan is a very interesting guy, and I think you're going to enjoy getting to know him better. He is the author of a book called *Never Been This Close To Crazy*, and it was released on June 1st, 2019.

Ken Harvey: 00:01:23 Alan is also the 28-year veteran of Washington and Idaho Law Enforcement, and he currently serves as a sergeant with the Edmonds Police Department. He's a member of the FBI North Sound Counterterrorism Working Group, which ... you know, I haven't had an opportunity to interview anyone on this episode, on this podcast yet who's been part of counterterrorism working groups, and so I'm really excited to chat with him about that. Also, Alan has been an officer on the Edmonds Police Department Force for some time, and so there's more that I want to talk about in terms of his background, but I don't want to get too far into that one before really just thanking Alan for being part of this show today.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:13 Alan, thanks for being with us.

(Continued)

Alan Hardwick: 00:02:14 Thank you, Ken. This is pretty fun.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:17 Yeah, great. Well, we hope to keep it fun for this episode. Hey, I don't have a co-host with me this week. They are off doing other things, so I'm riding solo, but not completely by myself. Not on a mic but sitting at the other end of the table recording this episode is our wonderful technical producer, Deborah Tahara. Thank you, Deborah, for all your work. She is nodding vigorously, if you can't see that in podcast land.

Ken Harvey: 00:02:49 Alan, in the background information that we have on you, it says that you and your family live in the Edmonds area?

Alan Hardwick: 00:03:03 Yes.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:04 And you actually were born in ... not necessarily born, but grew up in the Centralia, Washington area?

Alan Hardwick: 00:03:11 Right. Born in Port Angeles.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:14 Port Angeles.

Alan Hardwick: 00:03:14 Then Everett for a short time, and then grew up mostly in Centralia.

Ken Harvey: 00:03:18 Centralia is a very interesting community and part of the State of Washington for people in the podcast audience who don't know the geography of Washington as well as you should, and I think you really ought to check out some of the information that's available in the Sno-Isle Libraries collection about geography if you can, or go online and just look up where Centralia, Washington is on the state map. It is south of Olympia, Washington, the capital of the state. If you head straight south on Interstate 5 heading towards Portland or other cities south of that, between Olympia and Portland, there is a lovely city called Centralia. What was Centralia like growing up?

Alan Hardwick: 00:04:16 Smaller than it is now. Centralia was a quaint community at the time, one of a pair of twin cities they call them, the twin cities of Centralia and Chehalis, built for a perfect rivalry in high school becoming the two towns.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:32 I bet.

Alan Hardwick: 00:04:32 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:32 Because they're fairly close to each other. They're almost in each other's doorstep.

Alan Hardwick: 00:04:36 Just about. At the time, it was separated by some farmland, a very small airport and a freeway with a wide shoulder that I used to utilize for my bicycle when dad would say, "Go play on the freeway." I took him seriously.

Ken Harvey: 00:04:50 Well, I'm glad you live to tell the tale about it. Well, I have friends who live in that area, both in Tenino and Centralia, and then further south in the Chehalis and Onalaska area, so I know a little bit of that area and...

Alan Hardwick: 00:05:08 Have you been to Mary McCrank's?

Ken Harvey: 00:05:10 Yes.

Alan Hardwick: 00:05:11 Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:05:14 Yes. Lovely communities, but the reason why you're here is not because of Centralia, it's because of life experiences and the works that you've done that all have contributed to this debut novel that you've published called Never Been This Close To Crazy. You know what, I have not had the opportunity to read it yet, but I've been reading reviews about it and you've been so gracious to actually bring a copy to the podcast interview, and I'm looking forward to not sharing it with the library until I've had a chance to read it. Tell us a little bit about the story that's captured in this novel.

Alan Hardwick: 00:05:58 Well, the story itself is a picture of a man, a police officer as it turns out, from around 2008 and his sudden thrust into the life of a single father. That's not entirely unusual, although single parents, single dads don't often have custody of their children. It's usually the other way around. In my case, and reflected in the book to some degree, is a single father who was raising his five children, who happens to also be a police officer doing counterterrorism.

Ken Harvey: 00:06:39 Let me just jump in for a second and just clarify for the audience. Now, the book itself is a fictional novel, correct, not an autobiography?

Alan Hardwick: 00:06:48 Correct. I actually did consider writing some form of a memoir, but number one, I'm not famous; number two, I don't [crosstalk 00:06:57].

Ken Harvey: 00:06:56 You haven't been until now, right?

Alan Hardwick: 00:07:00 Well, I'm still going with number one. Also, I think that the story itself bleeds far beyond my own experience, and that was my hope because of what I found in doing the writing, there's an audience that I didn't anticipate and people who connected with the story itself that I didn't know or would never know that it serves some greater good, and I was so thankful to find that along the way.

Ken Harvey: 00:07:29 Well, there was more about the story that you were going to say before I jumped in about the memoir or autobiography versus being a fictional novel, but let me just ... with the piece that you told us about, a dad who becomes single, children involved, and working in law enforcement and with some work that extends over into counterterrorism, that's a lot. I mean, it seems like there's a lot of different angles, story angles to take advantage of in that.

Alan Hardwick: 00:08:10 It's true. I had a lot of raw data to work with in this story. But you're right, a single dad is a thing, a police officer is a thing. There's lots of books about police officers and some very interesting books that deal with police officers and family life and how family life is not simple for a law enforcement family, and I've seen that on all sorts of sites. Then kids growing up with a police dad, that's not easy, hard to get away with things in some regards. Then that whole sideshow of counterterrorism, one of those things that the officer probably can't talk a lot about because of classifications, and then on the other hand, is dealing with the stress of it and the concern for it.

Ken Harvey: 00:08:58 When you say classifications, you mean secret classified stuff?

Alan Hardwick: 00:09:03 Yes, yes. Yeah. National security classifications that protect information.

Ken Harvey: 00:09:08 Well, one of the things, and for the audience's benefit, let me just say that the book details the struggles of a single dad who works in law enforcement and he's part of a secret task force. If that's not intriguing enough, it's the thought that it's a top secret FBI task force and you're dealing with real-life issues both on the work front, but also on the home front. Let's just talk, if you don't mind, just a little bit about that. Let's talk about just maybe some of the struggles of finding yourself being a dad with two ... with not two kids, with how many children?

Alan Hardwick: 00:10:04 Five.

Ken Harvey: 00:10:05 Five children. In this novel, the hero of the story...

Alan Hardwick: 00:10:15 We'll call them the protagonist.

Ken Harvey: 00:10:16 The protagonist of the story is finding himself in that type of situation. Some of the struggles, and I think you mentioned of being, for the protagonist and yourself, being in that situation and dealing with custody issues. Who's going to raise the children? That can become both complex, but also painful.

Alan Hardwick: 00:10:47 Certainly. Anybody in that situation, in a family situation that falls apart, this is a real heart-wrenching thing for people to go through. I know a very few people who go through it graciously and wind up with good relationships on all side, and gosh, this just didn't work out but we're going to remain committed to doing good. People, if you ask them independently, they say, "Oh, of course, that's what I want," but the reality is most breakups like this are painful, messy, difficult, and the ones who pay the most price typically are the kids. In the situation of a law enforcement family that suffers something like this, which by the way, the numbers are ridiculous. Police families are laden with divorce and there's lots of jokes about that. You know you're a real cop when you've had a divorce and all kinds of ailments and different things like that.

Ken Harvey: 00:11:45 Well, and jokes not because it's really funny, but it's a morbid humor, it's a way of just coping with the painful realities of the situation.

Alan Hardwick: 00:11:52 Yeah, absolutely. Police are both wonderfully beautiful and simultaneously notorious for that sort of thing. But it's a way that people deal with their emotions and how they feel about the situation at the time of course, or just dealing with being able to handle the massive amounts of responsibility or stress along the way and the difficult things that they have to see. For police families that suffer this sort of thing, it's a tough thing always, and then it's very tough for the kids. Then if the father winds up being the one who is raising the children, most of the time or all the time, he then has to balance that without assistance necessarily in the home.

Ken Harvey: 00:12:36 There's no tag team.

Alan Hardwick: 00:12:37 There's no tag team. When duty calls, and sometimes it calls at very inconvenient moments, that can be a real struggle, and I knew I wasn't alone in that sort of thing.

Ken Harvey: 00:12:50 Well, given that I haven't read the novel yet, I've been intrigued by some of the reviews that I read about it. In one of the reviews ... well, I'm going to read and share with the audience just a couple of little snippets of reviews. One says, "Divorce can be..." This is someone who gave the story five out of five stars, which congratulations.

Alan Hardwick: 00:13:20 Thank you.

Ken Harvey: 00:13:22 Where the headline was breakups are hard, but the person said in the review, "Divorce can be devastating, but the hope in the story is personal restoration and discovering the hope of loving again." I thought that was really interesting, personal restoration. Another one, it was also interesting, said, "This book isn't the typical type of book that I would normally read, but I literally couldn't read it fast enough. I think I read for five hours straight when I first opened it. The dynamic between Nikki and Alex," and I'm assuming those are two of the main characters?

Alan Hardwick: 00:14:04 Those are the main characters.

Ken Harvey: 00:14:05 Okay. "The dynamic between Nikki and Alex really sucks you in, and then all the crazy in the book keeps you turning every page." What are some of the other crazy elements in the story?

Alan Hardwick: 00:14:21 Well, there's Alex was married to Holly, and Holly has some emotional instability. Most of the time, that side of the crazy parts of the story are a little bit heartbreaking and sad, but the focus in the book then becomes more about, not so much about somebody's mental health struggles or an illness or whatever that may be, but more about the impact on the family and those who are trying to wrestle with that situation or walk their way through it or find a way on the other side of it in the case of a marriage. There's that part. There's the five kids, crazy part, where kids do crazy things. This book has a fair amount of that going on simultaneously.

Alan Hardwick: 00:15:20 Then as a police officer, I've been blessed to be witness to so many goofy instances of humanity. If there was one thing I wish I could project into a book, it would be the craziness of some of the things that officers see. There's certainly a vast amount of very sad and difficult or challenging, scary things that happen, but honestly, there's just as much humor in every day of the funny goofy things that people do, including the officers themselves.

- Ken Harvey: 00:16:02 Well, I think I've gotten a sense of some of that from periodically watching cops on television, the television show. Also, PD live, police department live, and just some of the crazy stories that get played out in the little snippets that are captured there and shared. It's really something. I mean, just that would have made I'm sure ... and maybe it's the second novel coming.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:16:44 Well, that's funny. We talk about that a lot at the police department. I supervised a crew of ... I called it the Jurassic crew because most of them were more than 50 years old, had more than 25 years of experience. I was the young one, and I was approaching 50 years old myself. We would laugh at briefing about how there were so many goofy stories that happened just yesterday. Then we would forget them. I go home at night ... and this happened for years and my experience was not unique. We go home at night and somebody would say, "Well, how was your day?" "Oh, it's fine. Yeah." Fine was defined by, "I got through it. I'm not injured and I made it home within an hour of my quitting time." That was a successful day. It was fine, it was good.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:17:36 If I was pressed for more information about my day, then I would do the good thing and try to remember something that actually occurred and then relay that story. Well, in the relaying of the story, every time that happened, I found all of us would be laughing hysterically at the table about some goofy thing that happened that day, that day, and I had already forgotten it. In the morning briefing, we usually cover stuff that happened the previous day, and ultimately, all of us were saying, "Gosh, somebody should write this stuff down." There's just so much of it that's certainly intriguing or has some sort of intrinsic heart value, but there's just so much comedy. Some of it is calamity, but whatever, comedy is comedy.
- Ken Harvey: 00:18:25 Yeah. It sounds like you had some rich material to work from in putting this book together both personal life to draw from, but also professional life. I'm intrigued by a lot of things, but let me walk through some of them. Number one, you mentioned growing up in Centralia. What led you into law enforcement?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:18:53 Well, it's the natural path of a musician.
- Ken Harvey: 00:18:55 Okay. I don't think I get that connection. All right, so let's go back to that piece. Musician, let's talk a little bit about that.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:19:03 Well, I became a musician partly when ... I think it started when I was two years old maybe. My mother, in my second year or

maybe for my second birthday, bought me my first instrument, which was a cymbal.

Ken Harvey: 00:19:18 Oh, my goodness. She brought that for you?

Alan Hardwick: 00:19:21 She bought me a...

Ken Harvey: 00:19:21 Or someone who didn't like her brought that for you?

Alan Hardwick: 00:19:23 Well, that's very possible, but soon after that, she got me my second present, which was a pair of brushes.

Ken Harvey: 00:19:34 Oh, wow.

Alan Hardwick: 00:19:34 That toned it down from the sticks on the cymbal. I would set the cymbal up, or maybe she did, I don't know, next to the console stereo on Hoyt in Everett. We would listen to The Carpenters or Carole King or some of the old things on the radio, and I would play along with them on my cymbal.

Ken Harvey: 00:19:55 Of course, they weren't old back then.

Alan Hardwick: 00:19:57 No, they weren't old. Yeah.

Ken Harvey: 00:20:01 They're called classics now.

Alan Hardwick: 00:20:01 We are classics now, but look what's happening. The music now of today, the kids love our music, so we are that cool, Ken.

Ken Harvey: 00:20:09 That's right, yeah. Cool again.

Alan Hardwick: 00:20:11 That's right. From there, my parents split when I was three. These were my adopted parents, so I was actually adopted at birth. I didn't know my biological parents until just a couple of years ago, I met my mom, so different story.

Ken Harvey: 00:20:26 Wonderful. I hope that's wonderful.

Alan Hardwick: 00:20:27 It is, yeah. It's been really, really amazing, actually. My dad took a job. He worked for Darigold. He was literally the milkman. He drove milk truck...

Ken Harvey: 00:20:41 Yeah, you wrote that. You told us in writing that that was the case and I was like, "Really?"

Alan Hardwick: 00:20:47 Yeah. Back when milkmen were ... well, they were all sorts of things, but he delivered milk in a truck to homes around

Snohomish County. The Darigold plant shut down at one point, and so he was laid off and they reassigned him to a spot up in Mount Vernon at Carnation very temporarily and then said, "It doesn't look good here either." But there's this job down in Chehalis at a cheese plant. Well, cheeses, milk, I guess. That worked for him, and so he moved down to Centralia. He brought us all down then a short time later. In my elementary days, I got to explain to my friends that my dad cut cheese for a living, which was a lot of fun for a young boy.

- Ken Harvey: 00:21:40 I'm sure that that could be turned into a lot of different jokes.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:21:43 Not that that ever happened. Yeah. That led then to him taking the early retirement. He didn't really like his job. He had this strong work ethic, but he never liked his job. He was fairly angry man growing up, which was sad because he was so talented and he had a sparkle in his eye when he was happy and things like that. He took an early retirement and bought a set of traps, and then suddenly, we became trappers. That was completely...
- Ken Harvey: 00:22:15 Literally fur trappers?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:22:17 Fur trappers, yup. Farmers needed help with animals that were causing damage on the farm or things like that. The fur industry was in a heyday at the time, so he thought he could make a living in the fur industry. Now, in Lewis County, it wasn't that we were completely alone. There were other people in the county that did that, but nobody ever saw them. We got to see them. We somehow got to know these people and my dad became a trapper. I was the only kid in my school who had to float the river in the morning because I had to check the trap line before going to school.
- Ken Harvey: 00:22:56 Wow.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:22:57 Yeah. It was a different kind of thing and I didn't have a lot of friends. Our basement was a complete fire hazard and a scene out of a really awkwardly scary movie. With all of that, my love of music really strived.
- Ken Harvey: 00:23:16 Okay. Before we get to music now, I just want to go back and ... because you're describing or you're alluding to a basement and fur trapping can be a bloody business, right?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:23:29 Yes.

Ken Harvey: 00:23:29 I mean, it's not as beautiful as the furs when they are assembled in the garments. There's the preparation.

Alan Hardwick: 00:23:39 It's a mess.

Ken Harvey: 00:23:40 Did you learn all of that?

Alan Hardwick: 00:23:42 I did, I did. We did that for several years, probably four years or so before my stepmom then had had enough and said that we need to do something a little bit different. That morphed into buying and selling furs and not handling what they called the whole animal at the time. None of this was comfortable to me. I didn't like it, but I learned it and I learned how to handle all of that from start to finish. What I didn't realize is the preparation that was giving me to be able to literally handle very difficult things.

Ken Harvey: 00:24:20 Well, isn't it interesting and just in some ways as a life lesson that sometimes we find ourselves in situations, especially as children where we really are not in control of the situation, where there, we're expected to be present and to participate, and so we learn to do that, and so we cope with it? Sometimes we may find ourselves even thriving, learning to do something really well even if we don't necessarily enjoy it, and we can find ourselves wondering, "Okay. I'm doing this and either I enjoy it or I hate it." Then later on, you discover in life, "Gosh, there were some skills that I developed from that that suddenly are making me good at something else that I would never even see myself doing."

Alan Hardwick: 00:25:21 Absolutely. I mean, you're singing my song. That's very much how I see my childhood and my experience with my father, and the whole trapping thing, and all the way to ... every little bit of experience had value for me later on, even the ones that were awkward or difficult. I'm thankful that ... I think not everybody gets the opportunity to reconcile their past that way. By dealing with a lot of different types of people in the community now as a police officer, I get to see so many different walks of life and can identify with them or speak their language in ways that some of my peers can't.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:07 Let's make the transition now to musician. Tell us how that came about.

Alan Hardwick: 00:26:15 It was Mr. [Tinkham 00:26:17] in Centralia Junior High School who convinced me that my trumpet was okay, but the saxophone was pretty cool and they had an extra one at the

school. I started trying that out, loved it, thought it was ... I thought it was pretty cool.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:34 Oh, wait a minute. You had gone from cymbals to brush on cymbals to trumpet?

Alan Hardwick: 00:26:40 Yes.

Ken Harvey: 00:26:41 Okay. Then transitioned to saxophone?

Alan Hardwick: 00:26:43 Right, to saxophone. That continued into high school. By the time I hit high school, I actually had become pretty good at the whole situation. Centralia has a community college, Centralia Community College, and [Jerry Mae 00:27:02] was the director of music there, the leader of the Jerry Mae's Big Band. He would work with the high school occasionally, and he invited me to come play with his band, which shocked me. I had no idea that that was even a possible thing. I started playing on occasion with that band, did jazz band at the high school, and we played at the Kingdome. On my senior year of high school, I actually got to play a lead solo in a saxophone concerto at Expo at the World Fair.

Ken Harvey: 00:27:37 Wow.

Alan Hardwick: 00:27:37 Yeah. It really became my identity. Through high school, if you look through the high school annual, usually there's something involving music with any involvement of my image there.

Ken Harvey: 00:27:47 Let me jump in there for a second. That's interesting because as you were talking about floating the river, checking the traps, being a farer, it sounds like a loner, and now over a period of, I don't know, one, two, three years or four years, you're now playing as part of a band in front of, I don't know, hundreds, thousands?

Alan Hardwick: 00:28:14 Yes, of people. I remember in high school, there was a small group of us that were in music freaks and into theater and things like that. That all began to be part of my community, and I found a lot of welcome there. We went to the Kingdome one time and I remember being up on the 300-level of the Kingdome and just screaming out into the parking lot, "I want to be popular." It's funny, right? Another guy who played trumpet was very kind, I guess, to remind me of this recently that had happened.

Ken Harvey: 00:28:57 For folks in the audience who don't know what Alan is referring to when he says Kingdome, the Kingdome is a ... it was a large ... it was a huge concrete monolithic structure that used to exist in the SoDo district of Seattle. It was a sports arena that I think at the time that it was built, it was like the largest concrete sports facility in the United States and served its purpose with the home of the Seattle Seahawks and other sporting teams for many years until it was finally torn down and replaced by what is now the stadium that the Seahawks now play in, which is an open-air, where the Kingdome had had a concrete roof over that, as I recall. All right, with that trip down memory lane, let's move on into you're becoming ... how did you make the transition from musician to law enforcement?

Alan Hardwick: 00:30:04 It's pretty well-defined, actually. I was in college at Washington State University studying music. Two things happened. About halfway through my college time, I took a trip back to Seattle with, I think at the time was my girlfriend, and we were about to get married. We came back to see parents and that sort of thing. On the way back home, we stopped at the Seattle Center to get a few things before we march back to Pullman. We came back to the car and the car was gone. Well, the car had my saxophone. Now as a music student and a saxophone student at Washington State University, your saxophone is your entire library of books for your classes, so it's your [crosstalk 00:30:57].

Ken Harvey: 00:30:56 This is a double tragedy.

Alan Hardwick: 00:30:58 It was. That was my first experience with law enforcement. Okay, that's a lie. My first experience with law enforcement was on a motorcycle when I was 13 on Ives Road in Centralia, but we won't talk much about that.

Ken Harvey: 00:31:09 Okay.

Alan Hardwick: 00:31:12 I met the Seattle police officer. We filed the report. We rented a car from Ugly Duckling Car Rental and drove it back to Pullman.

Ken Harvey: 00:31:19 I remember them.

Alan Hardwick: 00:31:23 I only remember them because of the name.

Ken Harvey: 00:31:25 Yeah.

Alan Hardwick: 00:31:26 Fascinating. A week later, we got the phone call from Detective Anderson that the car had been located and we were very

excited it came back, and of course the saxophone was still gone. It was a real turning point for me of deciding, "Do I continue on in this?" because I couldn't afford a new horn. But God bless Greg Yazinitsky, who was the music director, actually Nobel Prize laureate ... no, Pulitzer Prize nominee recently. Greg Yazinitsky was my instructor in college for saxophone, and he offered to sell me his horn. Well, I couldn't afford it, but my dad pitched in and helped out with that, and I wound up being the owner of a 1922 Selmer alto saxophone, which I still have today. It's almost 100 years old.

- Ken Harvey: 00:32:25 Wow.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:32:25 Yeah. My music career was able to continue. I got married, and then my wife was pregnant. I was teaching music part-time at a private school in Idaho across the border and making about \$600 a month, and running out of money, a child on the way, and all things were pointing to, "This isn't going to work." I looked in the newspaper that day in the Moscow-Pullman Daily News and the classified section was about a page long, and I looked for whatever was in there, and the highest paying job in the paper that day was with the Latah County Sheriff's Office as a road deputy, full-time, temporary. I thought, "Perfect," although I don't know a single thing about law enforcement. I think I had an Adam-12 lunchbox when I was in second grade.
- Ken Harvey: 00:33:19 That's not quite the top of the list, I could see, for qualifications.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:33:24 Right. I went into the sheriff's office and I said, "What's this all about?" and they said, "Fill out this application if you're interested." I thought to myself, "Well, I grew up a trapper. I can shoot. I know how to do that sort of thing and I'm not too afraid of dealing with blood and icky things, so I got that. I know how to talk to people, I guess, so I got that. I'll see how it goes." I applied, and then a couple months later, I was suddenly a deputy sheriff.
- Ken Harvey: 00:33:52 Wow.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:33:53 Couldn't believe it, couldn't believe it. I had to dye my burgundy boots black. I was working part-time in the shop of a woodworker, so he had some stain and stuff, so he stripped down the boots and dyed them black. Then I went up to Spokane to a pawnshop and got one of those Sam Browne belts. I didn't have enough for a gun so they lent me a gun. You had to get your own equipment almost top to bottom.

Ken Harvey: 00:34:16 Your own gear?

Alan Hardwick: 00:34:17 Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ken Harvey: 00:34:19 Wow. With that, then suddenly you're on the road as a deputy sheriff?

Alan Hardwick: 00:34:23 Yup, just like that. Seven weeks of training by an officer there in Moscow. Fantastic guy, Brannon Jordan. Then I was suddenly on my own. In that year and a half before I was then laid off, I experienced some of the most amazing things that I had ever encountered; tragic, horrible things, and beautiful things same time.

Ken Harvey: 00:34:48 Yeah. That has been now with your career in law enforcement, what, two and a half, three decades?

Alan Hardwick: 00:34:55 Just about.

Ken Harvey: 00:34:58 Tell us about, before we move on to counterterrorism and then get back to your novel, what would you just say about the men and women who serve in law enforcement?

Alan Hardwick: 00:35:14 I would say we're really fortunate here in the Pacific Northwest. American policing has gone through its fair share of professional development, let's say, and transitioning from those who were just simply big and burly enough, and strong, and brave who could fight their way through a problem into those who are educated, understanding, inquisitive, and a combination of that detective mindset along with the ability to chase, and find, and hunt, and that sort of thing.

Alan Hardwick: 00:35:50 The professionalism of not just law enforcement, but the security industry as well, both, have exponentially increased I think over the last several decades. It's a very different game than it was in the '50s. It's a very different game than it was when I started law enforcement. I was in the academy in 1992 and we were watching the Rodney King film. Things have very much changed since that time. As I got into leadership and policing and the intelligence world, the intelligence community, I've seen so much difference between different parts of the country.

Alan Hardwick: 00:36:32 I did a background in St. Louis on a police candidate. In that area, you can drive a matter of three blocks, and then three more blocks and you've been in three different cities. Very small towns with a police force of one, two, or three people. One of

them is outstanding, and one of them is corrupt. Anyone who's not from the area, if you drive through, you just don't know the difference. We don't have that here. I mean, it's remarkable that I can go from one law enforcement agency in King County, and I can go through Brier, and into Lynnwood, and Mountlake Terrace, and I'm going to get basically the same type of encounter with any law enforcement encounter that I have there. They're professional, they're well-trained, they understand everything from implicit bias all the way to child abductions.

Alan Hardwick: 00:37:33 It's a very well-trained group of individuals, motivated almost exclusively. I can't say exclusively because of course there's trouble everywhere you go, but so much of my experience with these people has been strongly positive. Certainly, I'm biased, I'm one of them, but I'm also different. I'm a musician, so I have a different way of approaching things and looking at them. When I look internally at this industry, I honestly am so impressed and thankful for the kind of people that we have here and the kind of motivation and drive that they have for doing their job. Very few of them are just simply doing it to make themselves look cool, or get back at the people who picked on them, or whatever the ...

Ken Harvey: 00:38:24 For the power.

Alan Hardwick: 00:38:25 Yeah, the power side. Very, very few. I'm honored to be part of that cadre and thankful to be part of now the group of people training the leaders that are coming up.

Ken Harvey: 00:38:39 Well, I'm going to just say that I appreciate what you've said and appreciate the service that you have given all of us, as well as all of your colleagues. I just recognize the degree to which that thin blue line helps us all feel safer and more secure, and the reassurance knowing that if we call, you run towards us and run towards the danger on our behalf, so thank you for that.

Ken Harvey: 00:39:15 Hey, we're going to take a break, a short break here. We are talking with Alan Hardwick, who has written a book called Never Been This Close To Crazy and we're going to be coming back to him to hear a little bit more about his work in not just law enforcement but counterterrorism, and then back to this novel that he has written that we think you should check out for yourselves. Back in a second.

Speaker 4: 00:39:40 Hey, parents and grandparents, is there a child in the family who's latched onto a smartphone or tablet computer? Help them put that screen time to good use by downloading fun and

educational magazines from Sno-Isle Libraries, like Highlights, High Five, and American Girl, every magazine packed with age-appropriate content like crafts, quizzes, experiments, poems, and wholesome stories, and each issue is free to download with a library card from Sno-Isle Libraries.

Ken Harvey: 00:40:10 We love hearing from our listeners and subscribers, especially if you enjoy the guest or have a suggestion for a future topic. Drop us a line at Check It Out! Podcast at sno-isle.org. Again, that's Check It Out! Podcast at 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: 00:40:45 We're back from our break, and I'm Ken Harvey, the host of this episode of Check It Out!, Sno-Isle Libraries Podcast. I'm really delighted to continue this conversation with Alan Hardwick, who is the author of *Never Been This Close To Crazy*, which at the time that you hear this podcast should be available through the Sno-Isle Libraries website. I'd say if the line is too long in terms of how many people have reserved that book to read or listen to, or read electronically, because I understand it's available in Kindle format, then you can also check it out at some other online retailers. I'm not going to mention any names right now, but you probably know who I'm talking about.

Ken Harvey: 00:41:37 Well, Alan is not only the author of this book and this novel, but he's also, as he's been telling us, he's been a musician, he's been his own fur trapper as a young man, and he made the transition into law enforcement. Early in his time with law enforcement, he began to be pulled into the intelligence area. Tell us a little bit about that. How did that start out?

Alan Hardwick: 00:42:14 It began as ... I was a school resource officer in Boise. I worked in the Boise Police Department from 1993 until 2001. As a detective in Boise working in the schools, during the summer times, they would farm us out to other units. One year, I worked in narcotics for a summertime, and then the next year, I worked in the major crimes unit. It was during that time that I began to investigate an organized crime situation in Boise, which everybody thought was bizarre. Nobody thought that there was any organized crime there. I would venture to say nobody thinks that even today. It's Boise for crying out loud.

Ken Harvey: 00:42:56 But there was?

Alan Hardwick: 00:42:58 But there was, and we saw people doing things. It at least mimicked it. I started a case looking into that sort of thing. Well,

in so doing, I began to use methods that were similar to methods used by intelligence agencies, trying to find out the background of people, what motivated them, the different organizations they might be connected to, and the fronts they use to either launder money or that sort of thing. It really expanded my perspective in terms of law enforcement. Those activities with organized crime had all sorts of fallout in the community from robberies and burglaries to petty theft, harassment, whatever it was.

- Ken Harvey: 00:43:41 Let me just jump in for a second because it's interesting how you put that. It sounds like some of the methods and approaches you were using where you were essentially turning over a number of different rocks, looking and establishing a number of points of reference and then looking for patterns that you're going to piece together to see what the puzzle and really putting the puzzle together?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:44:03 Correct.
- Ken Harvey: 00:44:04 That must have been noticed by some others?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:44:06 It was, and the chief at the time paid attention to that. In the Boise Police Department for a couple of decades, there have been efforts to stand up a criminal intelligence unit in order to keep track of everything from outlaw motorcycle gangs or street gangs or whatever it may be. At the same time in the '90s was the advent of the environmental and animal rights activism and that fringe edge of that ultimately was called domestic terrorism. All of these things began to play together and we saw different groups of people in the Idaho area corresponding and planning with people from British Columbia, and Oregon, and California, all over the place.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:45:03 We saw the need then for law enforcement agencies not to simply talk amongst themselves internally, but also between the different law enforcement agencies in the different parts of the country. This is basically a microcosm of what the intelligence community does on a federal and international level. As I was just trying to solve a robbery, I began using these types of methods. Then I attended some training that gave me more exposure to that.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:45:32 At the same time, there was this fellow in Boise named Larry Jones. He was my lieutenant. He paid attention to world events, and he would write up this little one-page sheet, a piece of paper that he would proudly bring into the briefing room once a week, and it would list in very short bullet form; there was an

earthquake in this part of the world, and then there was a jewelry heist in this part of the world. He would go through the whole world of major events that he had picked out of open sources, newspapers, magazines, and whatnot, and he would list these things. Well, each one of them dealt with a different population base.

- Alan Hardwick: 00:46:12 I found it interesting to then reflect on the local population that mirrored that base, and it was fun then to talk to those people and see if they knew anything about it, how it impacted them. In Boise, there's a large Basque community. At the time, there was a group called the ETA, the Basque Separatists, and they were not far off from like the IRA in terms of a terrorist organization. They were listed as a terrorist organization.
- Ken Harvey: 00:46:39 Just for our listeners' sake, ETA and those Basque Separatists, they were fighting for independence in the Basque homeland, so back on the Iberian Peninsula.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:46:54 Right.
- Ken Harvey: 00:46:55 With Spain and Portugal and that area.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:46:57 Right. Yup. I knew that there was a Basque community. I had heard about that in Boise. Then I started to see that this group was blowing things up occasionally. I wondered. I wonder if any of the people here support that extreme of action back in their homeland. Well, it turns out that I didn't find anybody like that, but I was asking the question. That very question became the very thing that four years later I would be thrust into investigating for the next nine years. By learning how to do that, I found myself involved in what now is referred to as the intelligence community.
- Ken Harvey: 00:47:41 Before you get deeper into that, the next part of the interview, I just wanted to know two ironies. One irony is you mentioned animal rights activists and all a little earlier, and so here you are looking at individuals who are really strongly opinionated about how animals should be treated, and you came from this background of fur trapping.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:48:13 Yeah. Reluctantly, yes.
- Ken Harvey: 00:48:15 And having some feelings about that too, I mean, as you had mentioned earlier. That irony is not lost on me, and hopefully, not on the audience. The other irony is the irony of what happens when you start asking too many what-if questions.

What if there's some connection between this and that? Could it be that others feel this way, as you were talking about the Basque, that movement of Basque Separatism? Could there be anyone in our community who feels that strongly? Sometimes asking those questions out loud isn't always appreciated by everyone.

- Alan Hardwick: 00:49:00 No. By asking the very question, sometimes you insinuate the thought alone, and the thought alone that, "Well, goodness, you think that I could be that? You think that I would support bombing, and killing, and maiming, and that sort of thing?" Just asking the question can be offensive. You're right, it had to be something that...
- Ken Harvey: 00:49:22 It's not very politically correct to ask that kind of question.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:49:24 No. No, it's not, but it's also a very necessary question to know the answer to because in the event that there is somebody who supports that sort of thing, that's something that law enforcement and as a nation ... on the one hand, I want to say we want to not support that. Then on the other hand, I realized that we have something called the US military that is a very violent machine when necessary. But when people go rogue and go against the policy of your country or that sort of thing, that becomes a very difficult thing to understand or even to have a conversation about.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:50:11 I experienced this many times then, just a quick fast-forward, working in the terrorism community. There were people that we evacuated out of Africa at one point, who were part of a group that was fighting against their government at the time, and we supported that. Then those people are thrust into our local communities. Do they still support that? Do we still support that? Then suddenly, if the tables turn, what do you do now? Hopefully, people get to just simply have their family and calm down, but that doesn't always happen.
- Ken Harvey: 00:50:50 Yeah. Those are difficult situations and difficult questions, and sometimes the realities are really difficult and complex to work through. You're asking these questions you find ... you're noticed for asking these questions. Over some period of time, you find yourself working more and more with intelligence officials?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:51:14 Right. I worked quite a bit with the FBI in Boise and got to know some of the agents that worked in that space. Then there was a Western Governors' Conference and we did a bunch of work for that. Then I moved. I moved back to Washington. My wife and

family, we all moved back to the Edmonds area, and I was hired at Edmonds Police on the week of 911, so all of my separation...

Ken Harvey: 00:51:46

So doubly unforgettable week?

Alan Hardwick: 00:51:49

Incredibly. I had no idea that the experience that I'd had working in the organized crime and getting involved in the intelligence community would so instantly translate into a new job where I expected to be working patrol shift at night, doing barking dog complaints and domestics and things like that. Suddenly, the national conversation was very different, and so it didn't take us long to try to find our role as local police officers in dealing with this thing that was suddenly on everybody's television.

Ken Harvey: 00:52:25

Do you think that the 911 event and tragedy, the attack and the tragedy of it, changed our nation in any ways, or changed the cohort of colleagues that you were working with?

Alan Hardwick: 00:52:44

Oh, certainly, certainly. First of all, on a federal level, if you meet an FBI agent in the year 2000, most averaged FBI agents are excited to join the FBI because they want to investigate bank robberies, and drug running, and maybe some smuggling, maybe trademark violations, things like that, white-collar crime. There's the sexy versions of those things on television, and certainly, some of that exists as well. But for the most part, it was pretty straightforward.

Alan Hardwick: 00:53:25

When 911 happened, more than half of the agents assigned to the FBI were suddenly thrust into counterterrorism. That was a very small population before 911. Then after, people who were working drugs and bank robberies were now working counterterrorism, and in an environment where classification mattered. Foreign government information, information from spies overseas, information that was developed through secret methods and sources suddenly had to be used in order to do their job. It wasn't something they were accustomed to.

Alan Hardwick: 00:54:02

Local law enforcement then was trying to figure out their role in it. In the 911 commission report, it was very clear about tearing down the walls that prevent information sharing and that sort of thing. Well, state and local were very much part of that conversation then. Lots of people began to be assigned to these working groups or task forces and they would get security clearances so that they could have access to the information that was going on on a national scale, and then be able to interpret that into their local communities.

- Ken Harvey: 00:54:38 If someone were to ask you, should they walk around with the sense of fear or should they walk around just figuring, "Oh, someone else has got this. I don't have to worry about a thing. If I see something, someone else is seeing it, they'll report it. I can just go on my merry way." What's your sense of how the average citizen, the average resident should feel about any realities around terrorism in other parts of the world or other parts of the country?
- Alan Hardwick: 00:55:13 Well, I live in Edmonds and we have a saying in Edmonds, "It's an Edmonds kind of day." I love that. I love the fact that the citizens of Edmonds believe that the crime is so low in Edmonds that they don't have a single thing to worry about. Their biggest concern is, when it comes to crime, is maybe a car prowler that happened in their city overnight. Maybe somebody broke into a car. The reality is far beyond that, but the feeling of security and safety is as valuable as the security itself. We want to promote that sort of thing as a department and as a law enforcement community, that sense of security and that sense that if I really need the police, they're going to be there and I can call them. That's something that's very important to all of us in law enforcement.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:56:12 I would say that for the average citizen, awareness comes with a price. The more you know, the more likely you are to worry. News junkies get this. Then there's the opposite end of the spectrum with people with the head in the sand. I'm not going to recommend anybody change their perspective, but I think everybody needs to understand that there's a reality of bad things in the world and that we are not exempt from those things. Certainly, 911 taught us that on a national scale. What I have found in my work in counterterrorism, both in Boise and in Edmonds, in the Pacific Northwest, is that if you look hard enough, you'll find traces of things that are concerning, and perhaps even worrisome.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:57:08 I go back then to the professionalism of the industry. There are people who ... this is their job is to find those things and to seek them out and to prevent bad things from happening. Daniel Franey is a guy in Western Washington near the averaging area, Montesano I think. He was arrested about a year and a half ago, two years ago, for material support of terrorism. Here's just this local kid in the middle of a place that you don't associate at all with terrorism and yet he was arrested for some really interesting things.
- Alan Hardwick: 00:57:51 That is just an example of the type of work that is going on 24/7 by some very scholarly, dedicated, professional individuals who

won't give up in terms of trying to prevent the next major thing and keeping our community safe all at the same time, very, very much respecting the rule of law, the rights of citizens. I mean, that's our whole game right there. Yeah. Do I want to know everything that everyone's doing on their phones? Good Lord no, I've seen enough on my own. I have five kids. When I have reason to believe because of solid information that somebody's up to something nefarious or somebody calls it in, gosh, [inaudible 00:58:39] look into that and keep our community safe. Our community actually demands that.

Ken Harvey: 00:58:46 Well, as you were talking, I was thinking about friends of mine in the intelligence community and in law enforcement who, to this question when I post it to them, have said, "We work and pay attention to the things that need to be paid attention to so that you don't have to pay attention to them. Let us be vigilant on your behalf, but also keep your eyes open, and if you see something, let us know."

Alan Hardwick: 00:59:22 Right, right. It's funny though that people don't often recognize what it is they're looking at. I do a presentation for law enforcement called the Northwest Nexus to International Terrorism. I have several examples in that presentation about law enforcement officers who saw something that the hair stood up on the back of their neck, and so they did something about it, but something they did about it varies wildly, either write a report or tell their boss or something like that. But in every case that they did something about it, of course in the presentation, things went very well and we found things that needed to be found.

Alan Hardwick: 01:00:02 The ferry worker in Port Angeles in the year 2000 when Ahmed Ressam came across with a trunk load of bomb-making material, she did the right thing. She sensed it. She didn't just stop, but she made sure that that person got questioned even though it was the last one on her shift, the last car off the boat. Because of that, she started a process that quickly saved countless lives at the Los Angeles International Airport. Wherever your sphere is, and this is what I tell other officers, and intelligence agents, and firefighters, and ferry dock workers, and critical infrastructure people, wherever your sphere is, don't think that you're immune to the realities of terrorism, crime, evil, bad things. Those things are around, so don't be stupid. Be smart, be aware.

Alan Hardwick: 01:01:03 Then go home and enjoy dinner time with your family and pickleball, or whatever it is you like. Live your life and be happy. It's actually very important to me, this topic about living your

life and being happy. It's one of the main focuses I have now partly as a result of this book that I've written is wellness for the people who are doing this work. I say watch the watchers. Let's take care of the people who are taking care of us.

Ken Harvey: 01:01:37 Getting back to the book, great segue, because I wanted to read one more review that I picked up from others who have taken the time to read it. This one person said, gave it five out of five stars as well and said, "This is such a wonderful book, made me realize that when you look at someone who appears happy and strong, you never actually know what's going on with them. It's amazing though what a little interpersonal strength can do, especially when you have someone as spunky as Nikki to help you along the way."

Ken Harvey: 01:02:13 The person goes on and says, "Can I rant a little about how amazing Nikki is? What a fantastic treat to see her strength and spunk take this wonderful family out of a rut." Then she concludes, and I'm assuming this is ... yeah. This is someone named [Britney 01:02:31], who says, "There's hope even when everything turns dark. Alex and Nikki bring that to life in this book." Alex and Nikki are the two of the main characters in this book. It sounds like it's a wonderful read. I'm looking forward to plowing through it. I'm going to try and pace myself and not do it in five straight hours though.

Alan Hardwick: 01:02:56 Good luck for that. My wife likes to say, "When you open it, be sure not to have something important to do an hour later."

Ken Harvey: 01:03:09 Are there more of these in store, do you think?

Alan Hardwick: 01:03:12 Yes. In fact, before our interview today, I was at a coffee shop with my head down and cranking out another thousand words for the next book. There will be essentially the sequel to Never Been This Close To Crazy. I haven't decided on a title yet. I'm thinking Crazy Good, but the options are open still and my wife will probably have the final say about what it's called. Then there will be the ongoing saga of these two characters, Alex and Nikki, which of course will be completely fiction. This book is a fiction novel. There's a lot of my own take on things or even some personal stories that are interwoven in the context of the book. But as it goes forward, basically think Whiskey Cavalier meets modern family. That's where we're headed with this.

Ken Harvey: 01:04:04 Well, that sounds pretty fascinating. I am looking forward to jumping into this. By the way, before I conclude our interview, I told you that I was going to ask you if there was a library story in

that you want to share, or something around other books that you have either read or read to the kids or what.

- Alan Hardwick: 01:04:30 Actually, there is. In Centralia, the public library there was a place where we would go in order to do our homework. We didn't have the internet or things like that, and so the reference desk people were wonderful there. The effort at trying to keep somebody like me quiet was a strong effort. I have fond memories of that, but my greatest memory about libraries is actually from Sno-Isle. I lived in the area and actually was involved in homeschooling for some time. We would come to the library and...
- Ken Harvey: 01:05:11 Some of our most frequent customers.
- Alan Hardwick: 01:05:13 Yeah.
- Ken Harvey: 01:05:14 Our families that's homeschooling I think.
- Alan Hardwick: 01:05:15 I'll tell you what, the Sno-Isle has done such a fantastic job of doing something great for the community. But for homeschoolers or people who are really serious about education with their kids, there's nothing better. I have never seen anything quite this strong and accessible and good for families that are serious about education and reading. My favorite thing was with an author named John Erickson, and he wrote a series of books called Hank the Cowdog. They were on audiobook. I didn't know they were on audiobook at first.
- Alan Hardwick: 01:05:54 A friend of mine from Moscow, Idaho had introduced me to the author and so I read a couple of the books to the kids, and then I found an audiobook, and life for me changed forever. It was the most fantastic rendition. The author himself does the book on audio. I absolutely loved it. The kids grew up knowing those characters and the voices and everything else. In fact, one of the characters in this book may have some reflection on that.
- Ken Harvey: 01:06:28 Well, I want to thank you again for the time you spent with us. Really appreciate your service and all your colleagues who have serviced in so many ways 24/7. I appreciate the way that your vigilance helps protect all of us when we lay our heads on the pillows at night and don't have to worry about things. I'm also looking forward to diving into this novel and seeing what it can do for me. It sounds like a great story. The reviews are just excellent on it and just want to encourage you as you're plowing through, putting together the next one to maybe look forward to coming back and talking to us about that one.

Alan Hardwick:	01:07:24	I'd be happy to, Ken. Thank you very much. I appreciate your interest, and your questions, and all the things that you're doing here.
Ken Harvey:	01:07:30	Thank you so much, Alan.
Ken Harvey:	01:07:33	If you enjoyed this podcast, please subscribe so you can receive every episode automatically. Until next time, remember your library has a lot to offer you. So what are you waiting for? Check It Out!