Profile: Sarah Felkar  
Public Services Assistant  
West Vancouver Memorial Library

How long have you been working in libraries?

3 years.

What was your first job?

Working in a magazine distribution warehouse as a general labourer. It was hot and dusty, but there was a lot to read on my breaks.

Describe your first library job.

I was an on-call library assistant with the Surrey Public Library, where I had the opportunity to work with a lot of wonderful people amongst 8 branches, in 8 very different neighbourhoods. There I learned about shelf-reading (a good relaxing activity), about holds, fines, and how if the system goes down there are low-tech ways to carry on with little interruption.

If you weren't a librarian/library worker, what would you be and why?

Either a teacher or someone who works in a used bookstore. A teacher because I love the instructional aspect of my job, helping people learn, and rediscovering the joy of the topic that I am instructing every time I teach a new class.

Working in a used bookstore because I do need to be in a job that can feed my reading addiction.
What do you like best about your current job?

The variety, and the teaching. Every day brings a new set of people into the Computing Centre, with a new set of questions. Every time someone asks me a question that I can't answer right away, I love the process of finding the answer. And the opportunity to teach internet courses is a real joy.

Describe your favorite conference experience.

Watching a presentation on Google with an intermittent internet connection, the presenters handled the issue amazingly. Every time the wireless went down, they managed to pull out another anecdote, or moved on to the next piece of the presentation without the audience feeling like they were missing something.

What do you do for fun?

I love to read science-fiction and fantasy, write short stories to give to my friends, and knit and crochet.

Name one person you admire, and explain why you admire them.

I admire one of my co-workers, Reference Librarian Julie Backer. She's supported me since the day I was hired, and is always willing to talk about the industry with me, my projects and goals. She gives the best customer service out of any librarian I've ever met, as she is always willing to go that extra step to find what the patron needs.

If you could say one thing to someone who is interested in a career in libraries, what would it be?

Love people, love technology, and love books. If you love all three you'll have a great time and a great career.

If you were stranded at the airport, what would you want to have with you to read, and why?

Anything by Tanya Huff. Because I first picked out one of her books while stranded at the airport, and she's become my favourite author and many of her books are ones I can read again and again.