

9<sup>TH</sup> UNPLUGGED

CHIEF JUDGE LISA T. MUNYON

NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

AUGUST 18, 2021

HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Hi, I'm Chief Judge Lisa Munyon.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You're listening to 9<sup>th</sup> Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So Chief Judge Munyon, well to 9th Unplugged. We are so happy to have you here.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Thank you for having me.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Of course. Of course. And so being Chief Judge of the Ninth Judicial Circuit, could you just quickly explain to our community what that entails.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: The chief judge is really an administrative role. I ensure that the judges have the resources they need to do the job they need to do for the community. That's really my job

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. Well, we are happy to have you as our chief judge. So welcome in that position.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Well, thank you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, let's get unplugged.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Okay.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, can you tell us where were you born and raised?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I was born in Gainesville, Florida. I am a native Floridian from a family of native Floridians.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice. I didn't know that. And so did you go to the University of Florida?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I did.

JUDGE LATIMORE: For –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Both.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Undergrad.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Undergrad and law school.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, you're a double Gator.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I'm a double Gator. My father would not have had it any other way.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, what is it that you miss about Gainesville, Florida?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I miss my family, really. I am the only one literally that ever left Alachua County.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Everybody else lives there.

JUDGE LATIMORE: They're still there.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: They're still there. My cousins, my aunts, uncles, everybody is still there. So I miss the closeness of family. I mean, we, when I was growing up we literally got together after Church every Sunday and had lunch with the entire big family at the grandparents' house. It was awesome, and I miss that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you have siblings?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I do, I have a brother.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, and he's still in Gainesville as well.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: He's still in Gainesville, absolutely.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. And do you get to travel back and visit with them frequently when you're not busy being Chief Judge?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I do. I don't get there as often as I would like. It seems the busier I get, unfortunately that sort of thing gets neglected and that's – I probably should remedy that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I wanted to be an archeologist.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, how did you become interested in that?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I just thought it sounded like really exciting work to go to a place and discover something new about history. And about our ancestors. I also thought it was a plus to be able to go to work in shorts without makeup on every day.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There's an idea.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: But I have a passion for learning and I just – I thought that would be a lot of fun.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, have you taken any trips specifically to go to areas where you might find some archeological treasures?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Well, when I was growing up, we were always on the lookout for different things. If we were in Georgia, we may be looking on the ground to see if we could find pottery or arrowheads. When I was growing up, we took trips to Mexico and we got to you know go and not only go to some of the really well-known ruins, but you know go to ruins that you would hear about in the middle of the woods that locals would direct you to and you'd have to take you know single tractor roads to get to them.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Now, how is it that you ended up in law?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Well, I ended up in law because 17 year olds can make life decisions even if they shouldn't make life decisions. I graduated from high school early and I started at – I graduated from high school at 16. I started UF at 17. And I – everybody assumed I would be a doctor and they did not offer chemistry when I wanted to take it. So I just shrugged my shoulders, and said I'll go to law school. I literally never talked to a lawyer before in my life, before I entered law school. So that I would not recommend that decision making to anyone. You should explore a little bit more before you make life decisions but it turned out okay.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, it did. I think so. What do you believe to be your strongest attribute?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: My strongest attribute. Probably organization. I tend to be a very organized person. I can look at a system and many times figure out a way to make it run a

little bit more smoothly or a little more efficiently. And I think that's just one of the gifts that God gave me is the gift of administration or organization.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And when you're not being organized, what do you do for fun?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: What do I do for fun? I spend time with my family. I grew up in North Florida. We spent a lot of time outside, so I love doing anything outside. Boating, swimming, fishing, you name it, I enjoy it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you do deep-sea fishing?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yes. Not as much now as I used to.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: My father, we used to go regularly and now I go with my brother sometimes when I'm up in Gainesville and he wants to you know take the boat out in the Gulf.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's your biggest catch? Do you recall?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: My biggest catch. Would have been a grouper, I'm sure. But I can't remember how big.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: But it was – it was big enough that I had a hard time you know getting it on the boat by myself.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice. That's – did you eat it?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, I wanted to make sure you –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I just wanted to make sure we – I mean, I'm all about you know saving fish but grouper is going to head to the kitchen.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, we do – we do catch and release sometimes, but no, not of a grouper. They're just too good.

JUDGE LATIMOR: Yeah, exactly. Sorry about that you all. How do you deal with failure or defeat?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: You get up and you keep going. And you learn from it. Some of the best lessons that life can teach you are from things that didn't go right. And you learn from them and you do something different the next time.

JUDGE LATIMORE: If you could return to any stage of your life up to now, what stage would that be and why?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: That's an interesting question. I would probably return to college. I had a good time in college.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice. Yes. I'm sure at Florida you did.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yes. I did have a good time in college. And I also, I would love to go back knowing what I know now because I might have made a few different choices along the way, I may not have. But you know I may have decided, maybe that company called Microsoft that's just a little bitty startup, may I want to buy some stock.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. All those things we wish we should have done or could have done.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, absolutely.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Looking back 20/20 vision is amazing. It is when it's hindsight, I'm telling you. So if you were able to be a creature, an animal creature, which would you choose – what would you choose to be and why?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I would like to come back to life as my dog because she's got an amazing life.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Living life large, right.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, she's living life large. But if I could be a creature, a tiger.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Why?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: They're beautiful and sleek and dangerous.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, nice. I like that answer. What's your favorite dessert?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, that's a toss-up between crème brulee, love crème brulee and clafoutis, which is a French country dessert of fruit and it's almost like a fruit egg custard thing. It's awesome.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Awesome. It sounds like high calorie.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: It is actually not high calorie.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, no.



CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: No, high protein. It has calories but not as much as you'd think.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. What if anything would you tell young Lisa to do differently?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Have more fun.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yes. You know you don't need to grow up quite so fast. Enjoy your childhood, enjoy your adolescence.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And if you had – if you won a lotto and I mean big lotto.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Big lotto.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Like really big lotto. All right, what would you do with that money that would include having fun?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Well, I've actually had these thoughts as all of us have.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Exactly.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: What would I do if I won the lotto? I would travel a lot. And I'm sure my husband and I would both retire. And I think I would probably get a really nice compound somewhere, some acreage on a beautiful lake, build houses for myself, my kids –

JUDGE LATIMORE: And bring the family from Gainesville?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I don't know if they would leave but maybe I'd have to go to you know near Gainesville, but I would have – I'd have a family compound so that I could spend more time with my kids and you know see them when it was convenient for all of us.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Sounds good. Well, thank you so much for being unplugged with me today.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Wow, nine minutes already. That was fast. Thank you for having me.

(Music)