

OPEN NINTH:

CONVERSATIONS BEYOND THE COURTROOM

LOVE, JEWETT STYLE

EPISODE 43

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HOSTED BY: CHIEF JUDGE FREDERICK J. LAUTEN

>>Welcome to another episode of Open Ninth: Conversations Beyond the Courtroom in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida. Now, here's your host, Chief Judge Fred Lauten.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I'm joined today by county court judges Steve and Evellen Jewett who are one of two husband and wife teams here in the Ninth Judicial Circuit. They are both, as I said, county court judges and we're glad that they have come to our studio today to share their stories. So Evellen and Steve, welcome to Open Ninth.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Thanks for having us.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I appreciate it.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** All right. So let's talk a little bit about background information. So why don't you – I'll start with Evellen and tell me where you grew up and where you went to school, and eventually we'll get into how you met one another.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I grew up in Fort Lauderdale and went to South Plantation High School, go Paladins, and a little later on –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Paladins of South Plantation.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Yes. Purple and Gold, it's lovely. And I started at Clemson because my friends were going and they had a good football team. And the Gators did not, but then I decided I'd rather be in Florida so I finished up at Florida with undergrad and law school. So I'm a Gator through and through.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** All right, a Gator through and through. I didn't know that about you, that's interesting. All right, Steve.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Born and raised in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach Gardens. I was born in West Palm and then we moved to Palm Beach Gardens when I was little and then grew up – I went to high school in Palm Beach Gardens, the Palm Beach Gardens Gators, Orange and Blue.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** No, that can't be true.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** That's the total truth. However, when I was at my – my junior high school was the Howell Watkins Seminoles, so I was a Seminole before I was a Gator

but I obviously changed my mind on that issue. And then I went to Florida, a double Gator, went undergrad and law school.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So I think your office is just loaded with Gator –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I got a few items –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** A couple of things.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** A few Gator items.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** How about your office?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I have no items.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Because he took them all. Because they're all in his office.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And they can stay in his office.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** You know when you retire, you're going to have to build a wing onto your house just for memorabilia.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Well, it's funny that you mention that because we just had new carpeting put down in two rooms of our house and to do that you must remove all of the items from those rooms. And one of the rooms was the cave as we call it, where we're going to have a t.v. and stuff to watch and I also have my toy collection, and it's just incredible the amount of stuff that came out of these two rooms because it's literally all over our house now, just everything. And I can't – I don't understand how that all just came from two rooms and I don't know how it's going to go back.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** It looks like an episode of Hoarders. It's terrible.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** We have the ring, you know, the little door bell that has the camera on it, we have one of those and so when someone comes, you know it let's you know. So yesterday, we had something coming from Amazon and I looked to see if there was motion and it was the postman or somebody – I guess the postman or UPS was at the door and it's a lot of glass at our front door. And I could see him looking into our living room, and I'm sure he was thinking, what –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Who lives here?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** These are bizarre people that live in this house because we had shelving units and stuff stacked everywhere and so it didn't look real impressive, I'm sure.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Now, did you all meet in law school? Did you know each other in law school?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** All right.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No. We had about a year and a half overlap. I voted for him; I never met him. He ran for John Marshall Bar Association President and my friend, Joanne, told me, vote for him so I did.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Wow, how fateful was that?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Uh-huh, he didn't win.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** But I lost.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** That's not my fault.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I lost by one vote.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Oh, man.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** It's not my fault.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** As it turns out, the person who beat me was eventually impeached so, you know –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So did you – now you weren't elected vice president, were you?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** No. I had been –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Vice-President.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I had been vice-president but didn't get in. I lost by a vote.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's incredible, one vote. To lose by one vote is amazing.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** It was one of those – it was weird too, because the guy that ran against me, everyday had a different handbill, like back in the revolutionary days they had these handbills, and he handed them out and talking about the Jewett Cabal, and attacking me because while I was in charge of the happy hours that the Gumbo would put on, the Dean cracked down on them and so they stopped. I was blamed; I was the person for losing the weekly kegs and that was the issue I think that I lost.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** There were weekly kegs at your law school?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** It was a week or every other week, yeah, we'd have them.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** We were stressed out.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** It was only on Friday afternoon.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I got you. Well, here in Florida, sunny Florida. So you graduate from law school. Tell me a little bit about your work history, which I know something about, but tell our listeners more about your work history. Once again, we'll start with you, Evellen.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Well, mostly I was a public defender for a very, very, very long time.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Did you go right there from law school?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No, I worked at a civil firm down in Fort Lauderdale. I was doing divorce work and absolutely hated it. And then I came up here, and my friend, Kathleen Flammia said you should apply up here. You would love – she said Orlando is younger than Fort Lauderdale and she's absolutely right. There was a young demographic here.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right, there was, I guess.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And anyway, so I got the job with Joe DuRocher and that's when I met him, when I came up for my interview.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** When did you start at the PD's office?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** In – my first day, February 11, 1991.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay, and then I hear – so you had quite a stint there, did you say, what, over 20 years?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** 23 – more than 23 years.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So when did you all actually meet? Right away?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** When I came up for my interview. We did the interview; I went to lunch with Joe DuRocher. And he said we're having a staff meeting this afternoon. Why don't you stick around and go to the staff meeting. Then after the staff meeting, everybody went to Tanqueray's and I was here with my friend Kathleen.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And anyway, that's basically when I met –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** And you say, hey, I voted for you.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No, I didn't know his name. I had no idea – I had no idea who he was. But I met him when I came up for my interview.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** How long were you at the PD's office?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I was there for nine years and a couple of months. And at the time pension was vesting at ten so it was probably a smart idea to get out of there, you know, at that point in time.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Before you vested –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, before I vested.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** That was a good move.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah. So I did go right from law school to the public defender's office. When I was in law school, I did the internship at the public defender's office. I really wasn't certain what I was going to do after law school. My brother was in insurance defense so I thought I might do that, but I went to do that internship and that sort of turned my ship into that direction. I was an intern for a semester, then I was the head intern or chief intern, senior intern during the summertime studying for the bar. But I really wasn't going to start work right away. My friend – my best friend was a page for NBC in New York. And NABET, which was the cameramen and all of the union guys went on strike that summer, and so management was pressed into doing the camera work and editing and things such as that, and my friend had graduated from the University of Florida at the journalism school. And so he knew how to edit and he knew how to do those things. And so because pages are considered management, because they're not union, he was in Washington, D.C. cutting news stories for NBC News. And he had a hotel place – you know, suite that he was staying in. And he said, well, just come up to New York City – I mean, to Washington, D.C. and spend the summer. And I said, that's a great idea. But I came, after I took the bar, to Orlando to see my brother who had some of my stuff, he had been storing it, and my mom begged me, just apply at the public defender's office in Orlando –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Please get a job.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Just please, so I went and applied. And the chief assistant to Joe DuRocher at the time was Lou Lorencz –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** -- for many years. And Lou interview me and didn't give me a job. But my sister in law's friend knew Joe and called Joe and said, hey, you really ought to talk to this guy. Joe called me back himself personally, came in and I interviewed with him the next day and they offered me the job.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I wonder what Lou Lorencz thought about that?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Well, I think he held it against me for a little while. I did have some problems with him every once in a while. I loved Lou, Uncle Lou. So I, you know, I never made it to D.C. I accepted the job; I was paid 18,500 to start as an assistant public defender, and then when I passed the bar, I was at 21, so –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So how long were you there?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I was there from '87 to '96. And started out, of course, in – my first judge was George Sprinkel in misdemeanor, in the old courthouse. And then I went and I was one of the first public defender's for Jose Rodriguez, when he was a county court judge in traffic. Spent a year there and then worked my way up. I was division chief in front of Dick Conrad, who was – I considered sort of –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** When he was in county –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** No, when he was in felony, Circuit Judge, and considered him sort of a mentor. And then eventually after like the last four years I did capital work. I did child sexual batteries and death penalty.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** And so won an award while you were there, the Franklin Graham Award. What is that award about?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Franklin was an assistant public defender who came to work for the office and was really sort of a go getter, young guy and died way too soon. And so they had an award named for him, for young public defender's who really – they go over and above, at least that's what they said at the time.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right. Congratulations, really cool.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Thanks. It was really cool.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So then you went into private practice.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yep.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** And was that with a firm or on your own?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Just on my own. At the time – and the reason I left at that point was, you know, I don't know if you recall but they used to have the contracts. The county would contract with private attorneys to accept appointment work. And so I knew that if I did that that could be a nice, you know, base to open my own practice and so that's why I left a year before I vested my pension. So I went out and was doing contract work, doing family law and I shared space with Andrea Black who's been a domestic lawyer here for many years, was a

public defender. I knew her from being a public defender, and was there for 19 years on my own.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Wow, 19?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** No –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No, ten.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Ten. It was 19 years total.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Where does the time go?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, well, you know.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** You're not that old.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Believe me. That's right, 19 total years before I ran for judge. That's what it was.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So somewhere in this time period the proposal happens, right?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yes.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Yes.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Who wants to tell the story about that?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Well, first, she – you know, we can say that she moved in with me for a while and we lived together for a while, and the word came down that, you know, eventually this was not going to stand.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Oh, yeah, just – it was going to move in one direction or the other?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** That's correct.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Permanency or –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** You made the deadline by about two weeks. I don't think he –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, right.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** He did not know the deadline.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Just squeezed in.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** It was – it was not written or spoken in any way but certainly it was palpable that there was a deadline so it was felt. We were actually going to Chicago to visit my friend who had been working for NBC in D.C. who I was going to go – he had moved to Chicago and was working for NBC News there. And we were going to visit for a little vacation and I decided that that would be the time that I would propose. We had a planned game at Wrigley Field. We went to Wrigley Field to see the Cubs play the Giants, and at one point during the game there – Steve Buechele, who was the shortstop for the – I think he was shortstop or was he third base, for the Cubs, lashes a foul ball and we were in the box seats out near right field, right where Barry Bonds was –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** He's going to tell you every play of the game now.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yes, well, this is important – this is important, though, because the ball comes up there and I'm starting to reach up to catch the ball and all of a sudden I feel my arm's down on the ball. I miss it; it hits my hand and then scatters down on the ground. And Evellen comes up with the ball. She got the foul ball, yeah, so she saved me there.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** But my plan was, and as it turned out, I took the ring that I had which was my grandmother's wedding ring, and when Eric and I went to the – bought some crackerjacks and I opened -- slit the crackerjacks open and took the prize out of the bottom.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Put it in there?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Put the prize – yeah, took the prize out, put the ring in and slid it into the bottom of the box and brought it back and then gave – gave her her crackerjacks.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** In Wrigley Field?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** At Wrigley Field. And so she's eating the crackerjacks and of course, she was sitting, and there was – one of the people was in between us because I didn't want to be obvious and then, you know, change the seating. So she's eating and eating and I'm like looking down and waiting, and looking, you know, bending over and looking down, and I'm like, is she going to ever get to the prize? And so you can say what happened –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** It's a good thing she didn't say these are stupid.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Well –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Well – well, on that note. He had not taken out the other prize, I don't think. The prize was like this –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** A little square – a little square paper.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** It was a little mini – mini baseball card, and I got it and opened it up and I'm like, well, I guess -- we have the big – you know, the big expensive box. I'm like, well, this is kind of a rip off, it's the same, you know, crappy gift you get in the little box. And he starts to panic.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I'm like what? Hold on a second.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** There had better be something else in there.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, I hope that's not a crappy –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And then I think there might have been another prize and that's – well, I don't think it was in the same thing.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Anyway, did you finally get to it?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Or maybe – I finally got the ring but he wasn't – he didn't say anything. He didn't ask me –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I was looking –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I was just looking and he's like two people away from me. And I'm like –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Did you figure it out or not?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Well –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** After a while.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** That's not a proposal, I just said. He's like, well, and I'm like, well, get over here and do it.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Get the cameras on, you get on your knee –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** She made me get up and get on my knee and ask her right there, and of course, everyone around us is seeing what's going on.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I had no idea you proposed in Wrigley Field.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** He did. I made him. I'm so mean.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** One of the classic baseball parks. And so you got to go back there for anniversary celebrations.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Someday. I'd love to go to Wrigley.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** We have been back.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** We have been back --

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** What day was this proposal? Was it summertime, fall time?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Summertime.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** It was summer.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** It was August. No, his next birthday was the deadline so I know it was August. Like, I'm not throwing him another party.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay. I think I've told you this, my dad grew up two blocks from Wrigley Field, just outside the left field wall, down literally two blocks away so – and my son works in Chicago now. So the proposal happens. When was that? How long – and when was the wedding? How long have you been married?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** The proposal was '93.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And the wedding was '94.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** All right.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** March 26th, 1994.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Good, good, good.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I'm glad you know that.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** If I had to actually come up with a number sometime, you know, that's the hard part is cyphering –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So 24 years?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Um-hum.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Soon 24.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Children or no children?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** No – no kids.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** None that I know of.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** We have dogs.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's what I heard. So you got two judges used to making the calls in the courtroom. How do you settle these disagreements at home? Who's the superior court?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** She wins. It's just easier.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Well, maybe we should tell – I don't know, should we tell the public your infamous investiture story or not?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** She won that one, sure, by a long shot. Of course, I'll tell. Well, she wasn't a judge at the time when I ran for judge so she could help me in my campaign and she was really the most important person as far as work done and things in helping me get elected. And so at my investiture, you know, I was going to save her for last, her and my brother who had also helped a lot. And they were sitting right down in front. They had moved

down front, but the problem was, my mother was there. And so she was like the very next, the penultimate person to be thanked would be her. And so I started talking about my mother and she – you know, my father had died in 1969 when I was 8 and she raised all three of us kids on her own. She was a teacher and just went down the whole litany of things that my mother had done for me and I started getting choked up.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right, of course.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** And you know, once -- for me, I'll cry watching a TV commercial. I mean, I'm an easy touch. And so when it's really something emotional like that, I lock up.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Very tough.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** And that's what happened. I started to lock up and I just – I couldn't really even say anymore about her because of, you know, how proud I was of my brother and my sister and what she had done for me and I couldn't speak. So I just said thank you and then I sat down. And as soon as I put my butt on the chair, I realized I had not thanked my wife or my brother.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Uh-oh.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** And because Belvin – and this was an investiture with 8 judges so we were already going to be there forever and I think I was probably one of the last ones.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Yeah, was this the infamous one where Mark Blechman was told he had ten or fifteen minutes and he took 45?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** No, it was the one where Lubet told the joke about the pirate and the white pants and yeah, it's a really gross joke. But it was still – even with – I think I might have been seven out of the eight, so even if everyone stayed within a –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** A lot of people – nobody does.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Right, right, of course not. So I knew I was not going to get back up and say, hey, Belvin, wait a second, I got to say one more thing. That wasn't

happening. So I just – and I just sat down and ate it and so ultimately that – within a couple of months, my wife had a Porsche.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** After it happened, or at the investiture, people kept coming up to me, I can't believe he didn't thank you. You did his whole campaign; you wrote every single thing. You put out all those signs; you did everything. I can't believe it, and I just told them all, I just smiled, I'm like, you know what, don't worry about it, I'm going get myself – I'm going to get a Porsche.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** For our listeners, now at every investiture the running joke is you better not pull a Jewett and forget to thank your spouse of either gender or it will cost you a Porsche.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** And I got thanked. Of course, I couldn't help with her campaign –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Thanks for nothing.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** -- so during her investiture, she thanked me for laying on the couch and watching TV while she was at events. She thanked me for taking care of the dogs.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** So you both were elected of course in different campaigns at different times. So what's it like being a husband and wife judge? Are you talking about work at home? Do you help each other analyze, you know, issues that crop up or do you leave it here? What's the approach that you guys take?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** We generally don't talk that much about law at home, but me being a newer judge and he's been doing it for a while, I have a mentor Nancy Clark and she's great, but I don't live with her so when I have an issue, I can bounce it off of him so I am seeking advice. And he's a little cagey; he won't tell me what to do. He'll – he won't even necessarily tell me what he would do so it gets a little aggravating sometimes, but he – he'll give me help.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Kind of analyze it and show you – talk about options.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Yes.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Great. Well, I think that would be helpful to you.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I don't want to say –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Rule for me.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Right, rule for her. I just want her to think – give her ideas of what to think about and ways to, you know, analyze it.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** But when I'm tired, it's like, could you just tell me what I should do?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Occasionally that – that's the rejoinder from her is, could you just – just what? Tell me what – what's the answer? Thanks for the lesson, professor.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Like in law school, the professor would never affirm anything you said. It was like, am I even in the ballpark here?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Right. Professor Poindexter, enough of that, just tell me the answer.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Well, I'm going to ask you both this, so what do you -- and I'll start with you, Evellen. What do you think the most important traits that judges should include?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Well, I'm doing arraignments this week, and in county court, in particular, I think the most important trait is patience.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** And some compassion –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Of course, right.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** -- but the law is still the law. But I really think patience.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Yeah, especially –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** That's how my week's gone.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** -- at all levels, but county court which is really the people's court is what a lot of people say because most people see county court judges. More people see county court judges than circuit court judges or district court judges, or the Supreme Court. So a lot of the interaction of the public with judges is in county court.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** You just want to keep a good demeanor even when

–

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** -- craziness is happening?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** -- craziness is happening. It's like, okay, stay cool, just keep –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** What would you add to that, anything?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I don't think I can really. Those are the two things that I think are the most important. Unfortunately, I think I'm more patient in the courtroom than I may be in regular life.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** You mean at home?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, at home. Certainly, driving around and things such as that, you know, I try but I keep myself a little more under control patience-wise, and I think I do a pretty good job of that because I think it's – it's like you said, it's the people's court in the sense that, you know, if you're a circuit judge, and especially in criminal, you're going to see probably people that are – you see a higher percentage of bad people in there trying to act their best, you know, they're going to be their best. Whereas in the county court, you see for the most part not bad people. They just made – maybe made a small mistake and this is probably one of the worst days of their life so they're really trying to, you know, get beyond that. So I think you have to have the compassion for that as well.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I'm curious about both of your impressions about the volume of work that you're called upon to do which I think is something the public doesn't necessarily see. They see us on TV for one case, presiding over one matter or hear about us ruling in one discreet case. But what we know is that it's a high volume practice. It's a high

volume practice in county court. So what are your thoughts and observations about that? Let's start again, Evellen, with you.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Always me. I was a public defender for a really long time so high volume, it doesn't –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** It didn't come as a surprise.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** -- surprise me and it doesn't phase me. I've always dealt with high volume. Frankly, I think it affects the attorneys appearing before me. I mean, I will get through it as the judge. I'm going to call each case and we are going to get through it and we're going to figure out a way – I feel for the – I mean, I'm in a division with – I mean, I know there are a lot of cases and I've had a lone state attorney for the past month. And when I first started, I had two state attorneys and then I had a lone state attorney for about four months. So I feel for them.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Yeah, that's pretty tough.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** But we, you know, we work through the caseload. And just call them one at a time and just keep calling them until they're gone and we get through it.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right. Same thing, you were a PD and you were –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, because when I was a PD the last four years, I was just doing death penalty so I had a much smaller caseload there, and then as a private attorney obviously the numbers are not as high. But I do remember the days and so that's – now she's going to have – Evellen is going to have two prosecutors because one just left my division to go to her division. So apparently this state attorney can only practice in front of Judge Jewett's because she – literally her first day was in front of me so she's only been in front of a Jewett. It makes it easier for her to remember how to address the judge. So now I'm going to have one, only one prosecutor and he's brand new. So you have to be with those younger lawyers and if they're overburdened, you just have to be more understanding and easier to deal with. The one thing as far as the caseload, especially if you're in arraignment or something that I notice is I have to try to slow down a little bit because, you know, okay, I've got 60 people that I've got to

cover this afternoon, enter a plea or get rid of them. And the plea colloquy, when I say it, sounds like the right speed to me because I've heard it a million times. I'm sure that the person who is standing at the lectern, they're only catching every third word because I'm saying it so quickly to get through it. And it's brand new. It's all information that they've never heard before so I have to try to consciously try to slow that down a little bit because even though most people in arraignment I think just want to get in and get out. I think they still want to at least know they understood what happened, and if you go too quickly and you can do it – I mean, I can do a plea probably in less than a minute if I had to. But that's not doing anyone any service, even if they just want it over with.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** There's this famous training tape that new judges are shown. You've probably seen it where a woman goes into a county court high volume and there's a default which means the other side never even answered. So when she goes to present her case to the judge, he just says, you've won, congratulations, step to the right, see the clerk, here's your judgment for the dollar amount you asked for. And she walks out of the courtroom. They interview him and he says, I did a great job. I was very efficient. I have another 60 cases, you know, everything moved quickly and efficiently and she won. She must be happy. And then she's out in the hall complaining, the judge didn't care what I had to say, and I prepared for hours and then I didn't even get to open my mouth. What happened? Of course, she was completely successful.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** She got what she wanted.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** She got everything she asked for but it did illustrate that sometimes you just got to slow down and give people a chance –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Because how they feel about the – about the justice system is important, you know. Just because they won doesn't mean that they're happy when they leave. I mean, in county civil that's kind of common, I think, you know.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Well, speaking of the system, if you could change or alter any one thing, what would that be?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I think you should start with him.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** That's a tough question because, you know, not that we're perfect but I think we do it pretty good. I really do. I mean, I think that maybe that we could spread the work around a little bit, certainly in county court. The county criminal judges are less – they have less day-to-day heavyweight stuff to do compared to civil. But you know I tell this to jurors and it's not just puffery to me, I think we have the best justice system in the world. And again, it's not because of myself or us, but I just think that we do it – we do it pretty well. Now, when I talked about slowing down and helping people understand the process, we probably could do a better job of that. And it is because we are in this – this circuit where we have this huge pipeline. I think probably in the smaller circuits where they have one county judge or two county judges, that probably is not much – as much of a problem because their numbers aren't as high. But the access probably could be better as far as – but that's what they're working on. The Bar, that's one of their big initiatives now and the Supreme Court's initiative is the access to the courts, although I think I saw that the legislature – oh no, the justice department, they're access to the court system, they just basically defunded them. But you know we're going more and more to that. Certainly in civil, you see so many pro se litigants that they kind of half understand what's going on and they're representing themselves. So maybe that would be the only thing that I would say – and I don't really know what the answer is as far as the access and to do that other than we have to ourselves take it upon our shoulders to slow it down and make sure they understand what they're doing.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Great. What would you add, Evellen?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Oh, I think his answer was perfect.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Wow, can I have a copy of that to take with me?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Yes, his answer was perfect. I have nothing to add to that.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** What I would add at maybe the ten thousand foot level is, you know, I think we don't have one staff attorney for every two judges. And I think sometimes the public thinks, you know, we have someone who can help us write orders and do legal research and, you know, you guys have such a high volume that it calls for you to be in

court so many hours of the day. And if we shared a staff attorney, we'd double our staff attorney size from 16 to 30 because we have 65 judges. And yet in the federal court, the federal judges have multiple attorneys for the individual judge. So there are some resource issues. But I think you hit the nail on the head, which is, we're here to serve the public. We've got to remember we're here not for our own well-being but mostly really for their well-being and to slow down and make sure that they're served. Well, let me end with this question, anything that you can identify that is unique about the fact that you both are married to one another and judges? I'm not married to a judge; I'm married to a beautiful woman, she's not a judge and doesn't even work in the legal field. What kind of unique –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** But important in her own way. She does a lot of very important things.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Yes, she does, thanks. I appreciate that. But anything that's – well, you were a judge before your wife was a judge. Has anything changed in any way? I guess maybe you can go to all these judicial events together.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, because she didn't want to go to those before. I don't think --

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I don't remember being asked, but okay.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I really don't know that's it's really changed. I mean, our relationship is still the same, you know. Maybe people don't look at me as special anymore, you know, now –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I guess when you're out in public –

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** You're very special.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** -- and someone says, Judge Jewett, both of your heads –

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Which one, huh?

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's got to be different.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I think you're getting used to me being recognized. I mean, I was an anonymous public defender for years. It's not that I'm famous now but people know who I am which is odd.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I'll say from my perspective the best thing is, is that watching her flourish. She loves this job. I mean, I love my job too, don't get me wrong, but after ten years, eleven years, it becomes – it's still a job from moment to moment but it's all, you know, unicorns and rainbows for her. And so it's kind of exciting to watch that and to see that.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** And to remember back to that.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Right, right, when you first started –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** When you first started and what it felt like.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** How cool it is. I mean, the first – I still do remember the first day that I walked out and they announced me in the courtroom and I started laughing. I just – I couldn't hold it in because it was ludicrous –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Surreal, right?

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Yeah, yeah. And it was Dave Parker. I don't know if you remember Dave Parker –

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I sure do.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** And so, but really to me the job is that because although she was a tremendous public defender and an amazing trial attorney, I think by the end, you know, she got to the tail end of that career, it was – she wasn't enjoying it as much, certainly enjoying – or maybe not even at all. And so she has – she's in a much better place now and it's really great to see that because this job is really great for her and she's doing great at it.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** Great.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Thanks.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** You want to get the last word in?

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** I always say that he stole my idea because I'm the one who always wanted to be the county court judge. And I would say to him all the time, I think county court, for me would be the best job in the world because you don't have sentencing guidelines. You're dealing with people who screwed up a little bit for the most part, the general public, and you can do what you feel is justice. And you're not locked in by sentencing guidelines which, at that time, when I was saying this, I felt very locked in by sentencing guidelines. And I said that for years and then he went and ran for judge and got elected which was great. He stole my idea.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** I filed while she was out of town visiting her friends in North Carolina.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** He did.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** There was a spot open and I said, you know, I'm going to do this and I called her up that night and said, I'm going to run for judge. Huh? I'm going to run for judge. I filed the paper work today. Oh, yeah, that was basically the response.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** No, I was very encouraging, as long as that's really what you want to do, you're going to have to cut your hair.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** I didn't realize you proposed in Wrigley Field. I didn't realize you stole this idea from Evellen.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** He did.

>>**CHIEF JUDGE LAUTEN:** But on behalf of all of the judges here and as Chief Judge, and really on behalf of all the citizens of Orange County, we're thrilled that we have two Jewetts on the bench and you guys are doing spectacular work. And I know that you love every moment of your job and it shows. It shows in your demeanor and it shows in the work ethic that you demonstrate and we're blessed to have you as two county court judges in this circuit and really in this county, Orange County, and so on behalf of all the judges and people, I want to thank you for the work that you're doing. I want to thank you for taking time out of your schedules to talk to us today. Thanks very much.

>>**JUDGE EVELLEN JEWETT:** Our pleasure. Thanks for having us.

>>**JUDGE STEVE JEWETT:** Thank you.

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