

9TH UNPLUGGED

HONORABLE BRIAN S. SANDOR

COUNTY COURT JUDGE

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore.

JUDGE SANDOR: And I'm Judge Brian Sandor.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And you are listening to 9th Unplugged.

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So Judge Sandor, please tell us what division are you assigned to and how long have you been with the Ninth Circuit?

JUDGE SANDOR: I'm a county court judge and I'm assigned currently to a civil division and I was appointed in September of 2021 and I started on November 1st of 2021.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What made you want to become a judge?

JUDGE SANDOR: A lot of different things really. Not one more than any other but I really do love the law, but I really did dislike being in front of inconsistent judges and I thought that that inconsistency only had one answer and that was to try to be someone who would be more consistent.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Well, we are glad you are here with us in the Ninth. So let's get unplugged. What do you do when you want to be unplugged and away from the Ninth Circuit?

JUDGE SANDOR: So most of my free time is spent with my children and my family, but I also do love Orlando City Soccer and all things sports-related and Broadway shows at Dr. Phillips, and things like that just to get out and about.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Have you ever played soccer?

JUDGE SANDOR: I did. I did. I played soccer fairly seriously throughout my childhood and even got to go to college to play, but that didn't end up working out.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What happened?

JUDGE SANDOR: I injured my – well, I didn't injury myself. Someone else injured me but I separated my shoulder, broke my collar bone and kind of had a pretty significant upper body injury that required surgery and then by the time I rehabbed, my college coach had been relieved of his duties and the new coach that came in – I think there were 26 of us and only seven got to stay.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, wow. Well, you know I guess there was another direction you were supposed to go to in life at that time.

JUDGE SANDOR: Clearly.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What other sports do you play?

JUDGE SANDOR: I play golf now mostly, so I still dabble in soccer. But if I have free time and I want to play sports, it would be golf.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Are you good?

JUDGE SANDOR: I don't think so. I do get invited to play –

JUDGE LATIMORE: I love honesty.

JUDGE SANDOR: -- with groups so that's fine. I mean a good day is under 90 but most days are somewhere between 90 and 100, depending on the course.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Other than playing golf, what's your secret talent?

JUDGE SANDOR: Oh, I don't think I have any talents. I don't think golf is a talent either. You know I like trivia. I wouldn't say it's a talent but I do know lots of random things that are pretty useless to know.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's a really unique thing that you know that you could share with others that I probably don't know? Tell me something really good.

JUDGE SANDOR: Oh, man, let's see. Let's talk about something I learned today was that when people say, I hope you break a leg, when someone's trying out for an audition, it's because they want to be in a cast. I just thought it was a different way of saying good luck without saying good luck but it's really because they want you to get in a cast.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's interesting. Thank you for sharing that.

JUDGE SANDOR: There you go.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I would have never thought that. That's good to know. What gives your life meaning?

JUDGE SANDOR: My family. I'm the youngest of five boys and we all grew up in a very tight-knit house. We shared rooms because who has that amount of space and watching my nieces and nephews grow up and now having my own kids. And my nieces and nephews being in high school and being big brothers and big sisters to my kids, it's just – it really does fulfill everything when you come from a big family and then it gets bigger and bigger and you get to spend time together, there's nothing better than that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Did the boys get along? Did everyone get along as boys?

JUDGE SANDOR: No.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Boys were boys, weren't they?

JUDGE SANDOR: Oh, my brother is without a doubt my best friend now. But that probably didn't happen until I was about 19 or 20 when he was getting married. But we kind of decided okay, life is serious now and then he told me I was going to be an uncle and I had already been an uncle with my older brother. But having someone – we're only 14 months apart so that's probably an issue there as to growing up and sharing things. But once he became a dad and I got to become an uncle to his son, his oldest son, that's when we started becoming friends. But the first 20 years was pretty bumpy.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Pretty rough in there, right. And what title of the current chapter of your life would you pick?

JUDGE SANDOR: Man, so that's a great question because I really think I'm pretty far chapter-wise just because my late teens through twenties, I had so many different directions I thought my life was going to go in.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What else did you want to do?

JUDGE SANDOR: I had originally wanted to be a doctor. My oldest brother is a doctor. My second oldest brother is a dentist and I wanted to be a foot and ankle doctor, a podiatrist –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, tell us why the foot and the ankle.

JUDGE SANDOR: Because I played soccer and I was always at my own podiatrist.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go.

JUDGE SANDOR: Because I had broken both ankles a couple of times and had some other issues, and my podiatrist's kids were my age and they didn't want to do it and he would let

me come in and intern with him. And he was also the doctor for the Orlando Predators and the Orlando Magic so he had all of the cool sports memorabilia. And I just thought I was going to hang out with professional athletes all day.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes.

JUDGE SANDOR: And then I found out quickly that it's not what he does.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And that changed your mind?

JUDGE SANDOR: And that changed my mind when you're dealing with different afflictions of the foot that can be a little hard to stomach. And so that was phase one. And so college took a turn after that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. And then you went straight to law school.

JUDGE SANDOR: I did.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Or were there some other places that you thought you may end up in between there?

JUDGE SANDOR: Well, after podiatry I thought education, I still love education. I still think that at some point in my life I will get into teaching, whether it's at the high school or college, or even law school level, I love teaching. And I love learning. I think that's the best part of being a judge is that you learn all the time. You just don't necessarily have a test at the end of it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right.

JUDGE SANDOR: So I think that's a future plan. So after teaching and realizing that unfortunately teachers may not get paid what their hour is worth, I fell into law which was my original love as a child because my grandfather is an attorney.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Speaking of teaching, you were a daycare afterschool counselor, correct?

JUDGE SANDOR: That was my very first job ever. I taught at a children's academy in Oakridge that's still open today.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE SANDOR: My mom – one of my mom's best friends owns a daycare out there and I had to get my community service hours for high school. And so I just fell in love with it, and once my hours were done, she told me she'd pay me and I just said, you're going to be pay me to do what I was just doing for free. Absolutely.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. What's the fun times that you had doing that? I mean, I can only imagine how much fun that must be.

JUDGE SANDOR: It was a ton of fun. I had the older kids so I had third grade up and so we would spend the first hour when they came off the bus or got dropped off, we would spend the first hour actually doing homework and doing some basics. And certain groups of kids that were there were struggling with school. And so it was really helpful to help kids. It meant a lot. It was impactful to help kids learn how to read and write that were behind, but then once we got done with homework, it was playground time.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, party is on, right.

JUDGE SANDOR: And playground time with kids that age just the amount of energy, and I mean, I was in high school at the time so I was in pretty good shape. But when you got 8, 9, 10-year old's going hard on the playground for ten or fifteen minutes, and then they get swapped out with different groups of kids because they took a break but you can't take a break but playing with those kids and seeing them have it better than they may have had prior to getting to the daycare was always great.

JUDGE LATIMORE: How does that carry over to your life now? You have kids.

JUDGE SANDOR: I do. I'm not as active as I once was but my kids love playing outside. The playground and the backyard are probably their favorite things. My daughter does gymnastics. My son is starting golf and so getting outside and getting off a device is probably the most important thing that I can do with them, just to let them know that when I was a kid, you know there weren't devices like the Super Nintendo or a Nintendo was as good as it got.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Exactly.

JUDGE SANDOR: But even then, being outside and getting sweaty and having a good time outside is always the best.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Quickly, if you could change the world, keeping your kids in mind, what one thing would you change about the world?

JUDGE SANDOR: I would try to find a way to let them be kids for longer. I think the fact that they can't leave school behind at 2:30 when that last whistle or the last bell goes off like we did, there was no way to keep in contact with kids unless you met up at the playground or at the end of the street on your bikes. They don't get a break like we got a break and I would try to

find a way to allow kids to have a break and just separate from the rest of the world because they're always plugged in. Let's get unplugged.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Let's get unplugged. Thank you, Judge Sandor. You've been wonderful to speak with.

(Music)