

9TH UNPLUGGED

HONORABLE STEFANIA C. JANCEWICZ

OSCEOLA COUNTY JUDGE

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HOSTED BY: HONORABLE ALICIA L. LATIMORE

JUDGE LATIMORE: Hi, I'm Judge Latimore.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Hi, I'm Judge Jancewicz.

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

(Music)

JUDGE LATIMORE: So Judge, would you tell the audience where you are assigned and how long you've been a judge, and anything else you'd like to share about your position?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I have been a judge in Osceola County for 16 years. I'm right now in the civil division again, just transferred back in January.

JUDGE LATIMORE: What's your favorite division, if you have one?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I like them both equally. They both engage different aspects of my brain and they both require different focus so the fact that we can go back and forth really is a great balance.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. That sounds good. Well, let's get unplugged.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: All right.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right, so first and foremost, where were you born and how is it that you ended up in Osceola County, Florida.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I was born in Caracas, Venezuela.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Yeah. My parents are both Italian. They were both born and raised in South Italy in the Naples area. After World War II, independently their families moved

to Venezuela. A lot of Italian immigrants moved to Venezuela after the war. They met in Venezuela, got married, had me and we moved to the States when I was two.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Where did you move to?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: New Jersey.

JUDGE LATIMORE: New Jersey.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Jersey. I'm a Jersey girl.

JUDGE LATIMORE: It seems to be a popular place recently. Where in Jersey?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I grew up in Patterson, New Jersey.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay, tell us about Patterson.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Patterson has a very long and rich history in the United States. When I was there it was like the melting pot within the melting pot. Everybody in our neighborhood was from somewhere else. And we had so many different cultures, so many different backgrounds and religions and beliefs. Everybody was family oriented, so we had a great neighborhood.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you speak more than one language?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I do. I speak Italian and Spanish fluently. And then I learned English when we moved to the United States.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice. Will you say something because you know Italian is just such an eloquent language to me?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: It's a beautiful language.

JUDGE LATIMORE: I love it. Would you say something?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Say something in Italian. Ti vogilio bene.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That is so beautiful. What did you just say?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Thank you. That I love you.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, I love you too. That's about as good as it gets for me, though.
Well, so you ended up in Osceola County, how.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: My parents wanted to start a restaurant. My dad was a chef. And we always had Pizzeria's, Italian Cafes, things like that in New Jersey and we had an opportunity to move to Florida and open a restaurant, which my parents did here in Kissimmee, 35 years ago.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay. Oh, wonderful. So they make the sauce from scratch, that real Italian –

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Everything. I used to joke all the time. I would say my dad makes all the food, my mom makes all the desserts, and I make all the money.

JUDGE LATIMORE: There you go. What's your favorite Italian food?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Well, it's funny because a lot of the things that are popular in restaurants aren't really dishes that we have at home. So my mom makes a, it's a meat dish, it's called Braciolo.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: And it's flank steak and it's got herbs, and it's rolled up and it's fried first and then put into the tomato sauce, and it finishes cooking in the tomato sauce.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Sounds delicious.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: But the Braciolo is amazing.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, that's your favorite.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: It is.

JUDGE LATIMORE: All right. So outside of Italian, what is one of your favorite cuisines?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I don't know if I would call it like a cuisine based on a nationality. I'm a steak girl. I love steak.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Do you.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: You give me a good steak and a nice glass of red wine, and I am set.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Nice. What do you do for fun?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I cook.

JUDGE LATIMORE: You do.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Yeah.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Oh, okay. And what is your dish that everybody wants to get you to bring to the outings?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Well, there's a rotation of different meals that my kids request and a couple that my husband and my mom will request all the time. I make a really great Paleo, cashew chicken.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: And everybody loves that. And then I make a really great side dish, which is basically Brussel sprouts and butternut squash in a honey vinaigrette sauce. And I get requested to bring that and brie. For some reason, my cousins love my baked brie.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Wonderful.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Which is really simple to do but I don't tell them that.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Don't do it. No, they don't need to know that.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I make it special.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yes, absolutely. You put some extra effort into it, right.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I try.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So tell me, what makes you feel grateful for in life? What is it that really brings a sense of gratitude for you?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: My children.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: My children are just the reason why I enjoy getting out of bed and doing certain things throughout my day to make them happy, to teach them as much as I can about God, about love, about family, about responsibility. And about enjoying the life that we've been provided.

JUDGE LATIMORE: That's awesome. That is wonderful.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Thanks.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And do you have two top rules for navigating life? If you could pick two rules that help you to navigate through life, what do you think that would be.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: For me, my first, I guess my first thought is always, what's the right thing to do. What would God want me to do? What would be the right way to approach this? And what's the honorable thing to do? I mean, I learned I guess the hard way that you can't please everybody.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Right.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: But if you focus on pleasing, and in my faith you focus on pleasing God, everything else falls into place.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Now, do you like animals?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I love animals.

JUDGE LATIMORE: So if you were reincarnated as an animal, which animal would you be?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: A Labradoodle.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Aw. And why?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Because they're the sweetest dogs I've ever known and I think dogs, they are an example for us of how we should try to treat each other in life. They love you no matter what --

JUDGE LATIMORE: Unconditionally.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Completely unconditionally. All they want is to spend time with you. You know, not that I would want anybody to treat anyone poorly, but even when you treat a dog not nicely, they love you anyway. They're always happy to see you. They're just the sweetest creatures that God created and Labradoodles are the sweetest of those dogs.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I've had two –

JUDGE LATIMORE: I was going to ask you.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: -- and they were amazing, yeah. They just want to lick you. They just want to be with you. They want to be on your lap even though they weigh 110 pounds and they don't care about anything else except wanting to be with the family.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah. So what are some of the fun things that you used to do but now since we've matured you haven't been doing that as much anymore?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I don't know if it's – I guess it is a maturity thing. A little bit of it too is the job. I mean, certain things that we would have maybe not thought twice doing before I became a judge, we became judges, you have to worry about how it might be perceived. But back in my college days –

JUDGE LATIMORE: Back in the day.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: Back in the day. We spent a lot of time on Church Street.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: We were out downtown, and just being young and having fun.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And enjoying life.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: And enjoying it, absolutely.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Just because we really didn't – it wasn't as serious to us at that point, right?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: It was just about spending some fun time with your friends and being young and free and not having as much of the responsibilities that we tend to accumulate.

JUDGE LATIMORE: And so as you continue to mature, how is it that you hope to change as a person in the future?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I've gotten a little bit more calm and more still, and more thoughtful within myself. As I've gotten older, I've really decided to think about what makes me happy and what brings joy to my family. I've started to accept that I can't do every single thing and be responsible for everybody else's needs. Certainly, I have to focus on my family. But I've learned to let go of things that I know I can't control, and be present and be in the now, and appreciate what I have.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Yeah, that sounds great. Tell me, what's on your bucket list?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I want to get back to Ireland. I've been to Ireland several times. That's like my, I don't know, my haven, my sanctuary. If I weren't Italian, I'd want to be Irish.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I'd like to travel more. I want to go – I would love to see Egypt. I would love to go to Nepal. I want to go to India. So travelling is a really big priority for me if I can arrange it.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Anything else other than travel?

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: I don't know. I think the travel would allow me to do the other things so like to visit more museums and get to know more cultures. Maybe study some more.

JUDGE LATIMORE: Okay. Sounds good. Thank you so much for being unplugged with me today.

JUDGE JANCEWICZ: It was my pleasure. Thank you.

(Music)