

OPEN NINTH:
CONVERSATIONS BEYOND THE COURTROOM
LIVE LONG AND PROSPER
EPISODE 6
SEPTEMBER 25, 2016
HOSTED BY: FREDERICK J. LAUTEN

(Music.)

>> Welcome to Episode 6 of "Open Ninth: Conversations Beyond the Courtroom" in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

And now here's your host, Chief Judge Frederick J. Lauten.

(Music.)

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Hello. I'm here today with Orange County Judge Faye Allen. Judge Allen's been on the bench in Orange County as an Orange County judge since 2005. She received her bachelor of arts degree in criminology from Florida A & M and her Juris Doctorate from Florida State University.

Judge Allen, first of all, welcome.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Thank you.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** I understand that you consider yourself a Trekkie. For those listeners who don't know what a Trekkie is, think *Star Trek*. Think fan. Think the phenomena of a *Star Trek* fan and its multiple fans.

And I think the definition is an avid fan of *Star Trek* science fiction, television shows, and films or, by extension, a person interested in space travel.

Before we talk a little bit about your love of *Star Trek*, Gene Roddenberry, Captain Kirk, Spock, McCoy, and everything else that is the *Star Trek* franchise -- and it's

truly a franchise -- I'd like to talk a little bit about your background.

So why don't you tell me where you're from originally, and why you decided to become a judge.

>> JUDGE ALLEN: Fred, I'm originally from Quincy, Florida. It's a few miles west of Tallahassee, the capital. As you said, I received my bachelor's degree at FAMU up in Tallahassee, and then I went to FSU for law school.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: How did you get to Orlando?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: I -- my first job out of law school was with the Public Defender's Office here in Orlando. And I wanted to kind of get away from home, so I really didn't want to remain in Tallahassee, and it was my first opportunity to get out of that area and come in here for -- Walt Disney World was a perk too.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: Great. Great. So did you come to work for the Public Defender's Office for Bob Wesley or Joe DuRocher.

>> JUDGE ALLEN: It was Joe DuRocher.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: All right.

>> JUDGE ALLEN: But incidentally, I also did work for Bob Wesley also.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: So how long did you stay at the Public Defender's Office?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: I stayed at the Public Defender's

Office for a few years the first time when I worked for Joe DuRocher. And then I actually relocated back to Tallahassee for personal/family reasons. And after a few years in Tallahassee, I came back to Orlando and I did work a bit for Bob Wesley before I became a judge.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** And why don't you tell our listeners, how did you become a judge?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Well, I -- Fred, I've always believed in truth and justice, and as an attorney, I was advocating for one side. But as a judge, I -- I'm able to be a neutral arbiter of justice and due process for both sides. And I just thought I could add something to my experience, my legal experience, by becoming a judge.

I was appointed to the bench in 2005, and I've served ever since. I served in criminal divisions and in civil divisions.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So, Faye, we hold the distinction in this state of almost having the same amount of women as men on the bench in the Ninth Circuit. We have -- 49% of the judges in the circuit are women. If I'm right, I think you're the second African-American woman ever to serve in the county; is that correct?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I believe you are correct in that.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** And that is quite a distinction. Tell me a little bit about that factor and your being a judge.

Does it factor in at all?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I think so. When I first came to Orlando in the early '90s, I met the other female judge that had -- I think been elected. And I was really proud to see her. I was actually really proud of all the judiciary. I thought that Orlando was an excellent place to practice law.

I was able to meet with her and communicate with her about what the process was for her to become a judge. I was inspired. She wasn't the only one who inspired me, but I was inspired by what she told me. And I think that it had some bearing on my thoughts of my potential future of becoming a judge.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Great. Great. I'm gonna loop back before we talk about *Star Trek* because I noted that you said you graduated from FSU law school.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Right.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Today is September 20th. Yesterday, September 19th. The Florida Bar results -- examination results were released by the Florida Supreme Court, and this circle has kind of come complete. Why don't you tell your listeners the fabulous news about Florida State law school and family.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I am proud to share that I have -- I call it "grown a lawyer." And I grew a lawyer by the fact

that my daughter went to Florida State University College of Law. She graduated in May. She took the Florida Bar, and she found out on yesterday that she passed. So I have the distinct honor of having another lawyer in my family, and I hope to swear her in in the next day or so.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So can you make it through the oath of admission with your own daughter without crying? I don't know that I could do that with a family member.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I don't know. I don't know. We're gonna try it out though. We're gonna see what happens.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Great. Well, congratulations to you and congratulations to your daughter.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Thank you.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's just fabulous news.

Well, if you'll permit me to, let's switch gears a little bit and talk about travel through space and time to seek out new life and new civilizations.

So I watched the series, not originally, although I was old enough to watch it originally. We're celebrating the 50th year of the first TV episode, which aired in 1966. I got interested in it when I was in college.

And I remember that the Starships were crewed by personnel who serve in Starfleet, which is an agency chartered by the United Federation of Planets to conduct exploratory scientific and diplomatic space travel.

Why don't you tell our listeners when and why did you get interested in *Star Trek*.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I have always been interested in *Star Trek*. My parents allowed us to watch *Star Trek* on TV as children, and that's saying a lot because they didn't allow us to watch very much TV at all. But *Star Trek* met their standards for some reason.

So there were five of us kids, and we would actually watch *Star Trek* as a family, and we kind of bonded over *Star Trek*. We all had our favorite characters. Back then, my favorite character was Captain Kirk. As time progressed, it kind of became Commander Spock. But I'd go back and forth between the two of them. I actually love them both.

I think it's because my parents allowed us to watch *Star Trek*, and there were very few TV shows in my childhood that we were actually allowed to watch.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So I did a little research reading up about *Star Trek* and read that Martin Luther King met the actress who played --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Lieutenant Uhura.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Say that for me.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Lieutenant Uhura.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Uhura. And told her that that was the only television show that he would let his children watch.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Wow.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: In its time, it was progressive in that the crew was a diverse crew. So there were men and women. There were different races represented. There were different cultures represented. There were different countries represented. And he said when he met her that that's one of the reasons why he let his children watch it.

So I don't know if that's what your parents were thinking at the time, but it is kind of intriguing that it was a pretty progressive show for its time.

What do you think about that?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: Oh, it was absolutely progressive. I think that the diversity of the cast with, not just Nichelle Nichols, she's was the actress who played Lieutenant Uhura, but the actors who played Chekov and Sulu and even Mr. Scott, these were foreign nationals. They were not Americans. But they served on that spaceship with people who we probably identify with as Americans.

And we were able to see such a diverse cast in terms of, you know, culture and where people were from and how they worked together and how whatever differences there may have been were set aside for the greater good of floating through space on a ship, trying to conquer all of those who really were the enemies, the aliens, and the things that were unknown out in space.

So I think it was forward-thinking, and I believe that

it -- I agree with Martin Luther King in that Nichelle Nichols had an impact on me personally.

Now, I don't know if my parents allowed us to watch it for that reason. I think it just seemed like good, clean TV to them.

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

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** But Nichelle Nichols had an impact on my life as well.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's wonderful. The listeners can't see everything that's here, but I'm going to have you walk us through the memorabilia that you brought to the interview, and maybe we can start on the back with the photographs and other memorabilia that we have, and then we'll work kind of front -- this takes up an entire desk for the listeners who aren't here.

So why don't you describe for the listeners what it is that you have. And is this your whole collection or just part of it?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** This is most of my collection.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay. Great.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** This is most. This is not everything.

Over here I have my picture of Jonathan Frakes. He's my No. 1, but he's actually everybody's No. 1 because he is the commander on *The Next Generation* with Captain Picard, and Captain Picard always refers to him as No. 1. And that

picture was actually a gift to me from Judge Jerry Brewer.

I have my signed picture of Commander Spock and Captain Kirk, which is my pride and joy.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** And that's signed by Leonard Nimoy?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Leonard Nimoy.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Wow. That's amazing.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yes. That's my pride and joy. I actually got it at an auction. I haven't ever met Leonard Nimoy. I'm real sad that he passed away before I was able to do that. But I still hold out hope for meeting William Shatner. That's on my bucket list.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay. Great.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I have my original, complete first season of *Star Trek*. That was a gift, family member. And I have my Benjamin Sisko doll, which Benjamin Sisko was the commander and later the captain on *Deep Space Nine*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. I have my trusty ComBadge. I'm not gonna make any noise with it today because the batteries are dead.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Before we go on from the ComBadge, so that looks like the badge that the crew wore, certainly -- I remember Captain Kirk having that, and he could touch it and communicate with it. Is that --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Exactly.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Basically a communicator you could

wear on your uniform?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yep. Exactly. This is my ComBadge.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's fabulous. I love that.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I do too.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** I wish I had one of those, an actual one that worked.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I have my Starship. This is my Starship, this is *Enterprise*. This is *Enterprise* from *The Next Generation*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** And I sit this on a desk prominently displayed in my office, and I have my little mini *Star Trek Enterprise* that is a key chain that I can take with me wherever I go.

And, of course, Fred, I'm wearing my *Star Trek* medallion, which has Spock and Captain Kirk on one side, and then it has the *Enterprise* on the other side.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's fabulous.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I wear it on special occasions like today.

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

So have you gone to conventions for *Star Trek*?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Unfortunately, I have not gone to any conventions. And you mentioned that I'm a Trekkie. And there's another term called "Trekker."

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Okay.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** And once I go to a convention, I can graduate from being a Trekkie to becoming a Trekker. It's kind of a thing, junior varsity/varsity.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Is it on your bucket list to get to a convention?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Absolutely. I got to find somebody to go with me. Will you come?

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** I'm going to give that some thought. Sure. Let's do that together when it comes anywhere within --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** And we can invite all the judges.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** -- striking distance.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Anyone who wants to go can go with us.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Someone told me that Trekkies go to conventions not in the costumes, but in uniform. So I'm curious to know if you own a uniform?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I do not own a uniform. I don't.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** But if you had to choose a uniform --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** It would be hard. I think that I would probably choose between the Vulcan and the Klingon.

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

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** The Klingons are majestic and they have a lot of beautiful hair, so I think I would want that. I would want to be a majestic Klingon.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Now, but weren't Klingons enemies of the Federation?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Oh, at one point in time they were, but they're not anymore.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So there's been an evolution?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yes. We're on the same side. We had to fight the Dominion in *Deep Space Nine*, and so that kind of brought us a stronger bond together.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Very good. Well, I, again, in researching this, I was amazed at the depth and length of this franchise, and it seems to me you kind of know the whole franchise, is that a fair -- or the whole evolution of *Star Trek*?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I've watched every single episode of *Star Trek*. More than once.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Did you watch the animated series of *Star Trek*?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** No, I haven't watched the animated series.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** But all live action or film, *Star Trek* episodes you've seen?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I have.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Including all the movies?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I've seen every single movie. I've read books on *Star Trek*. So, yeah, I think I'm pretty

much --

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** You sound like an expert.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I wouldn't say I'm an expert or guru on *Star Trek*, but I love *Star Trek*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Is it possible with all that depth to have a favorite episode? Do you have a favorite episode?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I have memorable episodes.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Why don't you rank your top three to five for us.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** "The Trouble with Tribbles." That was from the original *Star Trek* series where these little hamster-like creatures just infiltrated the whole entire ship, and Captain Kirk couldn't figure out what to do with them. That was really, really funny.

And then I loved the episode where a Klingon fell in love with a human. And that was on *Voyager*. B'Elanna Torres fell in love with Lieutenant Paris. So there's romance in *Star Trek* too.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Of course, Captain Kirk had, like, 20 girlfriends.

And then maybe my third most memorable episode -- we're not talking movies here, are we? We're just talking about TV episodes?

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** We can start with TV and go to movies,

if you want.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** The TV episode -- any of the TV episodes with that Species 8472. And that was from *Voyager*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Tell our listeners a little bit about that species.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** *Voyager* was lost in the Delta Quadrant. And the captain for *Voyager* was Janeway, she's a female. And she had taken this shipmate from the Borg. The Borg were part machine and part nonmachine.

So if -- in this case, she had taken this one woman and divested her from the Borg, and she happened to be a human, and her name was Seven of Nine Tertiary Adjunct of Unimatrix 01, but we call her Seven for short.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Thank goodness.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** So Seven, during this episode where the Species 8472 was attacking the ship, identified the Species and told Captain Janeway that no one could defeat the Species because the Borg had not been able to defeat the Species.

But through all kinds of gyrations and crazy things that Seven and Captain Janeway were able to do, they actually came up with this nanoprobe technology, could actually defeat the Species. But because of Captain Janeway's compassion and love, she would not use it. She wanted to try diplomatic means.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Did she succeed at that?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yes, she ultimately did through a few more episodes.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So do you have any favorite catch phrases that you use from the show?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** "Resistance is futile" is one of them. Even though that comes from the Borg. I don't really like the Borg, but I like the phase.

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

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** And of course I like "live long and prosper." That's kind of positive.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Of course.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** And "boldly go where no man has gone before" -- or no person has gone before. I love that. It kind of mimics my life. I feel like even with becoming a judge, I feel like I boldly went where at least no one in my family had gone before.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's great. That's great.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** So, yeah, a lot of catch phrases that I like.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So another thing I learned in researching this is that the series has really invented its own language, Klingon, and perhaps at the conventions, a spoken language.

Do you speak any Klingon?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** No. I don't even know how they speak

it. I -- I wish I could just look like a Klingon, but I have no desire to speak the language.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** What does your family think of you being a Trekkie?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** They think I'm weird.

(Laughter.)

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** They love me though. The original series, that came from my daughter. And she loves me, so she understands. Other members of my family say they don't understand why I'm a Trekkie, and I say, weren't you there? You were watching the series with me.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I don't understand why you're not a Trekkie. So -- but they love me, so it doesn't matter.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So how about the new characters that are in the *Star Trek* movies, Christopher Pine, Zachary Quinto, the new Kirk and Spock? What's your evaluation of them?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Well, I think they're awesome. I don't -- the casting was phenomenal. These actors really -- they -- they identified with the characters so well, it's kind of hard to separate them.

You really do believe that Chris Pine and -- was a younger version of William Shatner. You really do believe that Zachary Quinto was a younger version of Leonard Nimoy.

They just did an awesome job.

And even with Zoe Saldana playing the character that played Lieutenant Uhura, they're very realistic. They did an awesome job with that. I think that they're going to do wonderful things with the new set of characters.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: How about the movie franchise. Do you have a favorite *Star Trek* movie? Is it hard to pick a movie that's your favorite?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: I have two favorites, *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock*. And, obviously, *The Wrath of Khan*, Spock died. And *The Search for Spock*, they -- I think they found him in *The Search for Spock*. They found him in *The Search for Spock*.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: So of all of your paraphernalia that you have, do you have one piece that's your most favorite?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: My ship. I love my ship.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: The model?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: Yes.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: And I understand if there were batteries working in that thing, it would actually be moving around a little bit?

>> JUDGE ALLEN: You would actually hear Jean-Luc Picard. He's the captain in *The Next Generation*. You would hear him say something. But the batteries are dead. Sorry.

>> JUDGE LAUTEN: Are you also a *Star Wars* fan? Does it

translate, *Star Trek* to *Star Wars*?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I am a fan, but not as involved or engaged as I am with *Star Trek*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So we've begun to utilize video conferencing in our courts. People are carrying around iPads and hand-held devices that are smart phones, which if you watch the original series in 1966 and a little bit beyond, you think some of the devices that we have today aren't that far removed from the devices that *Star Trek* showed us back 50 years ago.

Do you wish that you had any futuristic device or any technology from *Star Trek* that you could access? And if you do, what would that one piece of equipment or technology be?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Well, I would love to have a replicator because I can -- I would never have to wash dishes or cook. I could always replicate my meals. But being altruistic, I think I should want a thermal generator so that if ever I get a cut or anyone in my family gets a cut, we can heal ourselves --

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's great.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** -- really quickly.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So I've wanted the transporter so that I could be beamed to different places very quickly, have my atoms separated and reassembled --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** See, that's why I would not want the

transporter.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Because if it goes bad --

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** But I forgot, a holodeck. I would want a holodeck.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Right.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yes. Before I would want the replicator, I would prefer the holodeck.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So the holodeck is a room you enter into and experience all kinds of different places and things.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Oh, yeah. You can.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** One thing I know, certain companies, Cisco and others, have developed pretty sophisticated holograms, so it's not too far-fetched to think that potentially in the near future, in a courtroom, for example, there would be a witness chair and there'd be no one actually sitting in it, but it would appear that there was a human being in there because they would be hologrammed in.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** I think that would be awesome. The judges, we could sit in our chambers and hold court. We wouldn't have to go to the courtroom. We could just do it in our chambers and hologram everybody in.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** So how long do you predict this franchise will continue?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Forever.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** You think there's no end to it?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** There is no end to it. We even have a new series that's starting next year, *Star Trek: Discovery*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** On TV, right? A new TV series?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Yes, on TV.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** That's great.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** We're not going to let it end. As long as there is life, there is hope for *Star Trek*.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Any lessons or even sayings that you've heard from *Star Trek* that you feel translate to your job as a judge?

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Well, I think the go boldly -- boldly go where no one has gone before. I think that you have to believe in yourself and anything that you do, whether it's a judge or an attorney or a law student that's aspiring to become an attorney. These things are unfamiliar before you begin to become involved in them, and you just have to believe in yourself.

And *Star Trek*, they believed that they could do something out in space by exploring and meeting new races and, you know, developing new cures by going beyond what their imagination was here on earth or within the Starfleet -- the Starfleet nations.

So I think that going boldly has resonated with me always, ever since the original series. And I would listen and William Shatner's voice would say, "boldly go where no

man has gone before," and I would say, I'm gonna do that one day. I'm gonna boldly go. Who knew that it would be as an attorney and then as a judge as opposed to on a Starship? But I'm good with where I am. I love being a judge.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Well, Judge Allen, that's such a beautiful thought. I think I'm going to leave it on that and tell you in addition to boldly going where no one has ever gone before, which you certainly have done, I want to say this with all sincerity, I hope you live long and prosper.

>> **JUDGE ALLEN:** Thank you, Fred.

>> **JUDGE LAUTEN:** Thank you.

>> Thank you for listening to "Open Ninth: Conversations Beyond the Courtroom" brought to you by Chief Judge Frederick J. Lauten and the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida.

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(Music.)