

OPEN NINTH:

CONVERSATIONS BEYOND THE COURTROOM

FEATURING HONORABLE ERIC H. DUBOIS

EPISODE 180

JULY 7, 2023

HOSTED BY: CHIEF JUDGE LISA T. MUNYON

NARRATOR: Welcome to another episode of “Open Ninth: Conversations beyond the Courtroom” in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida. And now here’s your host, Chief Judge Lisa Munyon.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Hello, and welcome to Open Ninth. I’m here today with Judge Eric DuBois, one of our county judges here in the Ninth Circuit. Born and raised in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Judge DuBois is a native Floridian. He moved to Orlando in 1996 to attend Barry University School of Law and he’s remained here ever since. Over the years he’s practiced law with firms such as Lapina and DuBois, P.A., DuBois Law Group, P.A. and the Orlando Family Firm. But in 2016 he successfully ran for the bench and joined us as an Orange County Judge the following year. I’m thrilled to have you in the studio today, Judge DuBois. Thanks for joining me.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Thank you for having me. It’s great to be here.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So tell me a little bit about yourself. You grew up in Fort Lauderdale. How long were you there?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So I grew up in Fort Lauderdale, lived in Fort Lauderdale until I went to the University of South Florida. Went back and forth during summers and all of that, probably until I was 22, 23 and then moved to Orlando to attend law school and what was then University of Orlando and then became Barry University and then stayed there through the accreditation and helped them with that and then left there in 2004.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So you grew up in Fort Lauderdale and you obviously went to college and law school, so I know you were a good student.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I wouldn’t go that far. I was a student.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So did you have any extracurricular activities in high school?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So in high school I played golf on the side just with friends. Obviously living in Fort Lauderdale, if you didn't fish, you didn't do anything.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: So we'd always go offshore and go deep sea fishing. And I worked. I mean, ever since I was 16, my parents told me if you want to drive you got to work and pay for your insurance and gas, and that's what I did.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So being a native Floridian, you have to love the water.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: You have to love boating, and you have to love fishing.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I think it's a requirement of the job.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah. Yes.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And it was that way in your family.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Absolutely. I'm the oldest of four.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And we all either swam, you know. Whenever we could, we'd go to the beach. My mom loved going to the beach so that was Saturday and Sunday, we'd pack up the

van, the Toyota mini-van and drive to the beach and just sit there all day and enjoy the water. I mean, Fort Lauderdale Beach is probably one of the nicest. So it's not hard to say no.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah.

JUDGE DUBOIS: You want to go.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So when you were in high school, did you have any inkling that you would be interested in the law?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So my father was an attorney, his brother was an attorney and mom's brother was an attorney, so it was kind of in –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Kind of in the blood.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Kind of in the family. And my dad's side of the family has always passed the bar exam on the first time so there was that added pressure once I decided to go – I know my parents always from a young age, I'd go with my dad to work. I would dress up. I would carry the briefcase. I'd wear you know the three-piece suit or whatever and go and granted I was making photocopies and goofing around in the office, but I was always around it since I can remember.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So what kind of law did your father and uncles practice?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So my father did personal injury work. My dad's brother, my paternal uncle did immigration work up in Chicago. And my mom's brother did insurance defense work so that was always interesting –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, when we would get together –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Interesting holiday dinners.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yes, the holidays were always a unique conversation between my mom's brother and my father because obviously –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, they're on opposite sides of the lawsuit.

JUDGE DUBOIS: They were. And my uncle was an attorney out in Colorado, but he was also licensed in New York and Florida, so he would always call and be like, hey, what's the law in Florida on this and we're like, we're not telling you. You work for the other side. So it was just a natural transition and progression of me and I'm the oldest of four as I said, and my younger sister who's three in line is also an attorney and she does insurance defense work now down in Fort Lauderdale. So it's a very interesting dynamic.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yes. I bet it is. So you went to college. What did you study at USF?

JUDGE DUBOIS: International studies and it was a very – I went to junior college at Broward, now Broward College, Broward Community College. When I went to undergrad, the guidance counselor, whatever you call them, said what do you want to do. I said I want to get to law school and they're like, political science or international studies. And my response being 19 was what's easier? And their response was international studies so I said, okay, so I took international studies and I really enjoyed it. I mean, it was – it was quite interesting.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And that opens up so many doors. Even if you go to law school, you can still go to the state department –

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it did. Yeah, I had no desire of ever practicing law. My father passed away in '99 when I was just about to graduate law school from a massive heart attack practicing law. I'm like you know what, this isn't what I want to do. But you know you got to eat and you got to pay bills and you got to pay off your student loans. So you practice law after I was an administrator. But international studies, absolutely have no clue what I would do with it today if I wasn't doing what I'm currently doing but it's there.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And it was interesting at the time.

JUDGE DUBOIS: It was. I mean, this was pre – obviously pre-9/11 so you had free reign of airports and there was none of the – you knew about all the stuff in the Middle East but you never – it was never here.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And then 9/11 happened and then it kind of – everything that we learned came back and I was like, oh, that's what they were talking about. So it was interesting.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So how did you decide on Orlando for law school?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So we had always come up here obviously for the various attractions from Fort Lauderdale and my sisters and brother went to the University of Central Florida for undergrad and I would always drive over and see them and hang out with them, and I came up here and God's honest truth is we came up here. We were driving around and my parents dropped me off at what was then University of Orlando, crossed over Semoran on Colonial and on the right-hand side there's a Hot Dog Heaven.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: There is a Hot Dog Heaven.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And my dad's side of the family is from Chicago and he's like, this is where you're going to law school. There's Hot Dog Heaven. What else – how much better could this be? Your brother and sisters are here and there's a Hot Dog Heaven and a law school, and that was it. Knowing – who knew that it would be that much chaos with the law school, but –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Hot Dog Heaven, is that a Chicago franchise?

JUDGE DUBOIS: No, it's just their –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I mean, I know Chicago is famous for hot dogs.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, but it's the Vienna beef and there's a Hot Dog Heaven in Fort Lauderdale. I think it's just someone uses the name.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: The name.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And they just –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, I always assumed it was an original.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, I know, I don't – I don't know about that one. I know that family actually goes up to Chicago annually and closes down the store for a few weeks.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh.

JUDGE DUBOIS: So – but –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So you decided to attend law school here at Orlando School of Law that turned into Barry.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Correct.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And there was a lot of anxiety around that school and its accreditation about that time. Tell me about that.

JUDGE DUBOIS: So I was the student bar association president for three years while we were going through all the accreditation and I remember getting phone call after phone call. Yeah, I mean you had 120 students who had to repeat law school and go a second time. I was one of them.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So did you do six years?

JUDGE DUBOIS: I did. Yeah, I have –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: That would be torture.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I have two JD degrees. So you know when I – when I was practicing law, I always told my clients, look, I have two law degrees, but I'm only going to charge you for one just to break the ice. But it was very stressful. You know because at the time it was a slam dunk, we were good to go, you know, the council had approved us and it had never been reversed. And then the state announced the creation of two new law schools in the state and that kind of put the brakes on everything and then when FAMU came to Orlando, there were questions as to whether or not Orlando could handle two law schools. There were some issues because University of Orlando was a for-profit institution which was one of the first ones in the country.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, and FAMU was obviously a public –

JUDGE DUBOIS: FAMU is public, state funded, you know. So there was – when it was University of Orlando, then Barry University took over and Barry University had its own issues



when it took over because the main campus was in Miami, the law school is in Orlando, how are you going to self-regulate, self-govern. So it was very hectic. We lost a lot of students. A lot of students transferred to other law schools, but at the end of the day it proved to be successful and everything seems to be good there. You know, I think there's ten of us now in the Ninth Circuit that are products of Barry, so either good or bad.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah. Great. So in addition to attending law school a lot, did you work at the law school as well?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So I did. After graduation the first time, in 2000, I stayed on as the Director of Institutional Advancement to help with public relations and getting out in the community and raising the school's awareness in the community. And then I stayed on until 2004 and worked my way up to the Associate Dean of Administration so I ran all of the non-academic side of the law school when I left.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, so I handled all the ABA questionnaires, site evaluation questionnaires. I was responsible for the site visits. We had an ABA site visit the day 9/11 happened. So we had all these people, deans from other law schools fly into Orlando and then 9/11 happened –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And they couldn't leave.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And they couldn't leave, but I had good – a good relationship with the Budget Rent a Car which was right next door so I immediately got 4 Town Cars and they all drove back, but that's what I did at the law school. I handled all that. Did all the alumni relations, and that's frankly I think what really helped me with the campaign because I knew so

many people in the community. And I got to know the legal community and they got to know me, not only through the law school but then also in practice, when I left and went into private practice so –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Is that why you decided to stay here rather than go back to Fort Lauderdale when you got your law degree?

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it was – it was much easier. Well, there was that and then in 2002 when we got the accreditation, the Supreme Court said it's been more than 12 months, it was like 14 so you have to go back to another two years of law school. So the law school – our first – they audited in the first 30 hours, then we had to do 60 hours a second time. It was all pass/fail, thank God. Most of the professors were still the same and they all knew who we were so it was you know kind of easier.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah.

JUDGE DUBOIS: But we still had to take the final exams and we still had to do all that. And I figured, I'm not going to start over. I've been here – at that point I had been here ten years. To go down, move back down to Fort Lauderdale, you know, it was just too hard. I had too many connections here.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And when you left the law school, what did you do?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So when I left the law school, I partnered up with a friend of mine, Dan Lapina who was an attorney at the time and we were going to do personal injury and criminal defense work because that's what he was doing somewhat. And then I happened upon family law. Someone came in needing work and at that point it was either quit being so selective in your clients or starve to death. So I took on some family law cases and that just spiraled and

grew and grew and grew and then that's what I just did was family law. I had a number of cases in front of you when you were in the family division and that was honestly the hardest thing about transitioning from practice to the bench was, everyone that I knew was judge this, judge that was now a first name basis and now we're friends and we have cell phone numbers, but before it was you know, I could barely say hello. But that's what I did. And then –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Did you like family law?

JUDGE DUBOIS: I did. I mean, I liked family law because you got to help people. You got to try and reunite families that needed to be reunited, help kids be back with a parent that they really needed to be with. There were parts of family law that are very draining, as you very well know. But it was enjoyable. I did some juvenile dependency and delinquency work as well. I just think, I mean, my passion is with those kids and trying to help people through that rough time. So it wasn't that bad. It was doable and you just need – you know, I always told my clients, like, look, you can decide the future of your family or the scary person in the black robe is going to, and frankly tomorrow they're not going to know who you are. And you're stuck with that decision for the next 17 years, or however old the youngest child is. And that kind of put things into perspective for them but yeah, I enjoyed it which is why I have enjoyed covering when I've covered domestic and doing that because I teach it at Florida A&M, Florida Family Law so it gives me an opportunity to stay in it but not stay in it.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So you started working with your friend, Dan Lapina.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yep.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And then you opened your own firm.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I opened my own firm after an unsuccessful run for circuit judge in 2012 against now a very good friend, Letty Marques. And we grew to know each other really well during that campaign and had a lot of fun with each other on the trail. And then opened my own firm, spun off because I needed to start my own thing and do my own thing and I did that for three years until I decided to run for county judge in 2015 when I then closed my own private law group down and went over and went to work with former Judge Bob Evans and John Simon at the Orlando Family Firm. And that was more for God willing when I won, my clients wouldn't be left hanging and there were some back up other attorneys because at that time we were ten or twelve attorneys strong. So it was a lot easier to arrange and have people cover stuff.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So what made you decide – why did you think you wanted to be a judge?

JUDGE DUBOIS: It was something I always wanted to be somewhat involved in politics or giving back to the community or doing something in that realm. Frankly, politics has become way too partisan, even back then and I just – I didn't want to be involved in beating my head against the wall and not being productive and getting something done. And a lot of people have said, I did mediations, and a lot of people said you'd be good on the bench because you can relate to people, you can help people get through their things and talk to people in the way that they understand it as opposed to just talking down at people. And that's why I ran. I mean, frankly I ran in 2012 for circuit judge because I wanted to be in circuit and I wanted to do domestic work and all that and then after that campaign I realized, you know maybe I'll just start in county court, do my thing in county court and when I can dabble in circuit court, dabble in circuit court and I've loved it ever since. You know, being in county court has given me the

ability to have a little bit more flexibility in terms of the types of cases. I'm not just stuck in one division.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Dealing with one type of law. In county civil you see everything from credit card cases to evictions, to landlord tenant, you know to everything so it's good.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And I think most people recognize at some level that Orange and Osceola County are big. And running a campaign over two big counties is hard. Running a campaign in just Orange County is hard enough.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, right.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: But our circuit runs from Yeehaw Junction to Mount Dora. That's a lot of square miles.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, I put probably about 150,000 on a car in four years you know doing that. I mean, I had breakfast in Apopka, lunch in Kissimmee, and then dinner in Winter Park and then I live all the way on the east side of town. So I mean, and oh by the way you got to practice law.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right. You have to feed yourself.

JUDGE DUBOIS: You got to earn a living, yeah. And pay for the campaign if you're not getting enough donations and stuff so –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And heaven forbid have family time.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Right.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, so that your kids don't grow up without you.

JUDFGE DUBOIS: Yeah, and the student loans from the private school get in the way.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah.

JUDGE DUBOIS: But it was a great experience. I enjoyed the circuit race, you know meeting people in Osceola that I probably would have never gotten to know. Even though I practiced in Osceola you get to meet outside of the legal community. But it was fun. I enjoyed it.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And I know you have been in almost all of the rotations in county court.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And you seem -- you seem to like civil or at least you're willing to do civil which I really appreciate.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I enjoy it. The thing I like about civil over criminal is every 15 minutes the subject area could change.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Like right before this I had a first party insurance issue over evaluation of cars, then I had a landlord tenant eviction hearing right after that. This morning I had credit card cases, debt -- you know claims of exemption so you never know as opposed to in criminal, in county court there's --

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah.

JUDGE DUBOIS: -- you know ten things maybe so --

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah. So it keeps you on your toes.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it keeps you on your toes, a lot more thinking and you get to meet you know a lot more people from the community, especially during COVID with the landlord tenant stuff, we were really able to help a lot of people with the evictions and getting them rental assistance and getting that program going with the Mayor's office so it was good.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, another thing I really appreciate about you is that you are always willing to help and when we've had vacancies in family court or in circuit, you are always willing not just to do your own division, but to help in the places that we have holes.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I appreciate that. I mean, to me it's – we're only as strong as our weakest judge and you know right now we have at least one vacancy, two vacancies actually –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah. Two vacancies.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Actually one more on the horizon – we know of one on the horizon and it's not fair to the citizens of Orange and Osceola County. As a county judge my main concern is Orange County, but you know we're cross-sworn and if I can help, I can help. Why not?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So I know when I took the bench as a judge, I thought that I knew what being a judge would be like because I was in court all the time. And I was wrong. So did you find the experience of being a judge different than what you thought it was going to be when you were running?

JUDGE DUBOIS: Absolutely. I envisioned being a judge, coming in, go in my courtroom or my hearing room, doing my work and leaving. I didn't really see –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: You don't see all those stacks of mail.

JUDGE UDBOIS: Yeah, the 16 inches of mail that we used to get or now the 85 electronic file orders that I have to sign everyday in Smart Bench. And you don't see all of the committees that you're on, the committees that you're asked to be on, being pulled in 18 different directions. All at the same time, trying to do your job, 40 hours a week plus all the other stuff. But no, it's completely different. And when I meet with people that want to run for judge or want to go through the appointment, I'm like be careful what you wish for. It's not exactly what you think it is.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: You know our hands are tied with regards to what we can and can't do politically and publicly and there's a lot of behind the scenes work that attorneys just don't see. We may not be in court but we're not playing golf.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: We're working and pushing out paper and researching or drafting orders.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I always assumed that if the judge wasn't on the bench, they didn't have anything to do, but most of what I do is off the bench and very little is on the bench.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Right. I would prefer to be on the bench because that means I don't have to do a whole lot of writing and research and all that.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, when you're on the bench you've got one thing to do while you're there.



JUDGE DUBOIS: Exactly.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And when you're in your office plowing through everything else you can be putting out a dozen fires at the same time.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, that's – I mean, you're just putting it out and just shuffling the stack so it doesn't look as bad when you come back in the next morning.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And I think a lot of people don't recognize that our county civil judges even, I mean at one point when I became chief, they had about 18,000 cases each.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And we've added some judges to county civil, but they still have about 10,000 each.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: How does one person do 10,000 cases/

JUDGE DUBOIS: You don't. You just – yeah, you triage the ones that need triaged; you handle the ones that you can handle quickly and get those through. By statute, the evictions have to take precedent and they have to be in and out within you know a week. And some things just – just linger. I mean, there's the case management orders but you know frankly it's so overwhelming that you just – you tread water. You just try and keep up. I mean, we have nine divisions now, eight are full because we have one vacancy. When I started in 2017, we had four – three. Three and then we went to four. And now we're at nine. But yeah, we still have you know, nine, ten thousand cases which you know, you look at other counties and they're like – I mean, we had what 60,000 small claims cases last year and some counties get 3,000 in a year.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Right.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And I'm like, God, that would be a dream.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah. Don't know what you would do with all your extra time.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And we get paid the same.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yes. So have you noticed changes over your six plus years on the bench?

JUDGE DUBOIS: I have. I've become a lot more comfortable. Obviously, you know some of that comes with having done – being back in my second rotation in civil. I notice people are a lot more understanding now than they were initially. Initially people would try you and push you but now they kind of know, okay, look, this isn't going to fly with this one. Let's try it on someone else. He's been around the block so to speak. Those are the changes that you really notice. You do – the other thing I tell people is you lose a lot of – your friends change. Your close attorney friends are still your friends because they can't practice in front of you anyway but everyone else that you used to hang out with are no longer there. And now it's shifted to –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: To judges.

JUDGE DUBOIS: To judges, or the parents on your kid's baseball team or softball team, whatever they're doing. So your dynamic has changed that way. And you know it's hard because you've got to be careful what you do when you're off work so to speak.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: You're never really off work, are you?

JUDGE DUBOIS: You're never off work. You're never off work. You're on 24/7. You got to be careful, you know. My little one who's 15, or about to be 16 plays competitive baseball.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I know. He's up in Atlanta right now at a national baseball tournament and you hear all the parents, you know, jarring at the umpires or bad call this or that and I'm like, God you know I feel your pain you know because I get – people tell me it was a bad call all the time, but I can't say anything. You know, I can't challenge the umpire and I help coach and do this and I sit in the dugout and you all can go yell and scream because any little thing looks bad upon the judiciary and that's what makes it so hard. You know, but at the same time you got to be smart about what you're doing in any public job.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So what do you do for fun what you're not on the bench and at work?

JUDGE DUBOIS: So besides chase the 16-year-old, soon to be 16-year-old around from baseball field to baseball field, as I'm sure you know I'm passionate about barbecuing and cooking on my big green egg or my Blackstone. I may do some homemade Chex Mix there on the Blackstone.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Can't wait to try it.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it's – I just enjoy it. Like, they went to Atlanta yesterday and I made you know 16 pounds of pulled pork for them to take up there for the team to eat for dinner. I make my own bacon, you know, brisket, just have fun and that's really what I do is – not so much for me but for other people. Just we love to host parties and do all that.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, there's only so much you can eat.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yes, and I – my suits are shrinking. I think it's the dry cleaner but I'm not sure if the food has anything to do with it. But you know, and it's fun. I just enjoy playing around and seeing what I can come up with and how it compares to you know – not that my pork or brisket is the quality of some of the commercial places but I would – I think it is.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I think it's good. You made me some bacon. It was awesome.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Thank you.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So in addition to smoking meat, do you make your own barbecue sauce?

JUDGE DUBOIS: I do not. I have not tried that.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: The next challenge.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah. I've done research on it. It just seems a little complicated.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: So mustard or vinegar-based?

JUDGE DUBOIS: Depends.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Oh, okay.

JUDGE DUBOIS: So it depends on what I'm having. I prefer vinegar-base like on pulled pork, mustard-base like on brisket or something like that.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Personal preference.

JUDGE DUBOIS: That's weird.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it's weird. How about you? Which one?

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: I think I grew up on mustard-base but I do like vinegar-base, I must admit.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, it's just –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And nothing with too much sugar.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Right. They make some really good sugar free barbecue sauces now which kind of – it seems like an oxymoron because you think it's all sugar but it's pretty good. I haven't really experimented on it. I want to. Judge Calderon has been trying to convince me to go with him after one of the rodeos down in Osceola and you know split like a cow and buy like a fourth of a cow and put it in the freezer because he also likes to cook so we always compare notes and do all that. But maybe one day. We've talked about having –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: We need a cookoff.

JUDGE DUBOIS: -- a barbecue cookoff with me, Judge Bain, Judge Whitehead, Calderon.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, and the rest of us can just benefit by eating it.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Well, you guys would be our taste testers.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: And judges.

JUDGE DUBOIS: And neutral judges, right, exactly. So but yeah, it's enjoyable. I also like to play golf but the baseball takes priority over my weekend time.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Yeah, I bet it does. And kids always have to take priority.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah. Well, I mean, you know, he'll be a junior next year so I've got two more years so –

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: I know, it's crazy.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Wow. That's hard to believe.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah. You know he's taken to weightlifting and baseball. He finished fourth in the state last year in weightlifting for his weight class.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Wow.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Yeah, he weighs 119 pounds and benches like 195 pounds. His baseball coach is like, he's crazy strong so whatever. Keeps him off the streets and keeps him off of the video games so that's all I can ask for.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Does he want to play baseball in college?

JUDGE DUBOIS: He does. That's what he really wants to do and he's doing the weightlifting to get stronger, get more power because he's never going to be tall. He's never going to be a giant. He's probably going to be 5'5", 5'6" so he's got to have just power to generate. He likes to pitch and play middle infield and outfield so he needs the speed and the power.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Well, it's been awesome getting to know you, Judge DuBois. Thank you for joining me here today.

JUDGE DUBOIS: Thanks for having me. It's been a pleasure and glad we were able to do it.

CHIEF JUDGE MUNYON: Me too.

NARRATOR: Thank you for listening to “Open Ninth: Conversations beyond the Courtroom” brought to you by Chief Judge Lisa Munyon and the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram @ninthcircuitfl for updates on new episodes and subscribe to Open Ninth on your favorite podcast service.

(Music)