R&E S8E10 Across the Aisle: A Conversation with David Bridges

[00:00:00] Hi, I'm Kelly Engelman from Enhanced Wellness Living, where we take a functional approach to your health, looking at the root causes, not just chasing your symptoms. If you find yourself struggling with hair loss, shedding, thinning, or breakage, you're not alone. These issues can be distressing, impacting not just your appearance, but also your self-esteem.

At Enhanced Wellness Living, we understand that healthy hair reflects overall well-being. That's why we offer innovative regenerative solutions tailored to restore your hair's vitality and encourage growth. Our holistic approach considers various factors that may contribute to your hair challenges, from hormonal imbalances, nutritional deficiencies, stress, and lifestyle factors.

We work closely with you to develop a personalized plan that may include dietary recommendations, regenerative treatments, and supportive therapies. At Enhanced Wellness Living, we believe in empowering you on your journey to healthier hair and overall wellness. You deserve to feel confident and radiant in your own skin.

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consultation. Let's unlock the secrets to your hair health together.

Today we're joined by David Bridges. He's a longtime leader in Mississippi family law and a candidate for the Chancery Court bench for the eleventh judicial district, which is comprised of Madison, Yazoo, Holmes, and Leake counties. David was born and raised in Baton Rouge, earned his accounting degree from LSU, and graduated from Baylor Law School after completing its nationally respected practice court program.

He is a fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, has twice served as chair of the Mississippi Bar Family Law Section, and has organized the section's annual seminar since two thousand and eleven. He's a frequent lecturer to lawyers and judges across the state. David is married to Bonnie [00:02:00] Bridger Smith, and in his spare time, he describes himself as an untalented oil painter, a declaration which I take issue with.

David has worked across the courtroom from us many times, and we are glad to have him in studio today to discuss his hopes to transition from counsel's table to the bench.

Everyone, welcome back to Counseling Capital with Ethan Kelly. What are we talking about today, Ethan? Today, we're talking about something nobody likes to talk about, but everybody needs to, estate planning. And no, this isn't just for billionaires with yachts. First, the scary stat. Nearly seventy percent of Americans don't have a will.

That means if something happens to you tomorrow, the state, not your family, decides who gets your house, your bank accounts, and possibly even custody of your kids. The government becomes your estate planner by default. Hard pass. So what's [00:03:00] the bare minimum you actually need? First, a will. This is your basic instruction manual.

Who gets what? Who raises your kids? Who's in charge of your estate? Without it, you're rolling the dice. Second, a durable power of attorney. If you're alive but can't make decisions, think coma, stroke, this names someone to handle your money and legal matters. Third, a healthcare directive. This tells doctors whether you want life support, feeding tubes, et cetera.

Spare your family the heartbreaking guessing game. If you don't have any specific healthcare wishes, your power of attorney can make decisions for you. But if you do, you want a healthcare directive. And fourth, beneficiary designations. Your 401, life insurance, bank and investment accounts usually pass outside the will.

Double-check these. Ex-spouses sometimes accidentally inherit everything because someone forgot to update a form after divorce. Quick bonus, if you have minor kids, name [00:04:00] guardians. Do it in writing and talk to those people first. Trust me, showing up at Aunt Karen's door with your kids and a court order is not the vibe.

Look, I get it. Thinking about death feels morbid, but estate planning isn't about dying. It's about taking care of the people you love when you no longer can, and the peace of mind, priceless. The next step is easy. Call my office at six zero one-eight two five-six four five five and schedule an appointment to discuss your estate plan.

Your future self and your family will thank you

Let's do it, David. Yeah, man. Let's hit it. Um, thank you for agreeing to do this. Um, I know that you've got huge demands on your time- ... but, you know, I couldn't allow my competitor and- ... a longtime, um, person across the aisle run for judge without taking the opportunity to [00:05:00] sit down with you, man. Yeah. Thank you.

I appreciate it. Been looking forward to this. Yeah. Cool. Well, uh, man, I wanna go all the way back to- Yeah ... your origin story. I only realized today when we were talking about today's podcast that, man, you flew through school. Yeah. Um, yeah, I, uh, grew up in Baton Rouge. My father is from, uh, Rankin County, but, uh, he got a degree in chemistry at MC, so he worked at Dow Chemical, so he worked in Plaquemine.

So I grew up in Baton Rouge. Uh, and when I was 16, I graduated from high school, uh, graduated a year early and, uh, went to LSU because that's the state religion down there. Well, we talked about that. Um, and you know, it's, people in Mississippi sometimes are a little different. You have somebody from Oxford, they don't wanna go to Ole Miss.

Yeah. Or the same could be said for Starkville, but not, not in Baton Rouge. No, in, in Baton Rouge, it doesn't, it doesn't occur to you that you're not gonna go to LSU. I, I, I have a [00:06:00] favorite story. My college roommate's little brother, uh, was, uh... I, I go to visit my friend in Baton Rouge at his house. He's not there.

His little brother is there. So, "Hey, Craig, what are you doing?" "Oh, I'm filling out an application to go to college." "Okay, great. You won't have any problems." And, and he said, "Yeah, I, I, I don't know if Rice is gonna take me or not." And I said, "Rice?" You know, Rice University in Houston. You know, "Rice, what are you ta- Craig, you're smart.

You can, you can go to LSU. I'm sure they'll take you." And he said, "But I don't wanna go to LSU." I went, "What?" And so that just completely blew my mind that somebody could grow up in Baton Rouge and not wanna go to LSU. So, uh, yeah, so I went to LSU, got a four-year degree in accounting. And so, you know, now I'm 20 years old and way too young to be an adult, uh, and have a real life.

Did you go, did you... It took four years for undergrad? Yeah. Took, took four years. But obviously you finished early. I know you finished early at law school. We'll talk about that. Yeah. But also [00:07:00] high school. Yeah. Um, well, did four years at LSU, and nobody believes me when I tell them that I went, I went

through four years of LSU, never had a drop of alcohol, 'cause I was a very, very devout Southern Baptist, and we just, I just did not do that.

So I didn't do the Greek thing. I didn't do the get drunk at Tiger Stadium thing. Uh, and look, I was an accounting major, you know? So I go and, uh, I go and work for CPA firms, which nothing will cure you of wanting to be a CPA- Of wanting to do accounting ... like going and do- actually doing accounting, like, I, I gotta do...

I don't know what it's gonna be, but it's not going to be this. And- Well, what led you to law school? We talked about you applied all over the country, but what led you to do that? Uh, meeting divorce attorneys at CPA firms and getting, and realizing how much money they made because I'm helping with their tax returns and, and just balancing their monthly statements and they would talk about it and I thought, "How [00:08:00] hard can this be?

And this makes a lot more money than anything I'm ever gonna make as a CPA." And, you know, like I say, I'm 20 years old and I did not want to have a eight to five job as 20 years old. So I thought, "You know what the heck, I'll, I'll take the, uh, LSAT and, and see how I do," and I did really well. Yeah. And Baylor had, uh, Baylor Law School is where I went.

They had a really good trial advocacy program and so I figured I would love to be a courtroom lawyer and they offered me some scholarships. And what I didn't, what never occurred to me and it should have, uh, was Baylor's in Waco, Texas, that means I'm gonna be in Waco, Texas. And Waco's, you know, now with Chip and Joanna Gaines, you know, Waco's got some cachet.

Let me tell you, Waco was, uh- Back in the day did not ... was a little, little gritty. No, no cachet to Waco. And the other thing that it didn't occur to me and it should have was, look, if you go to Texas, a law school in Texas you're going to learn Texas law [00:09:00] and they're training you to be a Texas lawyer. Yeah.

And I had no intention of living in Texas after I got out of law school. I was gonna go back to Baton Rouge. And, but no, now I'm trained to be a Texas lawyer so that's what I'm going to do. Right, and some of the people who can hear our voice right now might know that everything in Louisiana is a little different- Uh-

especially- Yeah ... the legal system. Yeah, yeah. They have the Napoleonic code and it's just, it, it's developed completely different than anybody else and

so, you know, now I'm in Texas. Well, tell me a little bit more about, um, 'cause I was not familiar with it, um, before, um, kinda prepping for this discussion that we're gonna have.

Tell, tell our listeners a little bit more about this trial practice program that you were involved in, 'cause it sounds like it was amazing training. It was really intense because law school is a, an 80-hour a week job- Yeah ... uh, to begin with. Extremely difficult. Yeah, and, and extremely competitive. Yeah. Um, and so you're frenemies with all of your classmates and then on top of [00:10:00] that why don't you prepare for a trial?

And so they, every week you had a new file that was given to you, and you had to prep it and try it the next week. And I mean, the whole bit. You had to do the pleadings. You had to, uh, uh, cross-examine witness, direct-examine witness, object to evidence. I mean, every- you were trying cases. A- and you were a baby doing it, 20, 21 years old?

Yeah, I mean, I, uh, I went... Law school's normally a three-year program, and I did it in two years and three months 'cause I just, I, I hated law school more than any other experience in my life. Yeah, and you and I are different. We have a lot in common, but we're different that way because, you know, I, I was a, a aspiring athlete when I was in, um- Right.

I knew ... college. And so there- Baseball player, for God's sake ... I was, and I wanna talk about that with you, too. But so I had some, some guide rails with regard to my life. Yeah. I mean, where there was structure. You had to show up at practice and workouts, et cetera. But when I got to law school, other than, of course, the rigorous assignments and all- Mm

the things, [00:11:00] you know, l- law school entails with regard to my social life, and there, there were no guardrails. Yeah. And unfortunately, at least when I went to law school, I mean, the recreation of choice was if you, if there was a outing concerning lawyers, there was alcohol involved in it. Oh, yeah. Which is, we could have a whole nother podcast on that subject.

About lawyers and drinking? Right, about setting up- Yeah ... the freaking legal system for future alcohol problems. But that, uh, that's a story for another day. Bring, bring my wife for that. Uh- Totally, yeah ... you know, 'cause she's in, uh, she is, she was, I don't know what the word is, the director or, or something.

She was Very much in leadership at the Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program. Yeah. And it's, that's an interesting conversation to have. Yeah, no, no

doubt. But, but anyway, you're, so you're a baby student. Yeah. You're going through this rigorous program. Yeah. And you didn't like law school. But- And, and c- and completely unfitted for it, you know, 'cause I'd, I'd had no study skills.

Accounting is not, uh, mathematically difficult. You're not doing quadratic equations. If you can add- It's not engineering ... It's not engineering. If you can add and [00:12:00] subtract, that's all the math that you're ever really going to have to do as a, uh, as an accountant. Uh- Little did you- There's other skills, but that's it Little did you know filing that away for, you know, your, your career as a family law attorney and an aspiring judge that those skills are pretty handy, though, in our line of work.

Yeah. Uh, I tried to talk my kids into taking accounting classes because it's an amazing change in your life if you have some, some financial literacy. If you can read a profit and loss statement and a balance sheet, you're miles ahead. Uh, but, you know, at the time, you know, when I went to LSU, I wanted to be an English major, and my dad being a very practical engineer type of guy said, "You can't make a living as an English major that, that you're going to enjoy.

So you've gotta do something that you love doing." So I thought, well, I'll go into chemistry, um, like my dad did, and my big brother was in chemical engineering at LSU, and he was my college roommate, a- or one of them. [00:13:00] And, uh, as my brother was failing out of chemical engineering, I realized, well, I'm not gonna be- Maybe that's not for you

maybe that's not for me. Yeah. Maybe that's a little more complicated- I've, I've- ... so I'll be an accountant. Yeah, I've told the story to rooms of law school students about how I took the walk of shame across the drill field at Mississippi State from the mechanical engineering building- Right ... to the, to the business school.

Um- Yes ... and so I, I, I, I've been there. It is a well-traveled, uh, uh, road from engineering to business school. Yeah. Yeah. No, no doubt. So and I didn't even, I didn't even try out in chemistry. Once I got a F as in Frank in physics at, uh, LSU in my very first semester, I thought, "Okay, well, you know- Yeah, that's not

time to take a hint." We, we have that in common, too, 'cause I took some ridiculously hard classes that are still on my transcript- Right, right, right ... when I was thinking about being an engineer. Like, I couldn't even define linear

algebra. Yeah. But it's on my transcript. Yeah, let me see. There you go. I made a, I made a D in it, but it's there.

There you go. I mean, 65 counts, baby. Yeah, right. So you started, uh, so you, so you finished at Baylor, and then you landed in Texas for a season. Yeah, so [00:14:00] there I am. Uh, I'm in Texas. I got out as fast as I could 'cause I just hated law school, and I worked for a, uh, a guy in Temple, Texas. Temple's like halfway between Waco and Austin.

If you know where Fort Hood is, Fort Hood is in Bell County, Texas. And Temple is like the money city in, uh- Mm-hmm ... Bell County. It's where the lawyers are. And I worked there for two and a half years, and then, uh, the H... What, what is it? George H.W. Bush. Yeah. Did I get that right? Uh, that recession hit in 1990, and we were representing small businesses like home builders and small banks, and they all got wiped out in the, uh...

You remember the savings and loan- Yeah ... scandal and the, and the recession. And- And then the Gulf War hit right after that. Yeah. And so suddenly, uh, we're out of clients, and when your boss is out of clients, you're out a job. Yeah. And, uh, so I thought, "Well, how hard [00:15:00] can it be, uh, to go be a prosecutor?" And that's trial work.

Yeah. And I wanted to do trial work. So I got an offer back in, uh, Waco to work for the DA there, and, uh, and also got an offer to work for the attorney general's office, uh, out of Austin, and I thought, "Well, gosh, that's the more prestigious job. I'll go be a, a, uh, assistant attorney general." But the problem with that is they send you where they send you, and I had no connections, no anything, so they sent me out to San Angelo, Texas.

San Angelo is the biggest city in the United States that does not have an interstate. It's an hour south of Abilene, if you know where that is. Um, if you've seen the Netflix TV show, um- Landman ... yeah, Landman, um, Landman's in Midland, Odessa, which is further west, but the vibe is the same. The look is the same.

The dependence on oil and gas industry and, you know, roughnecks and, [00:16:00] you know, everybody's in pickup trucks. I mean, that, that show's pretty realistic. And, uh- And that's where you, that's where you met your, your wife- Mm-hmm ... and you started having- Right ... a family? Yeah. And, uh, and that's where I got into family law because I got recruited by the local county attorney, uh, who had...

The, the way that it worked is, uh, he was a county attorney, but he could hire, uh, a s- I guess, assistant county attorneys, assistant prosecutors, and they could have part-time jobs, and this guy's name was Tom Goff. And Tom was one of the preeminent, uh, divorce lawyers in the county. Like, you'd go into his office, and there'd be all these women with these great, you know, jewelry and you know, diamond earrings.

And- And dripping with diamonds. From Texas too, of course. Yeah, from, from Texas. I mean, there's some money in Texas- Mm-hmm ... if you don't know. Yeah. And, uh, so Tom, Tom needed help, and he saw that I knew how to try a case. And so it was, you know, by day- David's gonna be [00:17:00] the DUI attorney, so I have tried a million DUIs.

And then more or less after hours or when D- DUI work was done, uh, then I was doing family law work with Tom. And so he really taught me the beginning, ins, and outs of family law. And even though it was in Texas and not in Mississippi, the ideas really are the same. You know, custody, visitation, um, you know, trying not to destroy families.

But, you know, you're in litigation where every impulse seems to be rip the other guy's throat out, and yet that's not how you wanna do it at all. Yeah. You know, there's... You know, I, I tell people that people watch TV or movies about divorce, and they think that what a divorce lawyer does is just take a rusty hunting knife and try to cut the other guy's throat and just make it as nasty and bloody as you can.

And there are lawyers who practice law like that. Sure, and I'm sure we've both been accused of that at some point- Well- ... whether, whether knowingly or [00:18:00] unknowingly. You know, I, I would say that yes, there are lawyers who practice family law like that. We call these people beginners, uh, 'cause they're not that good of it.

They're not that effective. I mean, we all have that gear- Yeah ... and we know how to do it. Right. But that's a foolish way... I mean, foolish. I agree with that. If, if it were effective, that's what I'd do. Uh, that's what you'd do. But it's not effective. And so this is, this is what I was learning from Tom is, you know, you're trying to do this in a way so that people are, people are still gonna be the parents of these kids.

And, and you've gotta figure out a way to divide the family and yet have them not, you know, hating each other for the next 20 years. And that's, that's where I

began to learn that skill. Right. That's, that's the art in- That is the art of it. And so you were moonlighting as a divorce lawyer. As a divorce lawyer, yeah.

Oh, I, I guess I didn't know that. And so, uh, then, uh, after a while I got, uh, transferred, uh, down to Houston, Texas. Okay, so by [00:19:00] now I'm married, uh, to my former wife and have two little, little children. And I'm really not seeing them because, you know- Working all the time ... yeah, I'm working all the time. My wife's a paralegal.

She's working all the time, and my father has finally, uh, at this time, he's retired from, uh, Dow Chemical and moved back to Rankin County, where he's from, um, and built a house, and he makes this offer. And, and he says, "I will buy you a house, and we will take care of your kids during the day." 'Cause they're not even in preschool.

They're too young for that. Yeah. And he says, "I... And we will do that, but the price is you gotta get a Mississippi law license, and you're gonna be out here." And so in June 1, 1999, I moved to Mississippi, and I've been here ever since. Did you study for the bar in Texas, or did you- ... did you pack up and come over here- Mm

and then first, first order of business was to try to get licensed, or how did that go down? No. When I was, uh, when I was working at the [00:20:00] attorney general's office in Texas, again, moonlighting and, and working extra hours, I- Mississippi had some reciprocity with Texas, but you still had to take the one-day, um- Multi-state test?

Oh, the essay test. No, the essay. The Mississippi specific part, yeah. Which, which is the worst thing. Sure, yeah. Um, and so I order all the books that you take when you're getting out of law school to take the bar exam, and I'm studying and studying, and I'm just... I killed myself studying. At this point, you've been a lawyer for over a decade, right?

Yeah. Oh, I've been a lawyer for 12 years. Yeah. Um, and I'm just killing myself studying, uh, for the Mississippi Bar. And so I show up, and they give it at, uh, what's the hotel downtown? I can't remember. Yeah, that's where I took the test. It's got the, got the drawbridge over, uh... Anyway, uh, so I take it, and they have me sitting down next to somebody who's doing the same thing, only they're coming from Tennessee.

And I've got all my books with me, 'cause I'm doing the last second cramming, and she's kinda watching me. And I said, "Well, what did you do to get ready?"

She said, "Ah, I read a few cases." And I [00:21:00] thought, "Okay. Well, I guess that's another way to do it." So when the bar results come out, of course, it's not by name, it's by s- it comes out by social security number.

And there was a separate section for all the people who were doing what I was doing and coming... And I can't remember how they had it designated, but you can see all of the people who were coming in from out of state that were just trying to get a reciprocal law license, and every one of them passed. So this lady that, from Tennessee who had- Who read a few cases

who had just read a few cases, and here I am, and I, I had worked my tail off, and I thought, "Well, maybe it'll pay off later on." Well, you know, I'd... If, if anybody who's aspiring to be a lawyer that can hear my voice and is considering taking the bar, it's not something you wanna do twice. Uh, no, you s- you don't wanna do it the first time.

Exactly. Yeah. Much less a second time. Yeah. And so that, that was the second to last time that I've ever really studied like crazy just to take a test. To take a test, yeah. Yeah. And so, uh, I would not recommend it. Well, I mean, you know, getting ready for... And we'll, we'll talk a little bit about the day in and day out of [00:22:00] practice, but the, you know, getting ready for an event as a lawyer doing what we do- Yeah

it's, uh, somewhat like studying for a test is for me. Well, yeah, I mean, I, I give, uh, my, my friends that, uh, or clients that are, that are doctors, I said, "You got it made." I understand going to medical school is hell on earth. I, I, I get it. I, and I would not want to do that. But the fact of the matter is, once you've learned how to do an appendectomy, you don't study for two weeks to get ready to do your next appendectomy.

I mean, you got it. You've... And, and you're not going to have to learn it again. But when we go and try a case- It is a new case every time, and you've gotta start from scratch every time, and it's like taking a really hard, really hard final exam every time you go to trial. Yeah, they're like snowflakes.

Every one's different. Yeah, and there, frankly, there are some lawyers who just aren't up to doing the work that it takes to prepare for trial. And- Like, I couldn't agree more. So let's, so let's go back to the, to the [00:23:00] origin story. So you study for, pass the Mississippi Bar- Yeah ... and you hang a shingle, right?

Yeah, and so I hang a shingle. I, I actually answered an ad in the, uh, in the back of the Mississippi Lawyer, the, the magazine for the Mississippi lawyers. Um,

and it is for somebody who's in Florence, Mississippi who wants to share rent, share an office. It turns out to be Roger Clapp in, um- Former chancellor

in, yeah, former chancellor in Florence. And I thought, "Well, this is great 'cause I'm not gonna do criminal law. I'm gonna do family law." And, uh- So you knew from your experiences in Texas that that's what you wanted your practice focus to be? Yeah, yeah. I, I fig- I figured, uh, coming... It was, it was either try to get jobs in, uh, criminal work.

There's, I had no connections where I could do criminal defense and really had no appetite to do criminal defense. And I guess I could come over as a prosecutor, but if I didn't get on with the, uh, Rankin [00:24:00] DA's office, I'm pretty much out of luck. Yeah. You know, and I don't wanna be commuting 'cause the whole point of this move was you get to be more of a family man, right?

Yeah, and simplify things. Yeah. I mean, my kids were, uh, my, uh, my son was five, and my daughter was three when we moved over. What, well, what drew you to family law to begin with? Um, it's really tricky. The law is not that complicated. There's, you know, it's not tax law. It, it's not that complicated, but the application of it, it's kinda like chess in a way.

Learning the rules doesn't take that long. It's not that hard. But act- But- Yeah, you figure out which way the pieces move. Yeah. But actually, what the strategy is of it and how do you do it, it is Really, really an interesting area of law Yeah, and there's, it's an art to it as well It- there's, there's an art to it, and you, you know, you're not just fighting over the insurance company's money.

I mean, you, you and your [00:25:00] client will develop a real relationship. Some of the best friends that I've made in my life came from really getting to know them and them getting to know me and just going through it together Yeah, like a trauma bond Like a trauma ... Well, it is like a trauma bond, but it's, you know, y- you know, if you're fighting over taxes or insurance money, I d- I don't know that you form the same bond that you do in family law No, over your heirlooms and your children and all the, the, your income and all the things that we talk about, and I'm just hearing, you know, hearing some of your story for the first time, and obviously you had the accounting background Right Obviously you had the appetite for the academic component of it Right Obviously in law school you got Training on your feet Mm-hmm And so, you know, it doesn't take many more components to put it together- You can start putting it together

to have the full package. Yeah Yeah. But it's, you know, some, some of the best friends that you, that you will make are doing this. Some of the people that are supporting me the most, you know, in the campaign are former clients, and that's really flattering. [00:26:00] It is You know, when, when you're going to them and saying, "Will you support me?"

"Dude, I already support you. Do you know all those checks that I wrote to you?" No, but, uh, but instead it's, "I wanna support you. I wanna take you out to people and, and have you meet them." And i- it's absolutely flattering to have a client run into you at a restaurant and, and say, "Man, you know, how are you doing?"

You know, "Hey, this is the guy who represented me. He totally took care of me." That is- Yeah, and, and I- ... as good as it gets ... I couldn't agree with that more because you really are there with people in their, in their hardest moments. Yeah And, you know, to have, to be able to lock arms with somebody during that transition, it does forge those kinds of relationships.

No doubt. Trial bonds. Trial, maybe that's the, maybe that's the name of the podcast. So. Yeah. So anyway, so you came to, um, to Mississippi. You start, you- Oh, yeah ... you share office space- Right ... with a former chancellor. Yeah. And then what happened? So I shared office space for an hour b- uh, or for a year. But here, the problem is with [00:27:00] Florence is Florence is in Florence, and the county seat is in Brandon, and I'm living in Brandon 'cause I'm living close to where my parents are.

Um, and- And '49 was not what it is today. No. Uh, a- and, you know, getting back and forth from Brandon to Florence was kind of a hike, and I'm having to, you know, go to Florence to the office and then come back to go to court and then go back. I mean, it, it was just, I really need to have a place in Brandon. So, uh, I got an office, uh, in the firm.

Uh, not in the firm, but in the building where David Morrow, uh, had his office, who's now the county judge over there. Yeah. Right in downtown Brandon. Yeah, yeah. I mean, literally across the street from the courthouse. And yeah, I was just taking... I would only, I decided I'm only going to do family law. Uh, it's gonna be my full-time gig, and I'm just going to become the family law attorney 'cause there were only a couple...

There were no other lawyers there who decided they were only going to do family law. There were a few that were known as [00:28:00] kind of the go-to guys in family law. Uh, but nobody who was going to do it full time. And I

mean, I was coming in from Texas with a heavy litigation background. I wasn't afraid of anybody, and there were some lawyers over in Brandon that people were a little scared of.

Yeah, I remember some of those guys. Yeah. And, um- Some of them are still around ... some of them are still around. And, uh, and you know, I, I had no fear about going toe-to-toe with them and, and we'll fight as much as we have to. And Mississippi's a lot more laid back than the, the district courts in Texas, uh, because the judges in Texas who do family law, they're also the ones who do the felony, uh, the felony cases.

So these are some hard-bitten people. Yeah. And, uh, you know, so I was, I was in it to throw punches if you have to, work it out if we can, and in the meantime, I'm learning law, and developed a really good relationship with, uh, John Grant and, uh, Tommy Siebert over- who were the chancellors over [00:29:00] there when, when I got there.

Yeah. Me too. And of course I'd had, um, you know, the former chancellor that, uh, you know, w- that, that was helping me, uh, when I first got there. And so really got immersed in, in doing family law. I was doing it full time. That's where I met you. We had a couple of cases against each other, and, uh, that didn't go my way, but that's fine.

Thank you for saying that, Dave. But, but that's fine. I'm gonna need you to say that again slowly. Yeah. But that's fine. Um, bad facts. Wasn't my fault. Right. And, uh- Look, you can't make up the facts. That's right. So, uh- You gotta play the cards you're dealt, for sure ... but, uh, so you know, I'd moved to Mississippi in '99, and in 2004, I had a hearing with Judge Grant.

And, uh, at somewhere in the hearing, he said, "Mr. Bridges, I need to talk to you in chambers after this hearing is over." That's never a good thing. Not usually, no. Not what you wanna hear. Uh, and so, okay. So after the hearing is over, I go back into chambers, and this is what he led with. He said, uh, "Mr. [00:30:00] Bridges, do you really want to be practicing family law?"

It was really not what I wanted to hear. That was his introduction to me to say that he had a, not, not that it was his position to offer me, but that he knew somebody who was looking for an associate and he thought that I might be a good fit. And that person's name was Richard Roberts- Okay ... who I had never heard of- Really?

Richard Ro- I had no idea who Richard Roberts was. I had no idea. I mean, I knew y'all got together obviously- Yeah ... but I had no idea that was, that it was Judge Grant's suggestion. Yeah, so it's the, it was the, uh, summer of 2004, and so I just started, uh, meeting with Richard. We had a few lunches, and it, it was r- I, I, I thought I was doing him a favor by signing up with him.

Like, I kept all my furniture and I kept, yeah, I kept everything 'cause I thought, "I don't know about this guy." One toe out, yeah. I really did 'cause I thought- [00:31:00] Yeah ... "I don't know how this is going." And for those of you who don't know Rich- Richard is, like, one of the godfathers of Mississippi family law. Yeah.

He's, he is, he the man. Right. And, uh, and he really put me through what I would call the PhD program of learning family law. Like I th- I think I was good already, but I, I don't think I ever would've become the lawyer that I am but for day in, day out breaking down cases with him and just- How generous of you to say too, yeah

really getting to... Well, I mean, he is, he's still the mentor and, uh, really made me, made me from just another good lawyer into somebody that, you know, really, you know, did well in the, uh, in, in family law and, you know, put me on with, uh, doing, uh, work for the bar, uh, for the family law section and, you know- Yeah, you've, you've done that for years, and I know that- I did that

Richard was a former president of the bar- Right ... and so that was one of his, well, really giving back opportunities- Yeah ... was work service with the bar, and it's also- Right ... a great [00:32:00] way to get to know a lot of lawyers who don't do family law. Right. And so it's good, it's good business too to know a bunch of non-family law attorneys as well.

Yeah. For, for a while I, uh, I started a newsletter to the whatever law you f- y- when, when you sign up for the bar you can sign up for sections of the bar, like the family law section. So for a while I was doing a quarterly newsletter where I summarized the cases that came out and the statutes that came out.

And that turned out to be more work than I could keep. A lot of work, yeah. But yeah, it turned out to be more work than I could keep up with. Many have tried. Few have sustained that effort. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. I did it for about two years and kind of let, let that lapse. Sure. Um, and then there was a seminar that we had, uh, that the family law section had that I was not the one who started it, but you know- The Hot Tips seminar.

The Hot Tips seminar. Kept that ball in the air for, I wanna say a decade. And, you know, tried to hand that off and, um, you know, I think the people that we handed it off to decided that that was more trouble than it's worth. [00:33:00] And so every now and then there'll be a Hot Tips seminar and, you know, I lo- I love it for what I did for it, but, you know, frankly, I've not, uh, taken the reins back 'cause it, it's a lot of work to do.

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I'm here with David Bridges, and David is, um, campaigning to be our next, um, 11th Chancery, um, District Chancellor. And I just wanted to take this opportunity to sit with David, and we're talking about his career trajectory. And, um, David, we were just talking about, um, how you were mentored and shepherded by, um, Richard Roberts and, and how that, um, took your, um, really work to the next level.

Yeah. And, and you guys have been practicing together ever since. Yeah. Uh, Jennifer Boysen had, uh, joined us, joined, uh, Richard and me, uh, maybe a year after. I started in 2004, and I think Jennifer [00:35:00] came in, I want to say January of 2006. She had worked with Chancellor Bill Lutz in Madison for I don't know how many years.

Many, yeah. Many. And so she joined forces, uh, with, uh, with Richard and me, and Jennifer's kind of become the sister that I never had. I mean- Yeah, she's great ... we're, we're really, really close and, uh, you know, we try to do cases together as, as much as we can. Yeah, she's a fantastic lawyer too. She is, and we, and we have, uh, different skill sets.

Um, you know, I'm more m- of the book guy, and of course, I've got the accounting background. And she is really good, uh, you know, with, how do I put it, you know, sh- with handling witnesses and examining witnesses and, um, you know, pulling together, you know, the, the big picture of the case. And, you know, I don't think I'm bad at any of that and, you know, she's good at all the things that I do, but [00:36:00] we complement each other and, you know, we've been doing cases together for, gosh, it's coming on 20 years now.

David, you, um, unfortunately walked through a divorce many years ago, and I'm curious how... You'd been a divorce lawyer for many, many years. Right. And I, I'm curious how, how that went for you, not, not, not the details of it, but the mindset switch from being, you know how this stuff works to- Yeah ... you're now in that situation and how that colored your ideas moving forward.

It, it, you know, I got a divorce from my wife in 2016 and, you know, I'd, I, it was not really an amicable divorce. I'm very fortunate that, um, I know enough about divorce law to know, you know, look, there, there is a place where the fighting has got to stop and let's just make this a business decision. [00:37:00] Uh, we stayed married for the kids and a lot of people, you know, shouldn't do that and don't do that, but we did.

You know, we, you know, we really... The, the marriage had been over a long- Yeah, but you made the effort- Long time ... to try to keep it together. Yeah, and I, I just, um, you know, that's just the way that I felt and my, my kids- It turned out great and I feel like that was the right decision to make. But I'd also felt like I'd kind of made a sacrifice of, you know, a lot of time, honestly.

Just, you know, s- there's no loneliness but like the loneliness of a bad marriage. Wow. And, uh, so I, I, uh, you know, when my client's sitting across the, uh, the desk from me telling me their story, I get it. Yeah, I know you do. And they- That's why I ask ... and, and they will, you know, they'll tell me, and, and sometimes I'll finish the sentence for them and say, "Well, did they do this, and do they do the other thing?"

"Yeah, how'd you know?" Oh. Been there, friend. Oh, I know, my friend. Yeah. Yeah. So how did that ch- how did that change your [00:38:00] perspective, though? I, I'm sure it gave you a, maybe, maybe a little bit more compassion for the folks who were in that struggle themselves. Yeah, I mean, yeah, I mean, once you've, once you have lived through it and you know where they are, um, it gives you And, uh, something that you can share with people to say, "Look, it, I know that all you can see is the tunnel right now.

I promise you that there's a way out if you will trust me," which is a big ask. It is a big ask. Uh, and not all people will be willing to trust you. Um, but- They'll hire you and still not trust you. And yeah. Uh, but, but if they will trust you and you can lead them out of it and you can say, "Look, I've been there, I've lived it, and there's a, a row of people in front of you have

who have gone through this. You know, I've, I've been the Sherpa on this, uh, many, many times." On this mountain. I know- I say the same thing. Yeah. I know how to get you to the top and I know how to get you [00:39:00] back again. You can do it on your own if you want or you can be the one to call the sh- it's your case, it's your life.

But if you'll trust me, I can get you on and off the mountain, or, or the valley maybe I should put it. I, I can get you out of this. Yeah, that's well put. Um, i- if, if you will trust me to do it. And if you don't, then, then you're gonna do it as a beginner and, you know- Makes the job harder ... and yeah. And you're gonna get beginner results.

So, you know, our, you know, it's like playing chess. It's like y- you can move the pieces or I can move the pieces, but it just needs to be one hand moving them. I've played this game thousands of times. This is your very first time. We'll do it your way if you want to, uh, but I don't recommend it. Yeah. For sure.

And why are you paying, why are you paying me the money that you pay me, uh, if you don't want my expertise? So. Yeah. Yeah. It, it's very complicated. So, so, so why, why do you wanna be a judge? Why- Well- ... why do you wanna make that leap from, um, trying the cases to be the person who's making the decision? [00:40:00] You know, I'm, uh, going to be 62 years old on Election Day, uh, November 3rd.

Turn out and vote. That's, um ... So your birthday is Election Day? No, no, no. It's, it's, uh, when, when Election Day rolls around- And you will be 62, yeah ... it, I will have just turned 62 years old whether I win or lose. And, uh, you know, I have always thought that being a judge would be a good capstone of a career.

And you know, the problem is if you want to run for judge, you don't wanna be running against an in- an incumbent. You wanna be running for an open seat. Open seats come up maybe once a decade- Yeah ... as you know. Um, and so I could b- I could've been running four years from now or four years in the past, but this is when, uh, James Walker decided that, uh, he did not want to, uh, run for re-election.

And so I thought, well, this is the, now is the opening, so this ... If I'm ever gonna run, this is the time to do it, so [00:41:00] I'm doing it. Well, what's gonna make you a good judge? Well, you know, uh, it's not that I'm the only person who, who could be a good judge. You would be a good judge. A, a lot of the people that we work with could be a good judge.

Uh, and I think the, the qualities that, that make you good is you know what you're doing, you know what the tricks are, uh, you know what the lawyers are trying to do. I've got the, uh, the work ethic of, of somebody... You know, we've talked about that. Uh, the work ethic of somebody who just absolutely gets that, you know, this isn't a 8 to 5 job.

Um, and you're not r- you're not just making decisions and then you walk out the door. I mean, any fool can sit up in a judge's seat and make decisions. Yeah. That's, that's not hard. Um, you know, but somebody who actually knows how do you divide, uh, a family without there being blood on the floor and, and keeping the relationships in place?

How do you get [00:42:00] people on and off the mountain really quickly instead of these cases lingering for three or four years? Isn't that super important? It, well, and there are, as you know, as you know, there are some judges who are not great at that. Uh, and then, you know, there have been judges like John Grant and, and some other all-stars, uh, Hall of Famers, uh, who are fantastic at getting people In and out and they divide the family and the bitterness is kept to the lowest level possible and that's what I do Yeah, t- and, you know, to, to continue with the mountain climbing analogy, it's like you've gotta take a, you've gotta spend a little time in the death zone- You do

because you are in the death zone- You do ... if you're going through a bloody nasty divorce. And so the faster you can get out of there, the better. Yeah. A- and- And the judge makes a big part of that because when I talk about the variables in a case, certainly your life, your facts, your, your story, but who [00:43:00] is your lawyer?

Who's the lawyer on the other side? Who's the judge? I mean, all of these decisions are things that you don't really have a lot of control over but are gonna impact how fast you get in and out of that death z- zone, to, to stick with that. Yeah. Oh, no, no question about it. I mean, I, I ... It's, this is a judicial campaign and it's impossible, almost impossible to get people excited about a judicial campaign.

Until- I mean, let's face it. But- Until somebody's your judge. Yeah. But, but the f- but look, look at what a, a chancellor does. You do, you know, we've talked about divorce and child support and custody and visitation and grandparent visitation and wills and estates and alcohol and drug commitment and there is some real estate component to it, but, you know, mostly what you are doing is the family law cases.

And, you know- Even wills and estate is, it is a- Oh, my gosh ... component of family law. Oh yeah, no question. I mean, really because you've, I mean, you've had, I mean, I have been involved in sibling disputes that were just as heated- Oh, just as nasty ... as a divorce. Yeah. Yeah, ab- [00:44:00] absolutely. But, you know, when, when I talk about the race I, I'll say, "Look, it, it's not that you're getting a divorce, but I, I just about guarantee you somebody who matters a lot to you is going to be in front of a chancellor in the next decade."

I mean, in, in one of those scenarios. Yeah. I agree. That's going to happen. And like I say, nobody really gets excited about a judicial race until you're there in the courtroom and do I have a good judge or not becomes everything. 'Cause if you c- if you have a bad judge, there's nothing you can do about it.

You can't have the election then and you're just stuck with a bad judge and bad results and you just gotta pick up the pieces. The, the election is the only time that people get to decide, "What kind of judge am I going to get?" Hard to get people excited about it but- It, it will become a big deal when it's you or somebody that you care about that's having to deal with it.

Yeah. So, [00:45:00] so you're a hard worker, you know the law. Um, what else, man? What, w- what's gonna set you apart from the other people that are in this race? Uh- Why should I vote for you? I, I have nothing bad to say about, uh, you know, the people that are running against me. And, you know, I, I, I think everybody's, uh, planning on a, uh, positive campaign.

And, and everybody will say, 'I will be a good judge.' I'm just thinking that I will be a better judge because this is what I've done. This has been my career, uh, you know, as we've said, uh, uh, full-time since, uh, you know, gosh, since the 1990s. I know how to do this. I've done this at a high level. Um, and at ... You know, when you're running for office, you have to toot your horn a little bit, so I'll toot my horn a little bit.

Uh, when people who need somebody to represent their child or their [00:46:00] grandchild or their nephew or, you know, somebody who's really important to them, they start reaching out and saying, "Who do I get to do this work?" It's a

short list of names that they're going to get. Mm-hmm. You're on that list. Uh, my name is on that list.

My firm's name is on that list. Um, I mean, we are the go-to people. I'm glad I'm not running against you, Craig. I mean, I'm pumping you up, man. Yeah, thanks a lot, man. Uh, but, uh, you know, the, the, the person that you want to be a judge in the future is the person who does this work now. I mean, that, to me, that seems self-evident.

I couldn't even, I couldn't even imagine someone taking the chancery bench who had not done a significant amount of divorce work. Uh, it seems like it'd be just totally lost. But it happens. But, but it happens. Oh, it happens all the time. Yeah. And, you know, as I've said, it's not that the law is that complicated.

Uh, laws, the family law is pretty easy to learn, but the ... [00:47:00] Just like the rules of chess. But the nuts and bolts of how do you do it, it will take you a, a, a career to figure out, how do I delicately handle this? I've got people that will, that will come into the courtroom, and they want their 14-year-old to testify, and they have a constitutional right to insist that their 14-year-old testify.

Okay. Well, I mean, if, if all you've ever been is, I don't know, a patent lawyer, what do you know about ... How are you going to handle that? Yeah. Do you know what ... I mean, first of all, do you know what the law is? But second of all, how are you gonna handle that? Yeah, 'cause that is a big T traumatic event for that young person.

Yeah. You know, kid- You know, we have the, the, the cases where the, uh, the 15-year-old doesn't wanna want to visit with their parent. Well, what are you gonna do? Because, you know, the, the parent who's not getting the visitation, "I wanna throw Mom in jail 'cause this is all her fault." Okay, well, if you don't, if you're the judge, how are you going to handle it?

You gonna throw Mom in jail? How's that gonna- How's that, how's [00:48:00] that gonna go? How's that gonna work out for you? But if, if you're not going to throw her in jail, and you're, and you're probably not, okay, well, how are you gonna fix this? Because there is nobody else in a position to fix this other than a chancellor.

If somebody comes to you and they say, "Look, we're getting a divorce, and there's not enough money to go around," which is, I mean, that's many- Many of them. Most of them. Yeah. Mo- Yeah Most of them are there's not enough

money to go around. How are you going to divide things out in a way that leaves the least amount of damage?

There's gonna be some blood on the floor, but that leaves the least amount of damage as possible. If you've got somebody who this is the first divorce case they crack open, and they're supposed to be a judge I mean, what kind of decision do you expect that you're gonna get? Right. Yeah. So yeah, I mean, that, that's what I think makes me good at it is I've been doing it.

I have the respect of the lawyers that, uh, that do this kind of work. We have, you know, we [00:49:00] have their support. You get invited on the podcast and, and, uh, I, uh, the lawyers don't elect judges, but lawyers are a pretty good source of information about who should I vote for as a judge. I would agree with that, and if you can hear our voice right now, that's a great question to ask.

I mean, you know, really, if you know a lawyer in your life and, and you, you're, you're kinda scratching your head on what you, what you need to do in a specifically a judicial campaign, then it's not, not a bad idea to reach out. Yeah. I mean, who, who do you think, uh, is going to do the best job because I don't know any of these people?

I mean, that, that seems self-evident to me. Yeah. I agree. Well, um, David, another thing I wanted to ask you about, man, you, um, totally unrelated to your campaign and I, and I saw it in one of your, uh, biographies, I think on your firm website, um, and I, and I totally disagreed with kinda how you had stated it about your oil painting career.

Oh, yeah, yeah. Um, let's, let's talk a little bit about that. Yeah. How'd you get into painting and... 'Cause I mean, guys, I, I don't know if there's [00:50:00] anywhere you can publicly see David's work, but, uh, you know, he is a fantastically talented artist. Oh, thank you. Yeah, I, I, I mean that. I wouldn't say it if I didn't.

Yeah. Um, it, it's a funny story about how, how I got into it. I had probably one of the most difficult cases I've ever handled, and this is, I wanna say, 2019. It, it was, it was one of the ca- it was one of these kind of cases where we take a room in o- in the office and just throw up bookcases and then have three-ring binders of nothing but the documents in this case, and my job was to get a PhD in all of it and be ready to try a two-week case.

And, uh, I was so stressed out. I mean, at, at 2:00 in the morning I'd be jumping out of bed and just freaking out because I'm, my mind's just going through all

the things that I have to do. Been there. And so I had the genius idea that, you know, I'm so anxious and freaked out that I'm going to go to the doctor and get [00:51:00] some pills to help me with my anxiety.

So that's what I do. And to his credit, the doctor that I saw said, "There is no way that I'm gonna give you any kind of medicine for anxiety because all that you're gonna do if I give you that medicine, you're just gonna stack your anxiety even higher, and you're gonna put even more stress on yourself.

So you've got to find a way to To de-stress in a, you know, non, uh, non-pill-Non-chemically induced manner ... yeah, non, non-chemically induced way. Well, I mean, you, you already know that I'm not much of a drinker and, you know, obviously I don't use drugs and, uh, you know, so, you know, I'm not de-stressing that way.

And I just ... Anyway, to make a long story short, I, I decided that, well, what if I took up drawing or what if I took up painting? I mean, how hard can it be? And that, that really was my attitude. How hard can it be? So I go to the Hobby Lobby and I get a little, uh, art set. Turns out [00:52:00] it's really hard . It's quite difficult.

It turns out it's really hard, but it also turns out that there are a million free YouTube videos on how to oil paint. How do you get ... How do you set up your studio? Uh, how do you mix colors so that it's the right shade of green? I mean, I don't know. Blue and gr- blue and yellow make green, but how do you get that green?

Right. How do you match it up? How do you get a source photo? How do you, how do you? And it was just a million how-do-you's and I just got into this groove where I'd watch YouTube videos while I was painting and my first paintings were awful as you would imagine but, you know, ev- everything that I saw would say, "Look, your first 50 paintings are gonna be awful.

If you wanna be good at this, you just have to have your rear end in the chair and put in the work and just keep after it and eventually it will get better and eventually after that it will be kind of good." Now, I don't say [00:53:00] that I'm good because some of my art I will hang in my office and all I see are the mistakes.

The mistakes. And that's just the artist's curse is what they call it. You know, y-all I see is mistakes. Other people like it, but, you know, I just kept after it and kept after it and s- you know, slowly it starts to turn into ... What, what nobody

tells you, I have, I have a friend who, who, uh- throws pottery. And he said, "What nobody tells you when you start doing pottery is what in the world do you do with all the pots?"

You know, 'cause eventually you run out of family and friends to give your pots to Well, David, you can give me one of your paintings whenever you want to, friend Oh, yeah, absolutely ... 'cause, um, I'm a very amateur collector, but I, I do appreciate your talent. Well, did it work? Is it, uh, did it help take the, take the edge off?

Yeah, it really does. It's, um... And I bet you'll have this, this experience when you watch baseball. It's very similar to that where you're so engrossed in the game or r- r- in my [00:54:00] example, I am so engrossed in trying to get that green just right that I'd, for the three hours that I'm sitting out in my garage, uh, painting, I don't think anything but, "Man, that nose is off.

I really need to fix that." And that's because you're fully present in the moment. Yeah, you're fully... Yeah. And if you can achieve, you know, three hours of zen, uh, in the evening, that's gonna do a lot to reduce your anxiety. So I mean, literally, I've got my, my so-called studio, uh, set up in the garage, and I'll just sit out there and I will put a, uh, a painting YouTube video on.

I won't watch it, but I'll be listening to it while I'm trying to, you know, get the ear just exactly right or whatever it may be. And then three hours later, I'm tired and, you know, okay, I'm, I'm de-stressed and I can actually get some sleep. Are, are, are people your favorite subjects to paint? Uh, my least favorite subject.

There, there's, there- All the paintings I've seen have been of people that you've done Yeah. Well, there, there's an order of [00:55:00] painting, uh, believe it or not. Uh, you start with still life because that's the easiest and that's where you learn shape, and colors, and shading, and values, and texture, and, and thing...

And every painting that you've ever seen is just another version of a still life. A person's face is just a still life except it's not an orange, it's a face. And so you will gradu- once you graduate from still lives, you will start doing landscapes. And once you graduate from landscapes, you will start doing portraits or, or figures, human figures.

And once you graduate from human figures, you'll do portraits. Portrait's the second to last. And the reason that portraits are so high up on the list is because The human brain is wired to recognize the smallest details in a human face. You

know, if you do a horse or a dog, you can get it really badly wrong and people won't notice it because people don't look at dogs all day.[00:56:00]

But they do look at human faces all day. And if the ear is just a little off, if the... Especially the eyes. If the eyes are just even a little bit too close together, it looks as amateurish as can be. So if you graduate to portraits, I mean, you're really trying something. I always paint things that are beyond my ability 'cause that's the only way to learn.

Mm. And so I've, I've got a painting that I'm- a, a portrait painting that I'm doing right now that looks like it's in a, like I pulled it out of a thrift shop. I mean, it is, it is brutally bad, and I'm I am willing to take a paper towel and just wipe the paint off and say, "Let me try that again." And, you know, on this one I've, I've done that four or five times, and I just can't get it right.

But anyway, the last level of painting is when you start doing scenes like, you know, a Rembrandt of, uh, you know, The Night Watch. You have a lot of people, and you have a lot of figures and, you know- A lot going on ... a lot, a lot going on. And, you know, I've [00:57:00] tried to do that, and that... Yeah, it works out about as well as it can work out.

But, uh, you know, so that, it keeps me out of trouble. Well, it's cool, David. I, I love that about you, and we also share a love for baseball. Oh, my God. How'd you, how did you start? How... What, what was your draw to baseball? Um, you know, I was, I was living by myself, uh, in San Angelo not making much money at all.

This is before I met my wife, had kids or anything like that. And I had very... I'm living on state money, and I had v- very little of it. Um, and I'd just come home at night, and, you know, I had not found, uh, painting, of course, and I had nothing to do. And I started watching baseball the year that the Atlanta Braves had the worst first season.

Do you remember that? Mm, a little bit, yeah. With, uh, Sm- with Smoltz and Glavine and, um, uh, Steve Avery. It was, it was their first season together, and they went from where they'd been worst in the division, and they won the w- and, uh, they didn't win the World Series, but they got to the World [00:58:00] Series. And I mean, I'd go home, and I watched every game on TBS and just fell in love with it.

And so I just, I turned into a baseball guy ever since. But you're a Houston- you're a Texas guy, though. I... Well, you know, because I was in Texas, uh, you

know, once, once I moved to Houston, you know, I transferred allegiance to, uh, the Astros. It was really brutal because remember, the Astros were in the National League, and they kept having these NLCSs between Houston and Atlanta, and I was torn.

It was like, what, three years ago Houston and Atlanta were in the World Series, and it was awful. I mean, it was like I'm, I'm gonna be really happy, and I'm gonna be really sad, uh, at the same time. That's good. So yeah. Well, um, David, good luck. Congratulations on such a, such an impressive career. Oh, thank you.

And for everybody who can, um, hear our voice, if you're a resident of that 11th Chancery District, then I hope you'll consider my friend David Bridges. Thank you, Craig.[00:59:00]

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