

Jeff Around Town – October 21st, 2025

Jeff: It's time for Jeff Around Town, and I'm here with Jacki Cser, who was born in Connecticut, went off to Vermont, off to Australia, to Nebraska, where she worked for the Omaha Police Department for a number of years, now in Iowa. Thank you so much for being here.

Jacki: I never thought I'd make it this far.

Jeff: Well, and here you are. We've known each other off and on for many years. I think we first met when you were playing fiddle.

Jacki: When I was a busker.

Jeff: When you were a busker in the old market.

Jacki: Yeah.

Jeff: And we've kind of known each other off and on through the years, and only recently did I discover that you are also an artist. And I discovered that because you sent me a photo of a drawing you've made.

Jacki: Of you.

Jeff: Of me.

Jacki: Yes.

Jeff: And that was inspired by...

Jacki: That lovely photo that you took of the painting in, is it with the...

Jeff: In the Louvre.

Jacki: In the Louvre.

Jeff: Yeah, I was at a cartooning festival in France, and a friend of mine, I hadn't gone to the Louvre that day, and I'd never seen this painting before. And my friend Ed Wexler said, hey, I saw you at the Louvre today. And I said, I wasn't there. And he said, well, there's a there's a painting there, and it... it looks like you. And I said, no. And then he showed me the painting, and we took a photo. So, I posted that. This is a number of years ago, I think, I posted that.

Jacki: Yeah, I keep... If something's interesting to me, I have a particular file on the computer that I transfer the photo to.

Jeff: Yeah.

Jacki: In case I feel like working on it later on.

Jeff: What was it about that photo, though, that jumped out at you?

Jacki: The twinship.

Jeff: Twinship.

Jacki: And the look in your eye.

Jeff: And now it's like a... It's not a twinship. It's a... It's like triplets, in a way, kind of. And so, yeah, you are... You were always surprising me with different things. So, I didn't know until very recently that you... You're studying how many languages?

Jacki: Well, there's... Officially, there's 29 on the list, but probably only about 12 of them I'm working with.

Jeff: Only 12?

Jacki: Only 12.

Jeff: I can barely do English someday.

Jacki: Scots Gaelic is actually my favorite at the moment.

Jeff: Really?

Jacki: Yeah.

Jeff: Why is that?

Jacki: It's fun.

Jeff: Yeah?

Jacki: It's just fun. And I can almost get the pronunciation. Almost.

Jeff: And your last name, Cser, is... Cser is...

Jacki: Hungarian.

Jeff: Hungarian. So do you...

Jacki: I do Hungarian as well, yeah. I just started that.

Jeff: Really? And you mentioned that you also speak Esperanto.

Jacki: I don't... Yeah, I wouldn't go so far as to say I was speaking it, but it is, to me, the easiest one that I've tackled so far.

Jeff: So, for those who don't know Esperanto, would you be kind enough to...

Jacki: It was created in 1857, and I forget what the fellow's name was. I googled it to find out.

Jeff: Yeah.

Jacki: And it was to foster a common language that would be spoken throughout the... Throughout the world.

Jeff: Sort of a peaceful language.

Jacki: Yes.

Jeff: In theory of something maybe the United Nations one day would have used.

Jacki: Exactly, yes.

Jeff: So, there's a William Shatner movie... Before we did the interview, I mentioned there's a William Shatner movie, William Shatner from Star Trek, where it's in Esperanto. I can't remember the title of it, but do you know... Are there other TV shows or movies with Esperanto?

Jacki: I have a friend who has told me that her significant other speaks it fluently.

Jeff: Yeah.

Jacki: And to contact him.

Jeff: Yeah.

Jacki: But that's it, as far as I know.

Jeff: And so, learning languages and doing your art, what is it about that that... Like, I believe that it really kind of keeps us young at heart, you might say, and it's good to keep the creative juices flowing. What is it for you?

Jacki: It helps with keeping everything in order.

Jeff: Yeah.

Jacki: I remember reading years ago in a paper about... They were doing a study on Alzheimer's, and there was a nun who died at the age of 101, and when... And she donated her brain, I guess, and when they opened her up, it was covered with plaque, but they had never, never a hint that she had been involved in a million things, and she never had made any kind of anything that they would have led to believe that she had Alzheimer's. I think if you're putting stuff into your head, maybe it'll knock out stuff you don't need anymore.

Jeff: Yeah. Yeah, that's great.

Jacki: I've always... I always imagined that I had this little guy in a huge library in my head that was running around getting files that I needed.

Jeff: Oh, I love that. So, you're keeping the guy with the files busy?

Jacki: Yeah, keeping him employed.

Jeff: Jacki, so much for being on Jeff's Around Town. Really appreciate that.

Jacki: I enjoyed the discussion exactly.

Jeff: And thank you for that wonderful drawing.

Jacki: Oh, I will try to keep going with those.

Jeff: I hope you do. You're very talented. Thank you so much.

Jacki: Thank you.