

Kenneth “KJ” Bryan

Class of 1997



KJ Bryan graduated from Royal Valley High School in 1997. As a student at RV, he was actively involved in extracurricular activities including SADD, FFA, NAC, band, basketball, football, cross country, and track. He was also the vice president of NAC his junior year and a homecoming candidate his senior year.

Memorable Moments at RV

One of KJ's greatest memories from his four years at RVHS was during homecoming his senior year. He was one of the candidates, and back then the king candidates actually got to drive the brand new mustangs in the parade. The candidates were given a long lecture from

Mr. Hoch and Mr. Holthaus and were told to drive straight to the park and straight back to the high school once the parade ended, but the candidates had a different plan in mind. Once the parade ended they drove back to the high school like they were told. As soon as Mr. Hoch got out of the way to let them turn into the parking lot, all three candidates floored it and took off down the old highway, driving the mustangs as fast as they would go. That was the last year that candidates were allowed to drive the cars in the parade.

His most memorable moment of his high school sports career was during his junior year. He was on the varsity basketball team that beat Jeff West, ranked third in the state at the time. The game was at Royal Valley and the gym was packed. When the final buzzer sounded, Jeff West's star player, Paul Shirley, who went on to play at Iowa State and then for a few NBA teams, fell to the floor at the free throw line and started crying. Another memorable sports moment he mentioned was when his 4x8 relay team went to state his senior year.

Big Changes

1997 may have been roughly twenty years ago, but RVHS has changed so much from then. When asked about what he enjoyed most in high school he answered school lunches, not an answer you would probably hear from a senior in the class of 2017. KJ said, "They were awesome. School lunches were the bomb when I was a kid. No one packed a lunch ever because the food was just so good."

After High School

After graduation, KJ attended the University of Kansas for a year before deciding to continue



the family business. He stills owns that business and renamed it Bryan Builders. He said that growing up and going to school at RV taught him to work hard for what he has, and he remembers that every day at work and in his personal life. In 2003, he married Jessica Bryan and they have three children that currently attend Royal Valley.



Advice for Seniors

As a piece of advice for current seniors, KJ said, "I know a lot of seniors talk about wanting to get out of this small town where everyone knows everyone, but what they are going to realize one day is that having this many people that care about you is important. Don't forget where you came from and what this small town taught you. Don't forget that you came from this small community, and that it made you who you are today. Your senior year should be one of the best years of your life; don't spend it worrying about things that won't matter in five years."

Article by Ali Bryan
October 13, 2016