

JulesRules #5

Small town #Murica

Brings out the best in the Prairie

[Faith; Family and Football.](#) Three words that mean much to folks in [East Prairie.](#) A town of [3717.](#) and a fan base that seems twice that size on game nights at the Eagles Nest.

Friends from through the years come back for reunions; dinners and this year the [2nd Annual Ep Loop](#) will take place. Just all the folks from the ballgame riding around town afterwards. It's a cool thing and is just another reminder of the customs of small town Americana is still alive and well in the Prairie.

[Ricky Johnson, Jr.](#) takes a look back at his memories of the yearly wonderful Homecoming event in East Prairie and how much he missed during his the destructive cycle of his Life.

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1 - What does homecoming in #Ep mean to you?

Homecoming in East Prairie is always exciting. The experience of a small town coming together and putting the kids on a pedestal is pretty cool. I enjoy seeing everyone get so involved in the festivities.

2 - What good do you see from communities getting together for a common purpose?

When communities come together for a common purpose, it gives everyone involved a feeling of self worth. People get to feel like they are making a difference because they are. You can't go wrong with making memories while making a difference.

3 - When was the last time you have been?

The last homecoming I have been to, I do not remember. There was a good ten year stretch of my life where I wasn't involved in too much of anything good.

Kev I am wasting my time answering these questions about homecoming brother. I don't remember much of it and I was strung out for a good amount of time so I never went.

4 - Give us a glimpse of what Life would be on a night where everyone else was enjoying friends while you were enjoying your thing; to let people know what they are missing by not attending for whatever reason.....?

Have you ever watched a car get stuck on a sheet of ice and it would spin it's wheels and not be moving? That was me while everyone else enjoyed their life. I thought I was doing what I enjoyed but in reality I was killing myself. I was telling my wife this morning, I can't count the times I have been secluded in various places for days at a time and be so far gone mentally that I would not speak for a week. I would not open my mouth to say a word. Having no human interaction while I was high turned me into a very weird person during that time of my life.

5 - Is there any advice you would give students today to avoid that lifestyle sooner than later?

My advice, man that is a tough one. We all deal with things differently. A person could have told me step for step the consequences of my actions and I would have still made the same choices because I thought I knew it all. I thought it would never happen to me and before I knew it was in the front page of the paper for a drug charge. Surround yourself with positive people. I heard a man say he could tell someone their future by the people they presently surround themselves with and that is true.

6 - I see you compete and posted a pr (personal record) of your lift last night. Does being fit and strong help?

Some people enjoy painting or art. I enjoy being physical in the gym. Being fit and in shape matters to me. I have the mentality if I can physically and mentally push my body past it's limits then I can deal with most anything. My physical strength and health falls on me and nobody else. How good or bad I do is my responsibility and I enjoy that feeling. I like being functionally strong and that means if I need to move a freezer then I have that ability to do it.

7- What values do you take away from your hometown and into the marines?

The values I took with me to the Marine Corps were more mental I think. My dad was pretty tough on me in sports and quitting things was never an option. Coach Delane Beckwith was one of my high school coaches. He was hard on me and pushed me. The way he coached us, I doubt you can get away with it today. He prepared me mentally for the Marine Corps with his coaching style. The people in my life who have been hard on me, I thank them for it. Marine Corps training was hard but I always kept in my mind, "there is no way in hell I am quitting."

Bonus Q - What is your feelings on Kapernick kneeling and starting all the commotion with his disrespect of the national anthem?

My thoughts on him kneeling and everyone following suit? Ultimately it is their right and he is free to do that. Do I agree with kneeling during the National Anthem? No. I respect a man who is willing to go against what everyone else feels to prove his point. I may not agree with it, but I can respect it. This is my take and if some don't like it, so be it. First and foremost, I personally don't owe another human being anything. I choose to respect people because they respect me. Is there injustices in this country and racism? Absolutely and it goes two ways. I love people but for another person to think I am gonna say I am sorry for something I didn't do, it probably won't happen. I have been held accountable for every poor choice I have made and I will never blame another person for it. That is not who I am. These situations are the ones I try not to feed into. I am a simple guy. Don't put your hands on me, treat me with respect, don't hurt innocent people, and I will treat you like a brother. If a person can't meet me in the middle then I guess we are gonna have issues. I am a man of God but at the same time, I will protect myself.

Ricky Johnson, Jr., is living the dream at Lake of the Ozarks with his wife, Julie, and their Mutt Mick.

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