



This is the final in a series for The Buffalo News by the oldest daughter of Bills great Jim Kelly.

Dear Future Owner of the Buffalo Bills,

I'll never forget the first time I was at Ralph Wilson Stadium. It was a beautiful fall day in Orchard Park. Although I never had been to a professional football game before, I knew my experience that day would be unforgettable ... and it was.

I vividly remember walking next to my mom, getting as close to her as I possibly could, as she carried my younger sister, Camryn, on one hip while pushing the wheelchair of my brother, Hunter, with her other hand. All dressed in No. 12 Kelly jerseys, the four of us followed a few steps behind my dad as we walked

through the tunnel onto the field. As a naive 6-year-old, I was overwhelmed, excited and somewhat frightened by the deafening roar of the crowd as our family walked down the sidelines to the 50-yard line.

A small stage with a podium was set up near midfield where we met the rest of the Kelly Family, as well as many of my father's former teammates and members of the Buffalo Bills organization. Mr. Ralph Wilson stood behind the podium first and spoke to the fans about the many accomplishments my father had achieved for the team. Although I was too young to fully understand and engage in what was being said, I knew it was special.

After Mr. Wilson retired my father's jersey number and inducted his name onto the Wall of Fame, the crowd erupted as my dad walked over to the podium to share his gratitude. This was the first and last time our entire family would be at the stadium together.

This day would become one of those days in Bills history that would define who I am as a Bills fan, not just a Jim Kelly fan, but a Bills fan. It was the first of many moments at One Bills Drive that have helped shaped my passion for the Bills and my fan-family.

Not only were the fans supporting my dad, but more importantly they were rallying behind a legacy. It's a legacy that began with Mr. Wilson and his desire to build a championship team for the "City of Good Neighbors." The truth is, it has always been and will hopefully continue to be about more than just football. It's about the community and the people.

Mr. Wilson didn't just own the team, he loved the players and their families, he encouraged and motivated the entire Bills organization, and he cared about and was incredibly generous towards the City of Buffalo and its people. We all believed in Mr. Wilson's vision and engaged in his passion. The unwavering loyalty that characterized his life runs through the veins of all die-hard Bills fans.

Mr. Future Owner, you have enormous shoes to fill! As you take the baton of ownership into the future, I trust that you too will passionately preserve and perpetuate the very things that have made our team great. It's your turn to carry on the legacy. It's your season to encourage and motivate. It's now your time to rally the family to victory. Thank you in advance for providing future memories for me, my family and the countless Buffalo Bills fans across the world.

Thank you for "Billieving!" I "billieve" in you! Go Bills!

With Love,

Erin Kelly

P.S: Thank you for allowing me to share my heart with you. And thank you for praying for my dad and our family.

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