

For the love of the game

For middle school teacher Pat Cavanaugh, football is more than guys in tight pants tackling one another. The Troy resident, who was once captain of his college football team, believes the game reaches kids on a deeper level.

“It teaches them to believe in themselves and work toward a common goal as teammates,” Cavanaugh says.

To share his love of the game with others, Cavanaugh is hosting a free football camp for the second year from July 13 to 14, at the Warren Community Center.

Boys and girls ages 8 and older will have the opportunity to tackle the fundamentals of the game as well as learn each position, from linebacker to quarterback.

Last year, 62 kids – some from as far away as Clarkston – participated, and Cavanaugh expects at least 100 kids to hit the turf this year.

Cavanaugh says growing up, a lot of people helped him along the way and never asked for money, so offering the camp free of charge is an opportunity for him to give back.

Primarily funded on private donations last year, the camp now has several local sponsors, and use of the field is being donated by Warren Parks and Recreation. About 15 coaches are expected to volunteer, including Cavanaugh’s four older brothers, whom he credits for exposing him to the game he loves.

At just 27 years old, Cavanaugh has gone from a young boy tossing the pigskin in the front yard to an expectant father helping other kids develop a passion for the game. A game, says Cavanaugh, that also teaches kids valuable life lessons. In fact, his motto, both in the classroom and on the field, is: “Believe to achieve.”

“If a child believes in himself, everything else will take care itself,”

Cavanaugh says.

The camp runs from 6-9 p.m. Friday, July 13, and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, July 14. Two meals and a T-shirt are included. Registration ends July 10.

For more information, call 248-225-2145 or visit www.freeyouthfootballcamp.com.

– *Jennifer Sullivan*

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