

Ty Ankrom's Here's What I Think ...

Perhaps because Pumpkin Show just ended and the regular season is winding down for area football teams, I found myself thinking about teamwork a lot this week.



The Pumpkin Show may be the largest example locally of civic teamwork, as more than 250 volunteers work to put on "The Greatest Free Show on Earth."

Sports teams, certainly at the high school level, don't have that number of participants, but they also work together to put on a great show, or more aptly, a successful season.

As a high school student, I played baseball and basketball and am indebted to these group activities for what I learned.

Being a member of a team taught me that practice doesn't always lead to perfection but it does make you better. More important, practicing can prepare you for situations you face during competition.

Happily, I can look back on my baseball seasons with pride as my team was very successful,

winning our league championship my senior year and several summer league championships. This taught me to be a good winner and to be appreciative of those wins.

Conversely, my basketball team was not that good and so I learned to be a good loser. This also was important, teaching me to never quit. With my teammates, we evaluated what we were doing wrong (almost everything) and worked together to get better.

Having a common goal is a crucial factor in teamwork, be it on a basketball court or in a classroom.

By working together, we beat Waverly High School in our final regular season game of the year during my senior year. Waverly had only lost three games before our game and was in the OHSAA state championship Final Four that year.

Defeating a team as success-



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ful as Waverly was then was a feather in our team's cap and one that we can look back on proudly.

Being on a team also requires a sense of discipline. You either develop it or you hone it. Either way, that is a skill that will always be useful.

An unusual benefit of being on a team is that I made a number of lifelong friends from the schools that we competed against.

I hope young people competing today recognize that the color of a school's uniform doesn't negate the possibility that opposing players can be friends.

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