

Coaching the Mind-Body Connection



TRACIE McCOMB

Tracie McComb is the Boys Varsity Basketball Coach at Montrose Area High School—the first woman in that role in Susquehanna County history. Before that she coached elementary and junior high students for eight years. She also has practiced yoga for 30 years, most recently taking classes led by Charm Goff Giangrieco at the Wellness Arts Center in Montrose.

“I wanted the boys to experience the benefits of yoga.” She invited Charm to do a monthly class after practice at the school. “The first year they didn’t really see the benefits; they thought it was a little silly. The second year the 13 and 14-year-olds appreciated it more. The Varsity boys absolutely loved it, looked forward to it, and saw the benefits.” They appreciated the stretching aspect of the yoga postures, but also crave the quieting of the mind and deep breathing.

The team was invited to enjoy a private yoga class at the Wellness Arts Center. They were wowed! Senior Jack Russell remembers, “It was a place that felt like home, a place where we went from friends to family.” Senior Lukas Cokely added, “It was a place to find ourselves again. It allowed us to feel the little things we impulsively feel.” Word rippled through school so

that Friday evening yoga class has become a popular voluntary routine. Charm leads the boys through a series of poses that enhance their traditional basketball workout. Players also experience a deep ‘Yoga Nidra’ meditation at the end of practice. That allows the body to relax deeply and absorb the effects of the poses.

Coach McComb starts every practice with a minute of meditation. If she sees the team’s body language showing stress, she reminds them to recenter and she sees their shoulders relax. “They seem to really need the quiet.” The Varsity team has had three coaches in the last four years. Their number one goal this year was to work as a team. They needed to believe in and trust each other, trust their coach, and be unselfish. The Coach says, “We had a successful season this year and I’m very proud of them. It took time, but we got there. It’s not just about wins and losses.”

For twenty-seven years, the Wellness Arts Center has been financially supported by the Wellness Fund at the Community Foundation. This support has made it possible for the Wellness Arts Center, a public charity, to offer a greater number of courses and services that benefit all of our region.

For a list of the activities and the instructors, see WellnessArts.com.



Left: Montrose Boy's Varsity Basketball team. Right: Yoga studio at the Wellness Arts Center.