COACHING FOR THE GAME OF LIFE

Franklin basketball program volunteers with Respite Care Program and Patriot Machine

By John Cummings, Managing Editor, Miami Valley Newspapers

One of the things Franklin boys basketball coach Brian Bales has always emphasized to his teams are the three core values. Relationships, service and growth.

“We are always looking for community events to get involved in,” Bales said. “We are coaching the game of life. We don’t want to just put it on paper, we want to act it out and anytime we get a chance to serve our community, we take advantage of it. We talk a lot about leadership. The number one sign of a leader is willing to serve so it helps with leadership.”

On a Friday night last winter, the Wildcats helped out with the Respite Care Program. The program is for families with special needs kids where the parents can leave their kids for a few hours to go shopping or whatever they need to do. The basketball team spend time eating pizza, playing basketball, kickball and watching videos and playing video games with approximately 25 special needs kids.

“I think we thought we were going to bless these kids and families,” Bales said. “But, when you do something like that, you are the one that gets the blessing. To see our kids and the way they interacted with those kids was awesome. It was a great time. We got way more out of it than they did.”

The basketball team also helps wrap gifts for families at Patriot Machine in Carlisle around the holidays. The activities serve a couple of functions. It gets the players involved where they live and gets them together off the court.

“We try to do as much as we can to help the community,” Bales said. “It gives them a chance to hang out together somewhere other than a scrimmage or a game and they get to see each other in a different arena. They are still talking about last Friday.”

The team was only scheduled to stay for an hour, but ended up staying much longer, leaving just before families came to pick kids up so Respite workers could get them settled down to go home.

“They had a great time,” Bales said. “They had a lot of fun. I think we will do it again the next time it comes up.”

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