

# CCA basketball team off to strong start



Special to The Clinton Courier

Pictured (l to r) are members of the Clinton Christian Academy varsity basketball teams, front row: Taelor York, Esha Arora, Grace Murray, Makiya Pullium, Maddie Weeks, Taylor Jones, Callie Abraham and Audrey Bryson; middle row: Iris Farve, Jeremy Spiller, Keiwon Rodgers, KJ Sykes, Darrius Scott, Devin Collins, Monroe Gray, Gray Craft and Valeria Brown; and back row: Noah Murray, Bray Farve, Keshon Banks, Jamar Guy, Mike Chambers, Bobby Gibson, Parker Price, Thomas King and Devin Brown.

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The Clinton Christian Academy basketball teams are off to a good start to their seasons, with the varsity girls off to their best start in school history. Coming off last year's best-ever record and advancing to the south state tournament semi-finals, this year's team looks to make a run at winning the MAIS Class 2AA State Championship.

The Lady Warriors are 15-5 overall, with three of those losses to higher class schools, and the other two decided by one and two points. Starters for the Warriors are point guard Rae Rae York, shooting guard Hanna Zeitz, small forward Grace Murray, power forward Callie Abraham and center

Iris Farve.

The girls are currently second place in district play and, at press time, were looking to win the district regular season when they host Brookhaven Academy on January 31 at the Mississippi College coliseum. Leading scorers for the Lady Warriors are York (13 points per game) and Farve (10 points per game). Murray and Abraham are right behind with seven points per game each, and Zeitz has five points per game.

The JV girls are 9-7 overall and tied for second in district play. The JV district tournament was scheduled to be held on Saturday, February 2, at Brookhaven Academy.

The varsity boys basketball team is



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Pictured (l to r) are members of the Clinton Christian Academy junior varsity basketball teams, front row: Rilee Evans, Audrey Bryson, Natalie Hendon, Annie Kate King, Sarah Sanders, Alayna Lee, Abbey Abraham and Molly Mosley; middle row: Kyler Boyd, Cooper Ormon, Tristan McMullen, Cooper Loftin, Josh Markham, AJ Johnson and Carter Hendon; and back row: Ryan Gains, Joe Smith, Joshua Johnson, Landon Bland, Davarius White and John Michael Crosby.

also having another strong year. Despite having to replace all five starters from last year's Final Four team, at press time, the Warriors were 14 and 6, 5 and 1 in district and had won 11 of their last 13 games.

Senior Bray Farve leads the team in scoring at 13 points per game while averaging six rebounds. Eighth grader KJ Sykes is averaging 12 points, five assists, three steals and two rebounds per contest. Senior Brandon Birks leads the Warriors in rebounding at eight per game and has stepped up his scoring in the second half of the season. Sophomore Noah Murray has been a strong all-around player with a stat line of ten points, six rebounds, four steals and two assists per game.

Senior Jamar Guy has been the defensive anchor of the Warriors full court press while pulling down six boards a game. Tenth graders Monroe Gray and Devin Collins have brought energy and shooting coming off the bench. Senior Parker Price has also contributed by knocking down big three pointers and providing great leadership.

The rest of the roster is Jeremy Spiller, Keshon Banks, Bobby Gibson, Grey Craft and Thomas King. Coach Josh Zeitz says he is extremely proud of how the group has improved throughout the year and believes this is a special team with the ability to compete for a state championship.

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## Chamber's Annual Celebration highlights involvement

outreach vice president at Renasant Bank; and the President's Award to Tracey Harrison, director of public relations at Mississippi College and outgoing 2018 Chamber president.

Clinton Mayor Phil Fisher, in his State of the City address, highlighted improvements and developments in crime numbers, economic development along with sidewalk, parking and lighting, the train depot and park, infrastructure, courts and the upcoming hotel tax vote.

Fisher also announced the start of a new campaign, "Stay Classy, Clinton" — a move to counter negativity on the internet that can affect impressions of the city and have an impact on its

businesses.

"This is an effort to place the city and its business community in a positive light," Fisher said. "You can still blast away at the elected officials. We're still fair game." Confronting critics with humor is the way to go, Fisher said, as a slide of movie character Ron Burgundy (Will Farrell) flashed on the screen, complete with the "You Stay Classy, Clinton" slogan, to the audience's delight.

Crime numbers — "a real good news story in our city today," Fisher said — are tied to more police officers on the streets, better equipment and cars, additional training and weapons, citizen-based community programs and

more. From 2013 to 2017, total reduction of property and robbery crimes equaled 67.5 percent. Law enforcement leadership and security in the city "is something to be proud of," the mayor said. "It gets back to them working with y'all, and y'all working with them."

Fisher also announced the national job posting for a full-time economic development director for the City of Clinton.

Fisher recommended Judge Steven Boone as the City's first full-time judge, tasked with streamlining the judicial process and making the court a model for others, he said, including a hoped-for night court to allow police

officers to fold court duties into their regular work cycles.

In stressing the significance of the one percent hotel tax increase, Fisher said, "The need to promote Clinton from St. Louis to New Orleans, Atlanta to Dallas, is a very important part of our efforts to inform potential visitors and tourists that our community is the place to stop when you're traveling on I-20.

"Drawing them to Clinton to eat, stay, buy — it enhances our economy, and I want to aggressively move and capture those dollars."

For more information about Chamber of Commerce programs and offerings, call 601-924-5912

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