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Law enforcement recognized in aftermath of tragedy

By Katherine R. Dougan

At the Board of Aldermen meeting on February 19, Mayor Phil Fisher expressed gratitude to multiple agencies that responded to the scene of a fatal hostage situation in a Clinton subdivision near the Natchez Trace on Saturday, February 16. Four members of a family were found shot to death at the scene after a SWAT team ended a twelve-hour standoff.

"The use of the word 'hero' is so often used, it almost loses its flavor," Fisher said, continuing that, despite the word's overuse, it was the best word to use to describe the bravery and dedication of the many agencies that responded to the scene. The hostage situation was initially called in at 2:30 a.m. as a domestic disturbance; however, first responders found the suspect and homeowner, Nam Quang Le, positioned with a gun at a front window, and learned that Nam Quang Le had six hostages, including two children, in the home. First responders, Clinton Police Department, a SWAT team and the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation arrived at the scene as the situation unfolded throughout the day.

"It was a tough, tough, tough weekend; no getting around that," Fisher said, commending the first responders, Clinton Police and the MBI for bravely going on scene and staying there until it was over. The suspect, Nam Quang Le, 34, was shot at the scene and died at the hospital later. He was the owner of Nail Envy salon in Hazlehurst. The victims included his wife, Lan Thi

My Van, 30; his sister-in-law, Le Thi My Van, 28; a babysitter and family friend, Cho Thi Van, 54; and Le Thi My Van's fiancé, Phung Minh Le, 28.

In an article published by local media on February 21, Clinton Director of Communication Mark Jones stated that, although the incident is still in the early stages of investigation, law enforcement officials have reason to believe Nam Le killed the four found dead in his house.

Fisher also commended neighbors for staying safely indoors until the situation ended. At 9:30 a.m. during the standoff, Nam Quang Le and Lan Thi My Van's two young daughters, Madison, 5, and Kennedy, 4, were released unharmed from the home.

In the days since the tragedy, the city has received numerous calls from people asking about the children, who lost both parents during the hostage situation, Fisher said.

"It just shows a silver lining we can pull out of this; people want to be helpful. Thanks to all for getting us through a difficult day."

The children are staying with an uncle. Vicki Van of Madison, whose nephew was victim Phung Minh Le, started a GoFundMe to raise funds to care for the children. As of the writing of this story, \$14,241 of the \$200,000 goal has been raised on the page, which contains numerous messages of condolences and hope from donors and visitors, neighbors and friends.

Photos of the children and memorials to the victims are on the GoFundMe page.

To learn more about the GoFundMe effort, visit:
www.gofundme.com/clinton-ms-tragic-shooting-left-2-kids-behind.

Mississippi College offers ACT review course



Special to The Clinton Courier

The Mississippi College Office of Continuing Education will offer a review course for the ACT Assessment. The review is a one-day course that will take place on March 16 from 9 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. on the Mississippi College campus.

The course will review reading, grammar, math and science skills,

and registration is required. Space cannot be held without pre-registration and payment. There will be sample questions for each section. The course is \$65 per student.

Registration is available by mail or on line. For more information, please contact the Office of Continuing Education, 601-925-3265.