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Today's weather

Mostly Sunny
81
58



Scrapbook:

Last Aug. 11
High: 86
Low: 60



MCS reports positive case at high school

Marion Community Schools (MCS) reported Monday that a person who was on campus Friday at Marion High School has tested positive for COVID-19. School officials say anyone "determined to be a close contact of that person" has been informed and instructed to quarantine.

If you were not contacted, MCS says, you were not identified as being a close contact. Close contact is defined by health officials as being within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes, according to MCS.

"We will continue to work closely with the Grant County Health Department to monitor, verify and communicate as needed," MCS said in its statement.

ISDH adds second Grant County testing location this week

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) will host a free drive-thru testing site Tuesday through Saturday this week at the Grant County 4-H Fairgrounds, 1403 Ind. 18. This site is in addition to the free ISDH/Optum site currently operating at the Clarence Faulkner Community Center, 1221 W. 12th St. in Marion.

Grant County Emergency Management Agency Director Bob Jackson Monday reported a total of 798 COVID-19 cases and 30 deaths in Grant County.

ISDH Monday announced that 673 additional Hoosiers have been diagnosed with COVID-19 through testing at ISDH, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and private laboratories. That brings to 74,992 the total number of Indiana residents known to have the novel coronavirus following corrections to the previous day's dashboard.

See **SCOOP**, page A2

Car chase ends in crash, arrest

By **ANDREW MACIEJEWSKI**
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A high-speed chase through city streets in Marion ended with a vehicle crashing into Star Financial Bank Saturday, according to Marion Police Department (MPD) reports.

MPD Deputy Chief Stephen Dorsey said Kyle James Olson, 29, was arrested for operating without

a license, reckless driving, failure to stop and resisting law enforcement following the pursuit.

Dorsey said officers estimate Olson reached an estimated speed of 75 mph after police sirens and lights were engaged.

The chase began on Aug. 8 around 2:30 a.m. MPD officer Scott Fletcher was conducting a normal patrol on 30th Street when he saw a gold 2004 Ford Crown

Victoria turn onto 30th Street from Washington Street. Fletcher alleges that the driver covered his face and looked down to avoid being identified by the officer. Dorsey said Fletcher deemed these actions as suspicious.

Upon pulling behind the vehicle, Fletcher said the vehicle disregarded a stop sign at the intersection of Meridian and 30th streets.

"The vehicle traveled

southbound and it was evident that the vehicle was fleeing," Dorsey wrote in his release.

At this time, the officer initiated a traffic stop, activating emergency lights and sirens.

Fletcher said the vehicle disregarded another stop sign at 33rd and Meridian streets, turning westbound on 33rd at a high rate of speed. The vehicle also disregarded a red flashing

light at 10th and Adams streets before continuing northbound at a high rate of speed.

When the driver attempted to make a right turn near Fourth and Adams streets, the driver lost control and crashed into Star Financial Bank, MPD reports.

The driver fled on foot, police say, before being apprehended by other responding units as he rounded the building.

Popcorn Festival honors first responders



A Van Buren firefighter high fives a young girl during the popcorn festival parade Thursday evening.

Photos by Jaylan Miller / jmiller@chronicle-tribune.com

By **JAYLAN MILLER**
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The streets of downtown Van Buren were full of fire trucks, ambulances and police vehicles Thursday night, and not because of an emergency.

The Van Buren Popcorn Festival dedicated this year's celebration to the first responders working across the county.

The 2020 Festival Theme, "First Responders, Poppin' into Action," honored the hard work of local police, firefighters and emergency medical services (EMS).

"Most of the population knows about them. They know they are out there, but I don't think people realize the hours of training that these people have to go through in order to be able to provide these services," said festival committee member Al Holloway. "We thought they needed to be recognized."

Holloway said he experienced firsthand the excellent work of local EMS workers a few years ago when he was transported to



A young girl collects candy from the ground to place in a firefighter's hat at the Van Buren Popcorn Festival parade Thursday evening.

the hospital.

"I think countywide they do a really good job," he said. "I think that too often the community as a whole doesn't recognize what they do. They shouldn't be taken for granted."

County EMS Director Duaine Ashcraft said the theme was a nice gesture on

the part of the festival organizers.

"First responders have had a lot of difficulties as far as dealing with COVID and risking their livelihoods to help other people," Ashcraft said.

The theme was chosen last summer, before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 and the recent civil unrest, Ashcraft said.

Van Buren Fire Chief Don Plummer said first responders are often forgotten when people mention front line workers amid the COVID pandemic.

See **POPCORN**, page A2

Jackson: COVID cases dropping, masks still imperative

By **TIM TEDESCHI**
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Grant County is beginning to see a dip in COVID-19 cases after about a month's worth of a spike, but officials said residents need to remain vigilant to continue to slow the spread of the virus.

Grant County Emergency Management Agency Director Bob Jackson said while the 14-day average of cases was as high as 15 cases per day throughout July – with some single-day totals as high as 25-27 – the most recent data Monday shows the county is now averaging approximately 9.37 cases per day over the last two weeks.

"So yeah that's down from the 15 we were at which is good," he said. "Not where we need to be yet, but we're at least trending in the right direction."

Jackson said reports from Marion General Hospital show hospitalizations due to COVID-19 remain low as well. The county has reported a total of 798 cases and 30 deaths since the beginning of the pandemic, Jackson said.

Grant County Health Officer William David Moore said the number of cases finally seems to be coming down after the spike began following large gatherings over the Fourth of July weekend.

"We had a spike after July 4 and we seem to be burning through that spike and coming toward something that is more acceptable in terms of numbers," Moore said.

Jackson said the large spikes

See **COVID**, page A2

Weekend recap: Gas City Speedway, girls golf scores

By **SCOTT HUNT**
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One of Gas City I-69 Speedway's all-time best sprint car drivers added another win to his collection in the headline race of Friday night's Jack and Jiggs Classic, an homage-event for track owner Jack Himeleck and former promoter, Jiggs Thomason, who both attended the event.

Shane Cottle (Kansas, Illinois) became the sixth different winner in as many non-wing sprint car races held so far this year at Gas City by holding off Max Adams (Loomis, California), for the 25-lap feature victory in Friday's main event of

the five-division show.

Following a caution on lap 15, Cottle passed Adams for the lead on lap 16 and led the rest of the way. He reached the checkered flag 0.446 seconds before Adams. C.J. Leary (Greenfield, Indiana), reigning USAC AMSOIL national sprint car champion finished third and was followed by Travis Hery (Piqua, Ohio) then Brayden Clark (Tipton, Indiana).

Jacob Denney (Galloway, Ohio) won the USAC Midwest Thunder Speed2 mid-gate feature. The 15-year old Denney passed Chet Gehrke (Bardtown, Kentucky) with two laps to go and beat him to the finish by just 0.123

seconds. Adam Taylor (DeMotte, Indiana) finished third followed by Stratton Briggs (Anna, Ohio) and Alex Watson (Columbus, Ohio).

The D2 midgets return to Gas City on Sept. 11 and Oct. 2.

Derek Losh (Rensselaer, Indiana), recorded his fourth modified feature victory of the season at Gas City's quarter-mile dirt by beating Zeke McKenzie (Claypool, Indiana), the only other driver to win in that division so far this year. McKenzie took the lead on lap two and held it until Losh got past him in turn 4 on lap nine of the 20-lap race. The duo swapped the lead two more

times, McKenzie moving in front on lap 11 then Losh taking control four laps later and holding on for a 0.974 win. Polesitter Ryan Sutter (Coldwater, Ohio) finished third followed by defending track champ, Scott Orr and Aaron Orr, both from Columbia City, in fourth and fifth.

Andy Bishop (Gas City) led all 15 laps of the caution-plagued street stock feature to earn his third consecutive victory in that division. Bill Bradley (Marion), the only other street stock feature winner at Gas City this year finished second.

Gage Allen (Warren, Indiana) ended, at least for now, the stranglehold the Headley

family has had in the hornet division by getting his first victory in the 15-lap feature to close the evening's activities.

James Headley Jr. (Wabash) led the first 12 laps of the hornet feature with his father, James Headley (Marion) glued to his car's back bumper. Headley Jr.'s car appeared to lose power on the backstretch working lap 13 and it looked like he was headed to the pits. In the confusion, Allen passed both Headleys, led the next two laps, and came home the surprise winner. Headley finished second, 0.784 seconds behind. Kolton Sollars

See **RECAP**, page A10

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