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Today's weather

Rain

61
48



Scrapbook:

Last: March 26
High: 47
Low: 24

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ISDH reports 14 Hoosier deaths, 477 confirmed COVID-19 cases

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) Wednesday reported 115 new positive cases of COVID-19 have been diagnosed through ISDH, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and private laboratories. That brings the total number of Hoosiers diagnosed to 477 following corrections to the previous day's total. Fourteen Hoosiers have died.

A total of 3,356 tests have been reported to ISDH as of Wednesday, up from 2,931 on Monday.

Visit www.coronavirus.in.gov for the latest numbers and information. Cases are listed by county of residence. Private lab reporting may be delayed and will be reflected in the map and count when results are received at ISDH.

Election Commission approves changes for June 2 primary

INDIANAPOLIS — In response to recommendations from Gov. Eric Holcomb, Secretary of State Connie Lawson and the leadership of Indiana's major political parties, the Indiana Election Commission has issued an order making it easier for Hoosiers to vote in the June 2 primary election. Holcomb previously moved the primary from May 5 to June 2 due to COVID-19.

The complete order detailing each change is available at <https://www.in.gov/sos/elections/2404.htm>.

The Commission's order included the following changes, which will apply to the June 2 primary only:

- Moves all election dates by 28 days.
- Avoids reprinting ballots and other forms that have the May 5, 2020 date.
- Allows everyone to cast an absentee ballot by mail without having a specific reason to do so.
- Grandfathers applications already received for an absentee ballot, which did

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County talks COVID-19 disaster plan

Local EMA, Indiana National Guard by planning for worst-case scenarios

By **TIM TEDESCHI**

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Although the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Grant County remain steady at three, county officials are planning for the possibility of a severe outbreak to ensure the county is best prepared to protect the public.

Grant County Health Officer Dr. William David Moore said he expects the number of positive cases to increase in the coming weeks as it has

in other parts of the country and world, according to his remarks at a press conference Wednesday, and he said Grant County EMA Director Bob Jackson has been in touch with the Indiana National Guard to formulate several plans for dealing with a worst-case scenario.

Moore said they are talking through how the county would go about setting up temporary facilities in available buildings or tents should the need get to that level in the county, but they are not at

that point yet, he reassured.

The better the community is at following social distancing orders of remaining 6 feet apart in public over the next few weeks, the sooner Grant County will get through the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, according to Jackson. He encouraged the public to postpone minor medical procedures like teeth cleanings and other doctor's appointments, and boiled his advice down to "stay home, stay safe."

"If a house doesn't catch fire, I don't have to go in and get you," Jackson said. "If you don't get sick and we don't have to treat you...that takes a big burden off of our

healthcare workers that are already being pushed pretty hard and that's not going to let up anytime soon. So if we can maintain those efforts that's a big deal."

Marion General Hospital is a 99-bed facility, according to MGH representative Sarah Evans, and she said the number of open beds is constantly changing due to admitting and discharging people every hour and the hospital continuing to treat non-COVID-19 related illnesses. In order to help coordinate their efforts, Evans said MGH also reports availability to the state so regional hospitals can assist each other.

During this all, MGH is

continuing to monitor its use of personal protective equipment (PPE), like masks, to best meet the needs of patients, Evans said. As of Tuesday reports received by the Chronicle-Tribune, MGH said they have an ample supply of ventilators and PPE although the hospital is looking into alternatives in case those supply levels change.

"(With) ventilators, there are different devices that can be used to manage the symptoms of patients and so it depends on what that specific patient's needs is to what kind of device they need and how we can utilize those," Evans

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

Marc Wooldridge records himself demonstrating how to play percussion instruments for his students as they learn from home.

Professors, students adjust to online instruction

By **JAYLAN MILLER**

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Although Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) students have returned home for the remainder of the semester due to COVID-19, their learning has not stopped.

Douglas Daugherty, a professor and the dean of the School of Social & Behavioral Sciences & Business, said faculty and students have been flexible and persistent in the midst of uncertainty.

"Everyone is pulling together with acceptance, kindness and grace," Daugherty said. "This is a very fluid situation with many unknowns for all of us."

With the recent changes, Daugherty said the students are missing out on community worship in chapel and the usual opportunities for socializing.

"They're missing the opportunities to connect with faculty, mentors and peers

over coffee, as well as various scholarly activities, (such as) research, presentations and guest speakers," Daugherty said. "To their credit, our students are remaining pretty engaged. They really want to continue their education."

The students are looking for opportunities to connect in some manner, according to Daugherty, while experiencing sadness related to the changes, distancing and loss of athletics.

"It's unsettling for everyone. But our students are resilient," Daugherty said. "We are a resilient community that leans on the Lord in difficult times."

Timothy Steenbergh, a psychology professor, said he is remaining aware of the difficulties students experience as they return home.

"Students are faced with the challenge of having to establish new rhythms as

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Tammie Huntington teaches Emily Vanosdol, a freshman mezzo-soprano and music education major, over a Skype call.



David Riggs, an associate professor of humanities and dean of the John Wesley Honors College, teaches a group of students using Zoom.

MPD chief dispels stay-at-home order rumors

By **TIM TEDESCHI**

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Local law enforcement will not be pulling over every car they see on the road or people seen going for walks without cause during the stay-at-home order, according to Marion Police Department Chief Angela Haley.

Haley said there have been rumors circulating both that the governor's order means police can't conduct traffic stops at all and conversely that they will be stopping everyone. The truth, she said, is that police will continue to patrol as usual and conduct stops with the same criteria they always use of traffic violations and criminal activity.

"The Marion Police Department is not pulling people over simply because they are out," Haley said. "We're continuing normal operations. The governor's order does not provide blanket coverage for citizens to commit traffic infractions or criminal offenses. Enforcement activities are continuing."

The only exceptions to normal operations regard Holcomb's order for law enforcement to not cite or charge individuals for driver's licenses, driver's permits, vehicle registrations and handguns that have been or are set to expire during the period of the declared public health emergency, Haley said.

Haley asked the community for patience when calling into county dispatch centers, as callers are additionally being asked screening questions regarding if they are presenting symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with anyone that is more likely to have the virus. She also encouraged people to check up on family, neighbors and others in need.

Spring athletes still hopeful for a season

By **SCOTT HUNT**

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Though the sports world has come to a screeching halt over the past two weeks, the Indiana High School Athletic Association along with area coaches and athletes are all still holding out hope of having at least an abbreviated spring sports season.

While that question of if remains to be answered, the date Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb has targeted for students to return to school on May 1 is also when spring sports might begin, six weeks after the usual start of spring practices.

The IHSAA has made some

adjustments to its practice policy which states in part that athletes must have 10 practices completed before being allowed to compete. That number has been lowered to five practices, but an abbreviated season likely also means a concentrated season, more competitions in a shorter time.

With that in mind, many local coaches have developed practice plans for their athletes to try and follow while adhering to the state ordered, stay-at-home mandate.

"The message I left them was, if we do have a season, what type of season you have

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Scott Hunt / shunt@chronicle-tribune.com
Oak Hill senior Mollie Gamble starts her leg of the distance medley relay after taking the baton from Selah Jackson in an indoor track meet at IWU in early March. Local coaches and athletes are still hopeful of having an abbreviated outdoor spring sports season which could possibly begin on May 1.