County to start COVID-19 testing in hot spots

By TYLER FENWICK

The Marion County Public Health Department will begin a new COVID-19 testing program aimed at residents in parts of the city that have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

The first site will be at Eastern Star Church’s main campus, 5750 E. 30th St., starting April 30. Testing will be available 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Eastern Star Church is in the 46218 zip code, which Dr. Virginia Caine, health department director, said is one of the worst hot spots in the county, though specific numbers weren’t available.

The initiative will eventually include three testing locations that will be announced in the coming weeks.

Caine also said there will be more initiatives to address disparities exacerbated by COVID-19.

See TESTING, A6 ➤

Indiana Black Expo founder, James Cummings Jr., dies

By STAFF

James C. Cummings Jr., founder of Indiana Black Expo (IBE), died April 23 following a heart attack in a Carmel nursing home. He was 90 years old.

Cummings founded IBE alongside a group of community leaders in 1971, when the first event was held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

Following his death, IBE released a statement:

“It is with a heavy heart that we at Indiana Black Expo mourn the passing of Indiana Black Expo founder James C. Cummings. He was instrumental in the founding of Indiana Black Expo. He led and

See CUMMINGS A7 ➤

IndyGo changes course in response to COVID-19

By BREANNA COOPER

To keep drivers and riders safe through the COVID-19 pandemic, IndyGo is no longer collecting fares and now requires rear-entrance boarding on buses. Those measures are in place to enforce social distancing while continuing to get essential workers to their jobs.

Several weeks ago, IndyGo began operating on its Saturday route schedule seven days a week, running only 7 a.m. through 4 p.m. In addition, the Julia M. Carson Transit Center is closed to the public, and fares are not taken to reduce a gathering of people at the front of the bus. Each bus is cleaned throughout the day and every night, said Lesley Gordan, director of public relations and partnerships for IndyGo.

In a webcast with the Recorder on April 23, IndyGo president and CEO Inez Evans said the company is considering installing plexiglas at the front of buses to further protect drivers.

While a shortened schedule throughout the day increases the number of people needing a ride at one time, Gordan said IndyGo takes steps to ensure there is more than one bus to accommodate riders.

See INDIYO A6 ➤

IndyGo operators now wear masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19. (Photo provided)