

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Mail-in controversy traps troops' votes

The Washington Post

Voting by U.S. troops has been thrust into the spotlight, with opponents of President Donald Trump alleging that his efforts to limit mail-in voting could disenfranchise military families.

Democrats have raised the issue repeatedly after the president said last week that it would be "very proper and very nice" if a winner was declared on Election Day. Trump added that it was "totally inappropriate" for ballots that arrive later to be included, even though the votes of hundreds of thousands of service members that are sent by mail have been counted afterward for years.

Trump's opponents have pounced on the comments, suggesting that they show the president is willing to win at all costs, even if doing so hurts

military families.

The Lincoln Project, a political activist group formed by Republican operatives who oppose the president, released an online ad Monday narrated by actor Mark Hamill saying Trump has called for the election to be decided based only on ballots that arrive by Nov. 3.

"If he gets his way, many who cast absentee ballots will not have their vote counted," Hamill said in the ad. "This will deny thousands of troops serving overseas of their most sacred right. Stripping the men and women in our military of the very freedoms they served and sacrificed to defend — it cannot be allowed to happen."

A Trump campaign spokeswoman, Thea McDonald, sought to clarify the president's comments on Monday.

"President Trump believes that military ballots should be

accepted according to the law, as always, and that the law should be applied as written to everyone else," McDonald said. "There are and should be exceptions for our military members serving our country overseas. There should not be exceptions for the Democrats in Philadelphia who attempt to vote after Election Day."

But questions remain about how many votes cast by service members and their families will be counted, amid a slowing of the mail caused in part by the coronavirus pandemic and in part by changes made by the Trump administration to the U.S. Postal Service.

Trump and his allies have continued to signal that they could challenge any mail-in or absentee ballots received after Election Day. The courts have issued mixed rulings on the matter. The Supreme Court

rejected Wisconsin's request to extend the deadline for counting mail-in ballots but permitted extended periods for receiving mail-in ballots in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

More than 252,000 uniformed service members stationed away from home and their families voted in the 2016 general election, according to Count Every Hero, an initiative established by RepresentUs, a nonpartisan anti-corruption group, that promotes the right of service members to vote.

Twenty-eight states and D.C. accept and count ballots from overseas service members that arrive after Election Day, according to a recent report by Count Every Hero. More than 70% of the available votes in the Electoral College will come from states that count overseas military votes after Election Day, the report said.

Chinese ships set new record for days near Senkaku

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Chinese coast guard ships set a new annual record this week for the number of days they were spotted near islands controlled by Japan in the East China Sea.

Four Chinese naval vessels were spotted in waters near the Senkaku at approximately 8 a.m. Monday, Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato said during a press conference Monday. A day later, a Japan Coast Guard spokesman told Stars and Stripes the ships were still there.

The confirmation marks 58 consecutive days and 284 total that Chinese ships have spent in the area this year. The previ-

ous record was 282 days set last year, according to Japan's Ministry of Defense website.

"It is very serious that Chinese naval vessels have been entering the territorial water and contiguous water around Senkaku Islands frequently," Kato told reporters. "Japan will handle this situation firmly but calmly against China."

Japan Coast Guard vessels warned the Chinese ships to leave the area and Japan protested through diplomatic channels, Kato said.

"Senkaku is our land historically and internationally," he said. "We will stay vigilant and protect our land."

Japan administers the islands, whose surface area amounts to about 2½ square miles, but they are also claimed by China and Taiwan, which

refer to them as Diaoyu Dao and Diaoyutai, respectively. The area surrounding the islands is said to contain a wealth of natural resources, including fish, oil and gas.

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs often comments in daily press conferences on Japanese protestations, but officials had not yet addressed the issue this week. On Oct. 12, spokesman Lijian Zhao called the islands China's "inherent territory."

The U.S. has long declined to take a position on the islands' sovereignty; however, Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump both have said they fall under the U.S.-Japan security alliance.

The commander of U.S. Forces Japan, Air Force Lt. Gen. Kevin Schneider, had stern words for China on Oct.

26 while showing off joint U.S.-Japan warfighting capabilities like the CV-22 Osprey with its fast troop movement and island insertion capabilities during the biennial Keen Sword exercise.

"Our arrival today was simply to demonstrate the ability to move a few people, but the same capability could be used to deploy combat troops to defend the Senkaku Islands or respond to other crisis and contingencies," Schneider said shortly after touching down at the exercise in the special operations tiltrotor aircraft with Japan's military chief Gen. Koji Yamazaki. He then chastised China for "malign activities" against its neighbors in the Western Pacific.

New Marine hovercraft suffer cracks

Bloomberg

The U.S. Navy accepted delivery this year from Textron Inc. of the first two in a new generation of hovercraft for the Marines despite “extensive propeller blade cracking” that will require a redesign, according to service officials and documents.

The previously undisclosed problem was discovered during mid-2019 tests of the \$5.7 billion program to build new air-cushion hovercraft to move Marines from ship to shore.

Even with the cracks unresolved, the Navy awarded Textron a \$386 million contract for 15 more hovercraft that Congress had approved for fiscal years 2017-20. But ordering those vessels was held up pending resolution of other technical problems, including issues with the main gearbox, drive-train integration and lubrication sys-

tem, navigation electronics and bearings. The first two deliveries, in February and August, were each three years late.

Hovercraft “have always been important for supporting the Marine Corps’ ability to land forces ashore, and in coming years they are to form part of the toolkit for implementing the Corps’ new wartime island-hopping strategy for countering Chinese military forces in the Western Pacific,” Ronald O’Rourke, an analyst with the Congressional Research Service, said.

Taking delivery of the first two hovercraft allowed the Navy to begin initial operator training and “to move into the post-delivery test and trials period as we identify long-term” solutions for vessels in production, Navy spokeswoman Colleen O’Rourke said in an email. She described the flaws as “micro-cracks” in the composite structure of the blades that don’t pose

a safety hazard or “an immediate impediment” to operations.

O’Rourke said the Navy, Providence, Rhode Island-based Textron and subcontractor Dowty Propellers, a division of General Electric, conducted a study “to understand the underlying cause and mechanisms to improve propeller blade performance.” That led to a near-term plan to provide “reinforced blade sets that will deliver later this year” while production and post-delivery testing continue and “blade redesign efforts are underway,” she said.

She added that the eventual solution for the 73 hovercraft, known as Ship to Shore Connectors, “is not anticipated to result in any significant program cost increases.”

Currently, 12 additional hovercraft are under construction in Slidell, La.

Europe, Africa Marine missions have new leader

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

STUTT GART, Germany — Maj. Gen. Michael E. Langley, one of only seven Black general officers in the Marine Corps, assumed command Tuesday of Marine missions in Europe and Africa, the service announced.

Langley replaced Maj. Gen. Stephen Neary, who was relieved of command last month while the service investigates allegations he used a racial slur

that denigrates Black people in front of his troops at Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa headquarters in Boeblingen, Germany.

“MARFOREUR/AF is a varsity team and I’m excited to lead some of the most professional Marines in the Corps,” Langley said in a statement. “Together we will continue to assure our Allies and partners, deter our enemies, and maintain the high standards expect-

ed of us as Marines and Sailors in the finest fighting institution in the world.”

A native of Shreveport, La., Langley previously served as deputy commander at Fleet Marine Force Atlantic and led troops on multiple deployments to Afghanistan. He graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington, where he majored in information systems analysis. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1985, accord-

ing to his official biography.

He replaces Neary and becomes MARFOREUR/AF’s first African American commander at a time when the Corps has been under scrutiny for a lack of diversity in its senior ranks.

In August, The New York Times reported that of 82 Marine generals today, there were just six Black brigadier generals and one Black major general.

Police: Islamic extremist kills 4 in Vienna attack

Associated Press

VIENNA — A 20-year-old Islamic extremist armed with an automatic rifle and a fake explosive vest rampaged through a Vienna nightlife district hours ahead of a coronavirus lockdown, fatally shooting four people before he was killed by police, Austrian authorities said Tuesday.

The suspect in Monday night’s attack was identified as a young Austrian-North Macedonian dual citizen with a previous terror conviction for attempting to join Islamic State in Syria.

Unverified video showed the gunman,

dressed in white coveralls, firing off bursts apparently at random as he ran down the Austrian capital’s cobblestone streets.

Police searched 18 properties as well as the suspect’s apartment, detaining 14 people associated with the assailant who are being questioned, Interior Minister Karl Nehammer said.

Two men and two women died from their injuries in the attack. Authorities said a police officer who tried to get in the way of the attacker was shot and wounded, along with 21 other people.

“Yesterday’s attack was clearly an Islamist terror attack,” Chancellor Sebastian

Kurz said. “It was an attack out of hatred — hatred for our fundamental values, hatred for our way of life, hatred for our democracy in which all people have equal rights and dignity.”

The attacker, identified as Kujtim Fejzulai, was sentenced to 22 months in prison in April 2019 because he had tried to travel to Syria to join ISIS. He was granted early release in December under juvenile law.

Nehammer told news agency APA that Fejzulai had posted a photo on his Instagram account before the attack that showed him with two of the weapons he apparently used.

Hurricane Eta gets closer to Central America

Associated Press

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Hurricane Eta inched closer to Nicaragua's Caribbean coast with potentially devastating winds Tuesday, while heavy rains thrown off by the Category 4 storm were already causing rivers to overflow across Central America.

The hurricane had sustained winds of 145 mph, and the U.S. National Hurricane Center said it was likely to maintain that strength until making landfall in the morning. It was centered about 30 miles south-southeast of Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, and moving west-southwest near 5 mph. Hurricane-force winds were already blowing on land.

Hours after it had been expected to make landfall, Eta's eye continued hovering just offshore. The unceasing winds uprooted trees and ripped roofs apart, scattering

corrugated metal through the streets of Bilwi, the main coastal city in the region. The city's regional hospital abandoned its building, moving patients to a local technical school campus.

"It was an intense night for everyone in Bilwi, Waspam and the communities along the northern coast," Yamil Zapata, local Bilwi representative of the ruling Sandinista Front, told local Channel 4 on Tuesday.

Early Tuesday, Guillermo Gonzalez, director of the country's emergency management agency, said in a news conference that as Eta began to make landfall, there were reports of trees, poles and power lines falling, corrugated metal roofs flying off homes and rivers rising in the coastal area. So far, there were no reported injuries or deaths, he said.

The storm was nearing landfall just

south of Bilwi. About 10,000 people were in shelters in the city and an equal amount were sheltered in smaller towns across the region, he said. The area had already been lashed with strong winds and heavy rain for hours.

Authorities in Nicaragua and Honduras had moved people Monday from outer islands and low-lying areas to shelters. Residents scrambled to shore up their homes, but few structures along Nicaragua's remote Caribbean coast were built to withstand such force.

Nicaragua's army moved red-helmeted troops specialized in search and rescue to Bilwi, the main coastal city in an otherwise remote and sparsely populated area. The navy spent Monday ferrying residents of coastal islands to shelters in Bilwi, also known as Puerto Cabezas.

Bail set at \$2M for teen accused in Wis. shootings

Associated Press

Bail was set at \$2 million on Monday for a 17-year-old from Illinois accused of killing two men during an August protest in Kenosha, Wis., after the father of one victim told the court the teen "thinks he's above the law" and would disappear if freed before the trial.

Kyle Rittenhouse, of Antioch, Ill., is charged with fatally shooting Joseph Rosenbaum and Anthony Huber during a protest over a police shooting in August. He is also charged with wounding a third man, Gage Grosskreutz.

Rittenhouse turned himself in to police in Antioch the day after the Aug. 25 shoot-

ings. He was extradited to Wisconsin on Friday and made his first court appearance in Kenosha County on Monday afternoon.

In addition to the homicide charges, Rittenhouse also faces counts of attempted homicide, reckless endangerment and being a minor in possession of a firearm.

His attorney, Mark Richards, asked Court Commissioner Loren Keating to set bail at \$750,000 and place Rittenhouse on electronic monitoring, arguing that the protesters had attacked the teen that night and that Rittenhouse had fired in self-defense.

Richards also argued that Rittenhouse tried to turn himself in seconds after the shootings, but officers ignored him. Video

showed Rittenhouse walk past police vehicles with an assault-style weapon slung over his shoulder and his hands in the air. No one stopped him even though protesters could be heard screaming that he had just shot people. Police later explained that they didn't arrest him at the scene because it was chaotic.

Assistant District Attorney Thomas Binger asked for \$2 million bond, noting that Rittenhouse faces life in prison if convicted of the homicide charges, which makes him a flight risk.

"The defendant doesn't want to be here and if released won't come back," Binger said.

Report: More Americans on diets now than decade ago

Associated Press

NEW YORK — If it seems like more and more people are on diets these days, you might not be imagining it.

A higher percentage of Americans said they're on a special diet to lose weight or for other health reasons compared with a decade ago, according to a report Tuesday by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The increase comes as obesity rates have continued to climb. The CDC report found that 17% of Americans said they were on diets during the 2017-2018 survey period, up from 14% a decade earlier. Over the same period, obesity rates rose in

the United States to 42% of Americans, up from 34%.

The percentage of Americans who said they're on a diet is lower than expected given the prevalence of diet-related diseases in the country, said Dana Hunnes, a professor of public health and nutrition at the University of California, Los Angeles.

The report notes that about half of American adults have diet-related chronic conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease, and that special diets are a way many people try to manage them. Hunnes cautioned, though, that many people might not consider the way they eat to be a diet.

The report also looked at responses between 2015 and 2018 to determine other

characteristics of people on special diets:

- The heavier and more educated people were, the more likely they were to report being on a special diet. The report found that 23% of Americans who are obese said they were on diets, compared with 17% of overweight people and 8% of people who were normal weight or underweight.

- More women reported being on a diet than men.

- 18% of non-Hispanic white Americans, 16% of Hispanic Americans and 15% of Asian and Black Americans said they were on diets.

- A higher percentage of people 40 and older said they were on diets than those ages 20 to 39.

Texas ranks highest in total US virus cases

From wire reports

AUSTIN — Texas has surpassed California in recording the highest number of positive coronavirus tests in the United States so far, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

As the coronavirus pandemic surges across the nation, the data from Sunday — the most recent available — says that there have been 938,503 cases in Texas, the nation's second-most populous state. California, the most populous state, has had 938,119 cases, followed by Florida with 812,063.

More than 29 million people live in Texas. The state's cases per 100,000 population is 3,269.84. By comparison, California — home to more than 39 million people — has a rate of 2,371.56 cases per 100,000.

A summer surge of cases overwhelmed hospitals in Houston and along the hard-hit border with Mexico. But case numbers dipped in the fall, and Gov. Greg Abbott began relaxing some coronavirus restrictions, allowing restaurants and gyms to let more people inside. He also let county leaders decide if they wanted to reopen bars at 50% capacity.

Arizona

FLAGSTAFF — Lawmakers on the Navajo Nation approved legislation Monday to reopen the tribe's four casinos, even as the tribe's health director warned that the coronavirus is spreading uncontrollably.

The tribe's casinos in Arizona and New Mexico have been closed since March. The Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise got the blessing of the Navajo Nation Council to reopen them at a minimum 50% capacity later this month, but it still needs an OK from the tribal president.

Navajo President Jonathan Nez has 10 days to act on the legislation once it reaches him. He has not indicated whether he'll support it.

The casinos employ nearly 1,200 people, most of whom are Navajo. They have been on paid administrative leave. The

gambling enterprise has used federal Paycheck Protection Program funding and a share of the tribe's coronavirus relief funding to stay afloat.

California

SACRAMENTO — A judge on Monday preliminarily ordered California Gov. Gavin Newsom to stop issuing directives related to the coronavirus that might interfere with state law.

Sutter County Superior Court Judge Sarah Heckman tentatively ruled that one of the dozens of executive orders Newsom has issued overstepped his authority and was "an unconstitutional exercise of legislative power."

She more broadly barred him "from exercising any power under the California Emergency Services Act which amends, alters or changes existing statutory law or makes new statutory law or legislative policy."

It's the second time a judge in the county has reached the same conclusion, which runs counter to other state and federal court decisions backing the governor's emergency powers. An appeals court quickly stayed the earlier order in June.

Heckman's decision will become final in 10 days unless Newsom's attorneys can raise new challenges.

Connecticut

Connecticut will reimpose some restrictions on businesses and gatherings, including reducing the capacity in restaurants again, as coronavirus rates increase in the state, Gov. Ned Lamont said Monday.

State judicial officials also postponed a plan to resume jury trials.

Lamont, a Democrat, said the latest rules will take effect at 12:01 a.m. Friday, with neighboring Massachusetts likely taking similar steps. He urged people to work from home if possible and suggested that those over age 60 and with chronic medical conditions remain home as much as possible as well.

Restaurants' indoor capacity limit will revert back to 50%, down from 75% under the phase 3 reopening that started last month, with eight people maximum per table. The establishments will also have to close by 9:30 p.m., but can continue takeout and delivery past that time. Officials said it's part of an effort to stop bars from masquerading as restaurants and drawing large crowds. Bars have not been allowed to reopen in Connecticut.

Florida

SARASOTA — Four parents in Florida are suing the Sarasota County School Board over a mandate that requires students to wear face masks amid the coronavirus.

NBC News reported parents Amy Cook, Gustavo Collazo, Nicholas Eastman and Catherine Gonzales filed the suit. The Sarasota Herald-Tribune reported the 59-page lawsuit was filed Oct. 21 in a Sarasota County court. The board is listed as a defendant.

According to the parents, forcing children to wear masks denies them their right to an equal education. The suit invokes the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case, in which the Supreme Court ruled racially segregated public schools were unconstitutional, even if the facilities are "separate but equal."

Illinois

SPRINGFIELD — With the entire state scheduled to be under stricter rules regarding social interaction by Wednesday, Gov. J.B. Pritzker on Monday reported another near-record day for new infections of the coronavirus.

There were 6,222 new cases reported, the fifth-highest total since the pandemic hit Illinois in February — and the four days with higher numbers have all occurred since Thursday.

On Sunday, Pritzker announced that Region 2, which includes the Quad Cities, Peoria, Bloomington-Normal and Pontiac, would enter "resur-

gence mitigations" Wednesday, the last of 11 COVID-19 monitoring regions under the Democrat's "Restore Illinois" plan to see the restrictions. They include a prohibition on indoor bar and restaurant service, stopping food and drink orders at 11 p.m., and limiting crowds to 25 people or 25% of room capacity.

Michigan

DETROIT — Meals at Michigan restaurants came with a new side dish Monday: What's your name and phone number?

The latest order kicked in from Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's health department. Restaurants must be able to contact customers if there's a virus case linked to the business.

The Michigan Restaurants & Lodging Association insists COVID-19 transmission doesn't occur much at restaurants. The group predicts job losses and more financial struggles because of the requirement to get names and phone numbers of diners.

Restaurants, bars and other venues must seat no more than six people at a table. The state said indoor settings are much more likely to drive COVID-19 outbreaks than outdoor settings.

South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS — The mayor of South Dakota's largest city said Monday he's against a proposed ordinance that would require residents to wear face coverings because of the coronavirus.

Sioux Falls City Councilor Curt Soehl is working on a measure that would require masks by all city residents in indoor situations where social distancing is not possible, in response to climbing COVID-19 rates in the city and state.

Mayor Paul TenHaken said that while he believes that wearing masks is important, health care professionals have told him they don't see the need for a mandate and it would be difficult to enforce, KELO-TV reported.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Doctors agree to pay \$340K in fraud case

TN MEMPHIS — Two Tennessee doctors and their associated clinics have agreed to pay \$341,690 to resolve claims that they defrauded Medicare, according to a Friday news release from the U.S. Justice Department.

In a federal lawsuit filed in Memphis, the United States accused Dr. Shoaib Qureshi, Dr. Imran Mirza and their clinics of billing Medicare for services rendered by nurse practitioners at the higher reimbursement rate for physician services. At times when the billing occurred, the physicians were out of the office or even out of the country, the lawsuit alleged. It claimed the improper billing took place from 2015-18.

The settlement resolves allegations filed in a lawsuit by Michael Grace under a provision of the False Claims Act that permits private individuals to sue on behalf of the government and to share in any recovery. As part of this settlement, Grace will receive \$58,087.

Driver on tracks jumps out before train hits car

PA PITTSBURGH — Authorities said a driver pushed onto the tracks as a train approached was able to jump out before her vehicle was struck in western Pennsylvania over the weekend.

Pittsburgh Public Safety officials said no one was injured in the incident near the Southside Riverfront Park at about 4:20 p.m. Sunday. Officials said the car was hit from behind and pushed onto the tracks as a train approached, but the driver jumped out and the car was unoccupied when the train clipped the vehicle. Train traffic resumed after a brief delay, and the vehicle was towed.

Illegal Halloween party shut down by sheriffs

NY NEW YORK — Deputy sheriffs shut down an illegal Halloween party early Sunday that drew more than 500 revelers to a Bronx warehouse.

Authorities charged nearly two dozen organizers with operating without a liquor license and violating the city's ban on large gatherings.

Partygoers wore costumes, but many were not wearing proper masks, the New York Post reported.

Deputies went into the warehouse on Seabury Avenue at about 1:30 a.m. and dispersed the tightly-packed crowd. The venue had a large walk-up bar, food truck and two DJs, the Post reported.

Deputies broke up a similar bash the night before inside a warehouse in the East Williamsburg section of Brooklyn that drew nearly 400 people. Nine organizers were charged in that bust.

1 killed, 1 injured when tree falls on trucks

OH MENTOR — One man was killed and another man was injured when a large tree fell on their pickup trucks in a city on the shore of Lake Erie in Ohio, police said.

Police in Mentor-on-the-Lake near Cleveland said the tree fell across the roadway on Lakeshore Boulevard shortly after 11:30 a.m. Sunday.

Police said a 26-year-old Mentor man who was driving one of the trucks was killed. His name was not released pending notification of relatives.

Police said the 51-year-old driver of the other truck sustained minor to moderate injuries.

2 men sentenced for \$750K dating scam

KY LEXINGTON — Two men have been sentenced and a third has been convicted in an online dating scheme where a Kentucky woman was scammed out of more than \$750,000.

Kahad A. Wuupini of Auburn, Wash., was sentenced Friday to six years and seven months in federal prison, The Lexington Herald-Leader reported. Thomas D. Inkoom of Newark, N.J., was sentenced to one year and seven months.

Both men were also ordered to pay restitution. They pleaded guilty in March to one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering.

Court records said the two men led the woman to believe she was dating an Army sergeant named James Nehmer. They convinced her to send them money for an investment that didn't exist.

A third defendant, Baaki Abdul Majeed, 34, of Tacoma, Wash., was convicted last week of several counts related to wire fraud and money laundering.

Police investigating house package blast

MD LINEBORO — Police in Maryland said a man was injured when a package exploded at a home Friday.

Carroll County Sheriff Jim DeWees said the blast was intended for a person who lives in the Lineboro home where the explosion occurred, the Baltimore Sun reported. DeWees called it "an isolated incident."

He said the 28-year-old man hurt in the blast is not facing life-threatening injuries and is "very lucky" to survive. Part of the home's exterior appeared to have been blown loose.

Michael Martel, a U.S. Postal

Service inspector and public information officer, said the package did not travel through U.S. mail.

Nearly 100K steelhead killed to stop virus

ID FILER — Nearly 100,000 juvenile steelhead at a southern Idaho hatchery have been killed to prevent a virus from spreading, Idaho Fish and Game officials say.

Officials told The Times-News in a story on Monday that the 96,000 juvenile steelhead in the Magic Valley Fish Hatchery would have been released next spring into the Little Salmon River.

There are 1.5 million fish at the hatchery, and losing 96,000 is not expected to have a significant impact, officials said.

The fish had been shipped as eggs from Fish and Game's Clearwater Fish Hatchery in northern Idaho, and might have already had the virus then.

Hospitals join together to scrub their scrubs

MI DETROIT — Three Michigan health care systems are partners — in clean laundry.

Since June, a laundry in Detroit has been working two shifts a day, washing, pressing and folding 700,000 pounds of laundry every week.

The partners are Michigan Medicine at the University of Michigan, Henry Ford Health System and St. Joseph Mercy Health System. The laundry handles scrubs, sheets, pillowcases, blankets and towels.

A newly designed washable gown can be washed 100 times before it's put aside, Michigan Medicine reported.

From wire reports

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and Military News

Defense fuels Hoosier's No. 13 ranking

Associated Press

Indiana coach Tom Allen and defensive coordinator Kane Wommack spent countless hours during the unexpectedly long, uncertain offseason looking for an edge.

The answer jumped right off last season's game tapes.

As Wommack kept sifting through the footage, he realized the opposing offenses recognized the Hoosiers' defensive schemes too easily. So Wommack started mixing things up, came into the fall with a revised plan and has embraced the early results.

"I thought, at times, we were a little too man-oriented," Wommack said Monday. "We had some great pressures and great blitzes but the ball was coming out before we could get there and the offense knew what we were in. Obviously, we looked at that in the offseason and we had to do a better job schematically. I think it has made our players' production better when we actually are in

man coverage."

The changes have given Indiana (2-0) a completely different look on the field and on paper.

Only two teams in the Big Ten East Division are unbeaten — No. 3 Ohio State and No. 13 Indiana. After opening the season with their first upset of a top-10 team in 33 years and moving into the Top 25 for only the second time since 1994, the Hoosiers' encore was a 37-21 victory at Rutgers that gave them their highest ranking since October 1987.

If they snap a 24-game losing streak to No. 23 Michigan (1-1) on Saturday, the Hoosiers could be bound for their first top-10 appearance since September 1969.

This year's defense makes it a real possibility.

In its upset of No. 8 Penn State, Indiana forced three turnovers and held the Nittany Lions scoreless on three red-zone trips. Rutgers quarterback Noah Vedral was under constant duress last weekend and went down four times as

the Hoosiers forced three more turnovers.

They start this week ranked second nationally in turnover margin per game (plus-2.0) and third in the Big Ten in yards passing allowed (182.0). Indiana's defensive efficiency against opposing quarterbacks, 118.7, is fifth in the league and they've given up a respectable 28 points per game in a season where offenses have clearly had the upper hand.

Allen realizes the improved play from a deep, talented and aggressive secondary has added some new wrinkles and a solid foundation on which Indiana can continue to build.

"You want to be multiple schematically and that's one thing we've tried to become more of," Allen said. "The ability to play man and zone (coverages) is super positive for us."

The Hoosiers will need an even better performance this weekend to protect their home turf.

Wolverines coach Jim Harbaugh is a creative play-caller.

At 6-foot-5, 243 pounds, Michigan quarterback Joe Milton certainly poses matchup problems.

He has a strong arm and, like Penn State's Sean Clifford and Vedral, has the ability to run — and run over defenders.

The Hoosiers struggled to hold Clifford in check but were much improved last weekend, and if that progression continues against Michigan, the Hoosiers could check off another significant feat.

"I'm pleased with where we are as a man coverage team and frankly it was something that was a bit of a concern with how few reps we got," Wommack said. "It's great to see those things but there are things we have to be better at. I thought containing the quarterback from Week 1 to Week 2 was significantly improved. But the key is covering people and containing the quarterback. To me that will be the challenge this week."

Wisconsin cancels game

Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin has canceled Saturday's home game against Purdue, the second straight game the 10th-ranked Badgers have called off as COVID-19 cases within their team continue to rise.

School officials announced Tuesday that three more players and two additional staffers have tested positive since Saturday, bringing the program's total number of active cases to 27. That includes 15 players and 12 staffers.

Neither game will be rescheduled, and all team-related activities remain paused indefinitely.

"I share in the disappointment of our student-athletes and staff," athletic director Barry Alvarez said in a statement. "We have seen a level of improvement in our testing

numbers, but not enough to give us confidence to resume normal activities and play our game on Saturday. We will continue to test regularly, take the proper health-related precautions and look forward to getting our team back on the field as soon as possible."

The 27 active cases all have arisen since Oct. 24, the day after Wisconsin's season-opening 45-7 victory over Illinois. Ten players and 11 staffers have tested positive over the last seven days.

This marks the second straight week Wisconsin has canceled a game due to the outbreak. The Badgers had been scheduled to visit Nebraska on Oct. 31. They called that game off on Oct. 28, the same day they announced that coach Paul Chryst had tested positive.

Liberty redeems Freeze

Associated Press

Hugh Freeze is fine with his own redemption being part of the story as Liberty's football team makes school history. The coach also knows the very public legal battles engulfing the school's administration drives much of the narrative about the university.

He just hopes the success the Flames have had in earning their first national ranking in the Top 25 isn't overshadowed by his past or any other off-the-field news — and that the team's success offers those connected to the embattled school some respite.

"This is something you're going to remember and set on the rocking chair or the swing or your back porch and you're going to tell your kids about. You're going to tell your grandkids about," Freeze said he told

his team while displaying a photo of the poll.

The Flames (6-0), despite having played opponents with a combined 4-28 record, slipped into the Top 25 in only their second full season at the Bowl Subdivision level. It's a lofty perch that will be tested when they play at Virginia Tech on Saturday.

But no matter what happens going forward, nothing can take away the milestone, Freeze told his team on Monday — the first time they were together since the ranking was announced.

"I do hope in some way for those that are experiencing whatever negative things that could go on in life in general that, I would hope that if they're a Liberty fan, that our football team certainly gives them something to have some joy about," Freeze said.

Bucs, Brady take ugly win over Giants

Associated Press

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Tom Brady has felt uncomfortable against the New York Giants before. Most notably in a couple of Super Bowl losses.

He recognized Monday night's 25-23 victory by his Tampa Bay Buccaneers wasn't very artistic. At least, for the star quarterback, it had a better ending.

"We obviously didn't play the way we're capable of, but it was good to get a win," Brady said.

Lackluster for much of the game, Brady did what he does best in the second half. He threw touchdown passes to Rob Gronkowski and Mike Evans, giving him the career lead in TD throws once more.

The Saints' Drew Brees had passed Brady on Sunday, but now the six-time Super Bowl champ is back on top with 561. Evans' diving 8-yard catch provided the go-ahead points.

But Tampa Bay (6-2) had to sweat it out. Daniel Jones drove New York (1-7) 70 yards in 13 plays and connected with Golden Tate for a 19-yard touchdown with 28 seconds remaining. The two-point conversion failed as the officials picked up a flag presumably for defensive pass interference.

"You never apologize for winning," Bucs coach Bruce Arians said. "We made the plays that counted."

Brady and Gronkowski earlier combined for a 3-yard scoring pass on which Gronk barely held onto the ball long enough. That made the old New England combination second in TDs for a duo with 93, 21 behind Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison of the Colts.

Unable to connect with Evans on a two-point conversion, Brady still had Tampa Bay on top 15-14.

After the Giants went back ahead on Graham Gano's 33-yard field goal, Jones was pressured into an unwise throw to Tate that Sean Murphy-Bunting picked off at the Bucs 33. That set the stage for the 66-yard drive to the touchdown by Evans.

Jones had two costly picks, helping negate a strong effort by New York's defense.

"The interceptions were huge for us," Brady said.

"The young quarterback, he's still trying to do too much," Arians added.

First-year Giants coach Joe Judge, who won three Super Bowls in New England with Brady, is not discouraged by the team's record halfway through its schedule.

"I see a lot of improvement, our guys improving day by day," first-year coach Joe Judge said. "We have a good foundation. I see the core of a team that is developing."

New York got an early break

— and soon after a touchdown — when Brady's pass was tipped by Dalvin Tomlinson and caught by Tampa Bay running back Ronald Jones. But he fumbled when hit by Blake Martinez and rookie Darnay Holmes recovered at the Bucs 12.

Dion Lewis made a sliding catch in the corner of the end zone on third down for a 7-3 lead.

Ronald Jones was a nonfactor the rest of the half as Leonard Fournette got most of the action.

The Giants' next scoring drive was a model of efficiency, featuring two gains of 11 yards, a 12-yarder, a 14-yarder and a 17-yard run by Wayne Gallman. He scored from the 2 to finish the 10-play series that covered 77 yards for a 14-3 lead.

Brady, as has been his custom for two decades, then guided his team to a score, but it was merely Ryan Succop's second of four field goals, a 40-yarder with 7 seconds left in the half. Succop also had a 37-yard field goal on the game's opening drive, a 43-yarder set up by Carlton Davis' interception early in the third quarter, and a 38-yarder with 3:41 to go for what turned out to be the decisive points.

Soon after Succop had made it 14-9, Gronkowski was in the end zone — only to see Daniel Jones connect with his tight

end, Evan Engram, for a 30-yard play. That set up Gano's 33-yard kick and the 17-15 New York lead heading into the fourth period.

But that's usually Brady time.

Stats pack

Brady finished 28-for-40 for 279 yards, while Jones was 25-for-41 for 256 yards. ... Evans led Tampa Bay with five catches for 55 yards, and Gronkowski wound up with four receptions for 41 yards. ... Former Giants DE Jason Pierre-Paul had one sack among his five tackles ... Giants WR Sterling Shepard had eight receptions for 74 yards.

Throwback

The Giants donned uniforms similar to what the 1990 Super Bowl title team wore, white jerseys, and pants with blue and red stripes, a GIANTS helmet decal instead of the familiar "NY," and white facemasks replacing the customary gray.

Next up

Buccaneers: host Saints in battle for top spot in the NFC South. New Orleans beat Tampa Bay in the season opener 34-23.

Giants: at Washington next Sunday.

49ers send Alexander to Saints for Alonso, pick

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS — The Saints and 49ers have agreed to a trade sending linebacker Kwon Alexander to New Orleans in exchange for linebacker Kiko Alonso and a conditional fifth-round draft choice.

Saints coach Sean Payton, who confirmed the trade on Monday, said the draft pick is conditional because it is tied to playing time. Alexander, who is coming off an ankle injury, will be competing for snaps at outside linebacker with Alex Anzelone, Payton said.

The 30-year-old Alonso has not played

this season, which he began on the Saints' physically unable to perform list as he rehabilitates an anterior cruciate ligament tear that occurred during a playoff game against Minnesota last season. Alexander played for LSU and was a fourth-round draft choice by Tampa Bay in 2015. He played four seasons with the Buccaneers before signing a four-year, \$54 million free-agent contract with San Francisco last season.

In other NFL news:

■ The Denver Broncos say that general manager John Elway and team president Joe Ellis have tested positive for

COVID-19.

The Broncos have had three assistant coaches go under the league's COVID-19 protocols — Curtis Modkins, Mike Munchak and Ed Donatell — in addition to right guard Graham Glasgow, in addition to others in the building who have also been infected by the coronavirus.

The Broncos said both Elway and Ellis are feeling well and will continue to work from home in self-isolation while their health is monitored. Elway felt minor symptoms Monday and left his office to work at home. He was informed Tuesday morning of his positive test.

A shot at baseball award history

Betts aims to win the MVP in both leagues, Mets' deGrom seeks his third straight Cy Young

Associated Press

Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Mookie Betts could become the second player to win the MVP award in each league, and New York Mets ace Jacob deGrom is in the running for his third consecutive NL Cy Young Award.

The competition, of course, is tough.

Betts, Freddie Freeman and Manny Machado are the top finishers for NL MVP in balloting by the Baseball Writers' Association of America. DeGrom, Trevor Bauer and Yu Darvish are the finalists in the NL Cy Young race.

The three highest vote-getters for each BBWAA award were revealed on Monday. The winners will be announced next week.

Betts, who won the 2018 AL MVP award with Boston, helped the Dodgers win the World Series last week for the first time since 1988. Frank Robinson is the only player to win the MVP award in both leagues, accomplishing the feat in 1961 with Cincinnati and 1966 for Baltimore.

DeGrom could join Randy Johnson and Greg Maddux as the only pitchers to win at least three consecutive Cy Young Awards. But Bauer had an NL-best 1.73 ERA in 11 starts for Cincinnati, and Darvish went 8-3 with a 2.01 ERA in 12 starts for the Chicago Cubs, matching Cleveland Indians ace

Shane Bieber for the major league lead in wins.

Balloting for the BBWAA awards was completed before the start of the postseason.

Freeman batted .341 with 13 homers and 53 RBIs for the NL East champion Atlanta Braves, and Machado hit .304 with 16 homers and 47 RBIs for the San Diego Padres.

Bieber joined Minnesota Twins right-hander Kenta Maeda and Toronto Blue Jays left-hander Hyun Jin Ryu as finalists for the AL Cy Young Award. Bieber is the heavy favorite after the 25-year-old right-hander went 8-1 with a 1.63 ERA and 122 strikeouts in 77 1/3 innings, leading the majors in wins, ERA and strikeouts.

Chicago White Sox first baseman Jose Abreu, Cleveland Indians infielder Jose Ramirez and New York Yankees leadoff man DJ LeMahieu are the top three finishers in voting for the AL MVP award.

LeMahieu, who hit a big league-best .364, and Bauer are free agents after starring during the pandemic-shortened season.

The top finishers in voting for AL Manager of the Year are Tampa Bay's Kevin Cash, Toronto's Charlie Montoyo and Rick Renteria, who was let go by the White Sox after the team made the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

Cash was roundly criticized for pulling ace left-hander Blake Snell in the sixth in-

ning of the decisive Game 6 of the World Series against the champion Dodgers.

Miami's Don Mattingly, San Diego's Jayce Tingler and the Cubs' David Ross are the finalists for NL Manager of the Year. Tingler and Ross just completed their first seasons as big league skippers.

Mattingly guided the Marlins to their first playoff appearance since 2003 despite dealing with a COVID-19 outbreak that paused their season.

"Coming into this season, there was a lot of people in our clubhouse and within our group that believed that we were going to have pretty good pitching," Mattingly said. "With that, you can do a lot."

The finalists for AL Rookie of the Year are Houston Astros right-hander Cristian Javier and center fielders Kyle Lewis of the Seattle Mariners and Luis Robert of the White Sox. Philadelphia Phillies infielder Alec Bohm, San Diego Padres second baseman Jake Cronenworth and Milwaukee Brewers reliever Devin Williams are the top finishers for the NL rookie award.

The 25-year-old Lewis hit .262 with 11 homers and 28 RBIs in 58 games. He said playing 18 games with Seattle in September 2019 helped him out a lot this year.

"It helped me a ton just as far as nerves, as far as the ability to slow the game down," Lewis said.

Ramstein, Kaiserslautern, Wiesbaden win fitness titles

Stars and Stripes

Take that, coronavirus.

Winners were announced Tuesday afternoon in DODEA Europe cross country and European Athletic Fitness Games competitions in which all teams competed at their home facilities over the past few weeks.

Ansbach's Alexander Adams won the 5-kilometer boys cross country race in 17 minutes and 22 seconds, crossing the line 26 seconds ahead of teammate Lucas Morecraft, who led 58 other competitors. Lakenheath's Ava Trentbath finished first in the girls event in 18:59.5, about nine seconds better than Naples' Arianna Coats in a field of 55 runners.

In the inaugural fitness games competition, Ramstein's boys team, Kaiserslautern's coed team and Wiesbaden's girls team came out on top.

The Royals five-person boys team only finished first in one of the eight events — push-ups — but finished second in four others (3,200-meter run, standing broad jump, kneeling basketball throw and sit-ups) to grab 56 total points. Wiesbaden, second with 48 points, was first in the 3,200, basketball throw and situps in the nine-team field. Vicenza, third with 42 points, won the wall sitting and pro-agility events, while fourth-place Vilseck (41) was first in the broad jump.

The Raiders' six-person coed

team took first in all but two of the eight events, allowing them to finish last in the situp event and still top Ramstein 52-46. Seventh-place Baumholder shone in pushups with 356 completed and Wiesbaden totaled 742 sit-ups to win that event.

The Warriors (59) edged AF-NORTH (56) and Vicenza (56) in the three-team girls competition. Wiesbaden won five of the eight events, with Vicenza taking the basketball throw and pro-agility events and AF-NORTH finishing first in the wall sit.

In the boys cross country race, Adams and Morecraft were followed consecutively by runners from four other countries, as American Over-

seas School of Rome's William Davis, Brussels' Nathan Pierce, Lakenheath's Joseph Dluzeski and AFNORTH's Paulo Aponte rounded out the top six.

The races, all scheduled to run on tracks to try to provide similar conditions, follow a seven-team in-person championship Oct. 24 near Ramstein won by Stuttgart's Ella Bishop and Kaiserslautern's Griffen Parsells. Many athletes competed remotely all season due to restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic that prompted DODEA to scrap football and volleyball before those seasons began. There was an abbreviated tennis season but championships were canceled.