

Vaccine soon mandatory for all troops

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is preparing to issue a mandate for all troops to receive the coronavirus vaccine after the Food and Drug Administration gave its full authorization for one of the shots, chief Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said Monday.

The FDA gave full approval to the vaccine by Pfizer, one of three manufacturers making the vaccines that have until Monday been doled out to troops on a voluntary basis while they have been under federal emergency-use authorization.

The Pentagon is now working to finalize its mandate and determine the date for when troops will be required to have had the vaccination, Kirby said.

“We’re preparing the guidance to the force right now and the actual completion date of it,” he said. “In other words, how fast we want to see it get done — we’re working through that

guidance right now.”

Kirby said Austin will add the coronavirus vaccine to the military’s required immunization list, following up on his Aug. 9 promise to make the coronavirus shot mandatory by mid-September or immediately upon the FDA’s licensure, whichever came first. The list also includes vaccinations against illnesses such as Hepatitis A and B, influenza and Rubella.

At least five service members, including an active-duty Navy doctor, have died of the coronavirus within the past month. In total, 34 troops have died from the virus since the pandemic started in March 2020, according to DOD data.

In the Navy, which led the military branches in vaccination rates before the mandate, some commanding officers said they have had immunologists speak to their ship crews to correct misinformation that caused some to reject the shot.

“Sailors are open to listen. They are very intelligent, and they want education before they

say yes to anything,” said Cmdr. Bralyn Cathey, captain of the guided-missile destroyer USS John Finn in San Diego.

Now that sailors no longer have the option to refuse the vaccine, Cathey said some of them might decide to leave the Navy over the issue.

The military will offer exemptions for those with medical or religious reasons that warrant avoiding the shot. Those with medical concerns will work with their doctors to receive exemptions, while those applying for religious accommodations must submit a written request to their supervisor using the process set by their service branch.

The religious-exemption processes typically include providing documented proof of religious beliefs and consultations with health care providers and commanders. Chaplains will play a key role in these processes, often conducting interviews with the applicants before a waiver decision is made, said Capt. Richard Ryan, force chaplain for Naval Surface Force Pacific.

US troops surge Kabul evacuations, threats persist

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. military reported its biggest day of evacuation flights out of Afghanistan by far on Monday, but deadly violence that has blocked many desperate evacuees from entering Kabul’s airport persisted, and the Taliban signaled they might soon seek to shut down the evacuation.

Twenty-eight U.S. military flights ferried about 10,400 people to safety out of Taliban-held Afghanistan over the 24 hours that ended early Monday morning, a White House official said. The chief Pentagon spokesman, John Kirby, said the faster pace of evacuation was due in part to coordination with Taliban commanders on getting evacuees in to the airport.

“Thus far, and going forward, it does require constant coordi-

nation and deconfliction with the Taliban,” Kirby said. “What we’ve seen is, this deconfliction has worked well in terms of allowing access and flow as well as reducing the overall size of the crowds just outside the airport.”

After more than a week of evacuations plagued by major obstacles, including Taliban forces and crushing crowds that are making approaching the airport difficult and dangerous, the number of people flown out met — and exceeded — U.S. projections for the first time. The count was more than twice the 3,900 flown out in the previous 24 hours on U.S. military planes.

The Pentagon said it has added a fourth U.S. military base, in New Jersey, to three others — in Virginia, Texas and Wisconsin — that are prepared to temporarily house arriving Afghans.

Maj. Gen. Hank Williams, the Joint Staff deputy director for regional operations, told reporters there are now about 1,200 Afghans at those military bases. The four bases combined are capable of housing up to 25,000 evacuees, Kirby said.

President Joe Biden said Sunday that he would not rule out extending the evacuation beyond Aug. 31, the date he had set for completing the withdrawal of troops and formally ending the nearly 20-year U.S. military role in Afghanistan. And British Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to press Biden for an extension to get out the maximum number of foreigners and Afghan allies possible. Biden is to face the United States’ G-7 allies in a virtual summit on Afghanistan Tuesday.

But Taliban spokesman Su-

hail Shaheen, in an interview with Sky News, said that Aug. 31 is a “red line” the U.S. must not cross, and that extending the American presence would “provoke a reaction.”

Monday’s warning signaled the Taliban could insist on shutting down the airlifts out of the Kabul airport in just over a week. Lawmakers, refugee groups, veterans’ organizations and U.S. allies have said ending the evacuation then could strand countless Afghans and foreigners still hoping for flights out.

Biden said Sunday that military discussions are underway on potentially extending the airlift beyond Aug. 31. “Our hope is we will not have to extend, but there are discussions,” he said, suggesting the possibility that the Taliban will be consulted.

US gives full approval to Pfizer vaccine

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The U.S. gave full approval to Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine on Monday, a milestone that may help lift public confidence in the shots as the nation battles the most contagious coronavirus mutant yet.

The vaccine made by Pfizer and its partner BioNTech now carries the strongest endorsement from the Food and Drug Administration, which has never before had so much evidence to judge a shot's safety. More than 200 million Pfizer doses already have been administered in the U.S. — and hundreds of millions more worldwide — since emergency use began in December.

"The public can be very confident that this vaccine meets the high standards for safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality the FDA requires of an approved product," said acting FDA Commissioner Janet Woodcock. "Today's milestone puts us one step closer to altering the course of this pandemic in the U.S."

The U.S. becomes the first country to fully approve the shot, according to Pfizer, and CEO Albert Bourla said in a statement he hoped the decision "will help increase con-

fidence in our vaccine, as vaccination remains the best tool we have to help protect lives."

U.S. vaccinations bottomed out in July. As the delta variant fills hospital beds, shots are on the rise again — with a million a day given Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Just over half of the U.S. population is fully vaccinated with one of the country's three options, from Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson.

The FDA's action also may spur more vaccine mandates by companies, universities and local governments. This month New York City, New Orleans and San Francisco all imposed proof-of-vaccination requirements at restaurants, bars and other indoor venues. At the federal level, President Joe Biden is requiring government workers to sign forms attesting that they've been vaccinated or else submit to regular testing and other requirements.

Anxious Americans increasingly are on board: Close to 6 in 10 favor requiring people to be fully vaccinated to travel on airplanes or attend crowded public events, according to a recent poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Re-

search.

"Mandating becomes much easier when you have full approval," said Dr. Carlos del Rio of Emory University. "I think a lot of businesses have been waiting for it."

The FDA, like regulators in Europe and much of the world, initially allowed emergency use of Pfizer's vaccine based on a study that tracked 44,000 people 16 and older for at least two months — the time period when serious side effects typically arise.

That's shorter than the six months of safety data normally required for full approval. So Pfizer kept that study going, and the FDA also examined real-world safety evidence in deciding to fully license the vaccine for people 16 and older; those studied the longest. Pfizer's shot still has emergency authorization for 12- to 15-year-olds.

Even after hundreds of millions of shots, serious side effects — such as chest pain and heart inflammation in teens and young adults — remain exceedingly rare, the FDA said.

As for effectiveness, six-month tracking of Pfizer's original study showed the vaccine remained 97% protective against severe COVID-19.

Businesses can learn from Navy's vaccine campaign

Bloomberg

The corporate world may want to take a page out of the U.S. Navy's manual when it comes to boosting workforce COVID-19 vaccination rates.

The Navy is the pride of the U.S. military when it comes to inoculation: 76% of active duty members are fully vaccinated, the highest rate of the main four branches, according to data provided by each. And at a rate of 56%, the broader U.S. population has a ways to catch up.

The Navy has taken a more-stick-than-carrot approach with its members, eschewing the free gift cards or cash bonuses that some private employers are offering as incentives and instead making life more difficult for sailors who

haven't gotten their shots. It had been imposing long quarantines away from family and restricting port calls for unvaccinated sailors even before the Defense Department's Sept. 15 inoculation mandate was announced.

"A lot of sailors join the Navy because they want to see the world," said Cmdr. Wade Smith of the USS Sioux City. "I told the crew, if you get to 100% vaccinated, you'll have that option."

The Navy's experience could be a useful road map for U.S. employers that are facing a delicate balancing act as they seek to ensure a safe return to the office while not alienating certain workers by forcing them to get a jab. Some employers have re-

cently imposed vaccine mandates as the delta variant spreads, but others like Amazon can't enact such rules in the current labor market without the risk of losing employees.

Companies don't have the same level of control over employees as officers do sailors on a ship, but they can create inconveniences for their workers' daily lives and limit activities — like in-person trainings and meetings — that could give employees a leg up.

"What can companies learn from this? Incentives work," said Mark Cancian, senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a retired Marine Corps colonel. "Putting out another pamphlet about how vaccination is safe

and you should do it is not going to help."

COVID outbreaks at big companies like Amazon — which saw 20,000 of its U.S. workers contract the virus over six months last year — have proven public relations disasters. And the Navy hasn't been immune either. Nearly 1,300 sailors were infected on the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt in March 2020, forcing the crew to evacuate to Guam and sidelining the ship for more than a month.

For commanding officers, "not being effective is not an option," said Katherine Kuzminski, director of the Military, Veterans, and Society Program at the Center for a New American Security.

US-led coalition craft downs drone in Syria

By CHAD GARLAND
Stars and Stripes

A coalition aircraft shot down a drone Saturday flying near a U.S. military outpost in eastern Syria's Deir al-Zour province, military officials said.

The aircraft "engaged and defeated [an unmanned aerial system] through air-to-air engagement" near a base known as Green Village, the coalition told Stars and Stripes.

"Ensuring the safety of Coalition personnel is the highest

priority," Operation Inherent Resolve said in an emailed response to a query. "The UAS was deemed a threat and self-defense measures were taken."

A U.S. Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle used an AIM-9X Sidewinder missile to strike the drone, according to Aviation Week's Steve Trimble, who first reported the incident.

The coalition declined to confirm the aircraft type or other details of the mission, citing policy and security concerns.

Commander of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Brig. Gen. Christopher Sage was piloting the fighter jet, Trimble said on Twitter, citing two unnamed sources.

Although the Air Force declines to disclose the wing's location in the Middle East, some of its elements are believed to be operating from Jordan's Muwaffaq Salti Air Base, near the Syrian border in the eastern desert.

The wing recently conducted drills with two F-15E crews

to show their ability to respond to drone threats on short notice.

"Within minutes, we're going to be airborne shooting down that threat," said Capt. Jon Levielle, an F-15E weapons systems officer in an Air Force video of the July alert drill.

In recent months, the United States has ramped up defenses against drones in Central Command, where defending against such threats is a top priority.

Tennessee pummeled with 17 inches of rain

Associated Press

WAVERLY, Tenn. — At least 22 people were killed and rescue crews searched desperately Sunday amid shattered homes and tangled debris for dozens of people still missing after record-breaking rain sent floodwaters surging through Middle Tennessee.

Saturday's flooding in rural areas took out roads, cell-phone towers and telephone lines, leaving families uncertain about whether their loved ones survived the unprecedented deluge. Emergency workers were searching door to door, said Kristi Brown, a coordinator for health and safety supervisor with Humphreys County Schools.

Many of the missing live in the neighborhoods where the water rose the fastest, said Humphreys County Sheriff Chris Davis, who confirmed the 22 fatalities in his county. The names of the missing were on a board in the county's emergency center and listed on a city department's Facebook page.

"I would expect, given the number of fatalities, that we're going to see mostly re-

covery efforts at this point rather than rescue efforts," Tennessee Emergency Management Director Patrick Sheehan said.

The dead included twin babies who were swept from their father's arms, according to surviving family members, and a foreman at country music star Loretta Lynn's ranch. The sheriff of the county of about 18,000 people some 60 miles west of Nashville said he lost one of his best friends.

Up to 17 inches of rain fell in Humphreys County in less than 24 hours Saturday, shattering the Tennessee record for one-day rainfall by more than 3 inches, the National Weather Service said.

Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee toured the area, calling it a "devastating picture of loss and heartache." He stopped on Main Street in Waverly where some homes were washed off their foundations and people were sifting through their water-logged possessions.

Recent scientific research has determined that extreme rain events will become more frequent because of man-made climate change.

Henri's storm system swamps Northeast states

Associated Press

MONROE TOWNSHIP, N.J. — The slow and sprawling storm system named Henri drenched much of the inland Northeast with rain Monday, hampering cleanup efforts and threatening further flooding in areas with ground already saturated from a wet summer.

Rains from the storm, which spared coastal areas of New York and New England major damage when its center made landfall Sunday in Rhode Island as a tropical storm, deluged areas from New Hampshire to New York City and down to New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

Downpours, flooding and even tornadoes were possible Monday in New England, where officials fretted that just a few more inches would be a back-breaker following a summer of record rainfall.

With rain still falling off and on, but with the sun finally peeking through at times, residents in parts of the Northeast turned to cleaning up any damage so far.

Dolores Hebert recalled being ferried to safety by

boat with her dog and cat as 8 inches of rain fell and water surged through the streets.

"I was sleeping and when I woke up, it was up to my knees," said Hebert, 76, as she stood by a front door bearing 18-inch-high watermarks.

Gov. Phil Murphy visited the community, which remains under a flood warning until midnight, on Monday morning.

In Manchester, Conn., a Hartford suburb some 40 miles from the coast, Annette Landry hoped Monday's rains wouldn't repeat the flooding that left three units in her condominium complex under a few inches of water Sunday.

Parts of New York's Hudson Valley, north of New York City, had gotten 4 inches of rain by Monday morning and had no power and flooded roads. An additional couple of inches of rain was possible, and flood watches remained in effect.

Hundreds of customers had no power in Maine, but outages were minimal in Vermont and New Hampshire by Monday morning.

Protesters clash in Ore. after rallies

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — Opposing rallies that drew hundreds of people in Portland, Ore., sparked clashes Sunday.

The two groups had gathered in different parts of the city after a far-right group changed the location of its event.

The right-wing rally drew about 100 people in a parking lot of a former Kmart store and clashes began as it wound down, KOIN-TV reported. A van tried to drive into the parking lot, but it crashed and the driver ran away. Demonstrators then began igniting fireworks and similar devices. It was not immediately clear whether anyone suffered serious injuries.

Later, shots were fired near demonstrators downtown. Dustin Brandon Ferreira, 37, a left-wing activist, told The Oregonian/OregonLive he was with others Sunday evening when a man used a slur against a Black man in the group and then fired multiple rounds in their direction.

Portland police said the man was arrested. No one was injured.

Demonstrations associated with anti-fascists had earlier drawn more than 200 people downtown.

The plans for the opposing demonstrations had prompted Portland police to call in all available police personnel.

Portland Police Chief Chuck Lovell said

Friday that despite expecting clashes, police will not necessarily be standing in between opposing groups.

Lovell and Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler did not name the groups expected to gather that “may choose to confront one another.”

Oregon State Police, the sheriff’s office and other local partners were also helping address the situation.

Similar events in Portland between groups with differing political ideations or affiliations have resulted in violent clashes. Sunday’s event falls on the one-year anniversary of a particularly violent political clash in which the opposing groups brawled on the street next to police headquarters for hours.

Experts say Ariz. 2020 ballot audit launched by Republicans has flaws

Associated Press

PHOENIX — A cybersecurity firm plucked from relative obscurity to conduct an unprecedented review of ballots in Arizona’s largest county is readying to present its findings to Republican lawmakers.

Experts say there should be little anticipation about the revelations from the Maricopa County audit — and whatever those revelations are, they cannot be taken seriously.

“There are too many flaws in the way this review was conducted to trust it,” said Trey Grayson, a former Republican secretary of state in Kentucky who was the coauthor of a paper outlining the extensive problems.

Grayson cites a series of red flags, from biased and inexperienced contractors to conspiracy-chasing funders and bizarre, unreliable methods.

The report by Cyber Ninjas, a small cybersecurity firm based in Sarasota, Fla., to lead the audit, was scheduled to be handed over Monday, but the findings will not be made public immediately.

Republicans in the state Senate launched the review of the county ballots in April in an effort to find irregularities that could support former President Donald Trump’s false claims of a stolen election. The lawmakers did so despite the fact that the ballots had been counted and audited twice. Courts in Arizona and other 2020 battleground states have rejected dozens of election suits as judges found no evidence to support claims of fraud.

In Arizona, the number of problematic ballots reported was nowhere near Democrat Joe Biden’s winning margin of 10,400 votes.

The state Senate president, Republican Karen Fann, insists the review was meant only to determine whether Arizona’s election laws were good enough. Still, leaders of the review have a history of making misleading claims about their findings, and those claims are amplified by Trump and his allies.

Fann selected Cyber Ninjas even though it had no prior experience in elections and never submitted a formal bid for the work. Its owner, Doug Logan, had tweeted support for conspiracy theories claiming Biden’s victory was illegitimate. Logan deleted his Twitter account before his Arizona contract was announced.

“I’m tired of hearing people say there was no fraud,” read one tweet that Logan retweeted. “It happened, it’s real, and people better get wise fast.”

The auditors recruited workers from Republican activist groups and did not live up to promises to screen them for biased social media posts. A former Republican state lawmaker who was at the riot at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 was spotted counting ballots for several days. His unsuccessful state House race was on thousands of the recounted ballots.

For a time, the official Twitter account tied to the audit leaders published attacks on Democrats and journalists. The account was later banned for violating Twitter’s rules.

The review was funded almost exclusively by groups led by prominent Trump supporters active in the movement to cast doubt on the 2020 election results. The money from pro-Trump groups dwarfs the \$150,000 contributed by the Arizona Senate, which commissioned the audit and hired Cyber Ninjas.

Envoy for Biden urges N. Korea to return to talks

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — President Joe Biden’s special envoy for North Korea said Monday that he’s ready to meet his North Korean counterparts “anywhere and at any time” as he held discussions with South Korean officials over stalled nuclear talks with the North.

Sung Kim’s visit to Seoul comes amid declining expectations for a quick resumption of talks, and new tensions over ongoing U.S.-South Korean military exercises. North Korea has described them as a rehearsal for an invasion and has threatened unspecified countermeasures that would cause a “security crisis” for the United States and South Korea.

After meeting with senior South Korean diplomat Noh Kyu-duk, Kim reiterated that the Biden administration has no hostile intent toward North Korea and that the joint drills are routine and defensive in nature.

Kim and Noh told reporters they discussed possible ways to facilitate diplomacy, including humanitarian cooperation with North Korea in providing anti-coronavirus resources, sanitation and safe water. They did not announce any specific plans.

Kim is also set to meet Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov, who is also visiting Seoul.

“The United States does not have hostile intention for North Korea,” Kim said. He said the joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises are “long-standing, routine and purely defensive in nature and support the security of both our countries.”

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

**Postal worker robbed;
\$50K reward offered**

AL MONTGOMERY — The U.S. Postal Service is offering up to a \$50,000 reward for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of whoever is responsible for the robbery of a postal worker in Alabama.

Officials said the incident happened Friday in Montgomery's Gibbs Village area, WSFA-TV reported.

The U.S. Postal Service Inspector's Office has launched an investigation. Postal Inspector Tony Robinson said there are few details other than where the robbery occurred.

**8 rabbits rescued, 25
found dead inside home**

NE OMAHA — Animal control and police rescued eight rabbits from an Omaha home where more than 25 others were found dead.

Two dogs also were saved, the Omaha World-Herald reported. The Nebraska Humane Society is taking care of the rescued animals.

Animal control officers obtained a search warrant for the house after getting tipped off that the home was unsafe and unsanitary.

**2 charged in kidnapping
of 4-day-old baby girl**

MA WORCESTER — A 4-day-old baby girl missing for several hours was found unharmed and two people face kidnapping charges in the child's disappearance, Worcester police said.

Officers responded to a gas sta-

tion in the city where they talked to the baby's mother, police said in a statement posted on the department's website. The mother told police she had gone out with an acquaintance she knew through Facebook, but who she had never met, for a coffee at the woman's invitation. But when she went into the store, the woman drove away with the baby.

The suspect's vehicle was found in Shrewsbury, but the baby and the suspect were nowhere to be found.

Police later got a call that the baby had been left at a Subway sandwich shop in Worcester, and mother and baby were reunited.

The 19-year-old suspect and an alleged accomplice, a 23-year-old man, were found at another restaurant a short distance away. They were arrested and charged with kidnapping and reckless endangerment of a child.

**Home designed by Frank
Lloyd Wright sold at \$1M**

IN OGDEN DUNES — A home designed by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright that's one of only two surviving Wright-designed residences in northwest Indiana has sold for more than \$1 million.

Oak Park, Ill., resident Brian Bobek bought the Armstrong House for \$1.02 million in April, The (Northwest Indiana) Times reported, citing Porter County property records.

The dramatic, light-filled home was built in 1939 in Ogden Dunes, a Lake Michigan lake-front town located about 40 miles east of Chicago. It's sometimes also called the Armstrong Dune House because of its location on a sloping sand dune.

The two-story, 3,696-square-

foot brick home overlooks landscaped, wooded lots. It boasts four bedrooms, four bathrooms, a retro carport, two fireplaces, a sauna and many other features, including a screened-in porch that showcases the surrounding woods.

**Filly escapes racetrack
and runs on highway**

KY HENDERSON — A 2-year-old filly got loose before a race at a Kentucky track and ran onto a highway alongside cars before being apprehended.

The filly, named Bold and Bossy, got loose on her way to the starting gate at Ellis Park. Jockey Miguel Mena was thrown off.

She then ran off the track and over a levee heading to U.S. 41. Bold and Bossy ran briefly onto Interstate 69 and Veterans Memorial Parkway, with a posse of trainers chasing her in their vehicles. Police and the sheriff's department also showed up.

"Thank God for all the people who jumped in to go find her because she left town," her owner-trainer Michael Ann Ewing said from Lexington.

**Medical student swims
across iconic lake twice**

MI ALDEN — A medical student from Illinois swam across one of Michigan's largest inland lakes — twice — to raise money and awareness about diabetes.

Marian Cardwell accomplished the 35-mile feat at Torch Lake in Antrim County after dropping a plan to swim across Lake Michigan from Chicago to Grand Haven, the Traverse City Record-Eagle reported.

Cardwell, 31, started on Aug. 4

and finished the next day. She had hoped to keep swimming but stopped after two crossings and 18 hours.

Cardwell is trying to promote the Chicago Diabetes Project, which seeks to make islet cell transplants a treatment option for Type 1 diabetes. She is a medical school student at Central Michigan University.

**Killer whale suddenly
dies at SeaWorld park**

CA SAN DIEGO — A killer whale died unexpectedly at SeaWorld San Diego and the reason was not immediately known, the aquarium and theme park said.

The cause of death for the 6-year-old female orca named Amaya will not be known until results of a post-mortem examination are complete, which could take weeks, SeaWorld's statement said.

Amaya was the youngest of 10 whales at the San Diego park and spent time with her mother Kalia and father Ulises, according to its website.

**College lets men live in
dorms for the first time**

SC COLUMBIA — A private college in South Carolina is allowing men to live on campus for the first time since it was founded 167 years ago.

About 45 men moved into a dorm set aside for them at Columbia College, media outlets reported.

College officials said last year they decided to bring men to what had been an all women's college because enrollment had fallen 25% in the past decade.

— From wire reports

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Tigers' Cabrera hits his 500th homer

Associated Press

Miguel Cabrera celebrated with his teammates on the Detroit Tigers. He took a curtain call on the road. He paid tribute to his family, his team and his native country.

It was quite a day, even for one of baseball's most accomplished sluggers.

Cabrera became the 28th major leaguer to hit 500 home runs, reaching the milestone in the sixth inning Sunday against the Toronto Blue Jays.

The 38-year-old Cabrera connected on a 1-1 pitch from left-hander Steven Matz,

sending the ball over the scoreboard in right-center field. Measured at 400 feet, the homer tied the game at 1.

Many of the 14,685 fans at Rogers Centre rose for a standing ovation as Cabrera rounded the bases. After celebrating with his teammates, he came out of the dugout to accept a curtain call, taking off his helmet and bowing to the crowd behind Detroit's dugout.

Cabrera, who won the Triple Crown and the first of back-to-back MVP awards in 2012, is the first Venezuelan to hit 500 home-

rs. He is hoping to become the first hitter to reach 500 homers and 3,000 hits in the same season, as he needs 45 more hits to accomplish the latter.

"It's something special for my country, for my family, to be able to do this," he said after the Tigers' 5-3 victory. "I'm really happy."

Jeimer Candelario, who was on deck, was the first teammate to celebrate with Cabrera.

"When he hit that ball, I knew something special was about to happen and history was about to happen," Candelario said.

Braves hand O's 18th straight loss

Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Jorge Soler homered, Touki Toussaint pitched effectively into the sixth inning and the Atlanta Braves won 3-1 Sunday to extend the Baltimore Orioles' losing streak to 18 games.

Baltimore's skid is the longest in the major leagues since Kansas City dropped 19 in a row in 2005. This was only the third time during this streak that the Orioles lost by two runs or fewer.

Adam Duvall added a two-run double for NL East-leading Atlanta, which has won nine in a row and 16 of its past 18. The Braves also have won a franchise-record 13 consecutive road games.

Toussaint (3-2) allowed a run and five hits in 5½ innings. Will Smith worked the ninth for his 28th save.

Rays 9, White Sox 0: Francisco Mejía hit a three-run double for host Tampa Bay, and five pitchers combined on a seven-hitter in a win over Chicago.

Austin Meadows had three RBIs for the Rays, who took the final two of the three-game series between AL division leaders.

Giants 2, Athletics 1: Pinch-hitter Donovan Solano connected for a two-run homer on the first pitch he saw from A.J. Puk with two outs in the eighth inning, and San Francisco won at Oakland for a second straight day.

Puk (0-1) couldn't hold the lead after relieving Frankie Montas, who struck out nine over seven scoreless innings in a brilliant duel with Logan Webb. Solano went deep moments after Austin Slater drew a pinch-hit walk.

Mets 7, Dodgers 2: J.D. Davis homered and drove in four runs, and New York won on the road to snap Los Angeles' nine-game win

streak.

The Mets avoided a four-game series sweep and a seven-game season sweep at the Dodgers' hands with just their second win in 10 games overall. Marcus Stroman (9-12) pitched six innings of four-hit ball, and Javier Báez hit an RBI double in the first inning of his first game back from injury.

Reds 3, Marlins 1: Tyler Naquin hit two solo homers and Vladimir Gutierrez pitched seven effective innings, helping host Cincinnati complete the four-game series sweep.

Naquin's leadoff shot extended his hitting streak to 12 games.

Phillies 7, Padres 4: Rhys Hoskins homered twice for Philadelphia in his return from the injured list, and Kyle Gibson pitched eight fantastic innings in a win at San Diego.

Mariners 6, Astros 3 (11): Ty France homered in the ninth inning and singled in J.P. Crawford in the 11th, leading Seattle to the win at Houston.

Crawford started the 11th on second base and moved to third on a wild pitch by Ryne Stanek (1-3) with no outs. Mitch Haniger walked before France singled on a grounder to right field.

Brewers 7, Nationals 3: Kolten Wong homered and drove in three runs, powering host Milwaukee to the victory over Washington.

Cardinals 3, Pirates 0: Adam Wainwright pitched eight innings of two-hit ball and Paul Goldschmidt homered, leading host St. Louis to the victory.

Royals 9, Cubs 1: Andrew Benintendi drove in three runs, and Kansas City finished a three-game series sweep at Chicago.

Diamondbacks 8, Rockies 4: Daulton Varsho hit a three-run homer, and Arizona got a rare win at Colorado.

Quantrill, Tribe shut out Angels

Associated Press

WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. — Cal Quantrill pitched two-hit ball over seven innings, Amed Rosario launched an early homer and the Cleveland Indians beat the Los Angeles Angels 3-0 in the Little League Classic on Sunday night.

As the rain held off, youngsters in town for the Little League World Series were able to enjoy the festivities. Kids rushed to the stands for ice cream and sweets, popping inflatable thunder sticks in excitement for each big league at-bat.

"It was almost more nerve-racking throwing for a bunch of preteens than it is regularly," Quantrill joked. "But this is a really cool event and getting to play in front of these kids — they took a little time out of their schedule playing games, and coming to watch us play is pretty cool."

Angels two-way star Shohei Ohtani faceted fans on ESPN's "Kidscast" from the dugout, and Little Leaguers inched closer to the protective netting to watch his first at-bat.

Ohtani ripped a single to the delight of the crowd at Historic Bowman Field, which opened in 1926.

Indians pitcher Triston McKenzie tossed baseballs into the stands to Little Leaguers and parents alike throughout the game. Fans often cheered the Cleveland dugout for the generosity.

DJ Yoshi invited young fans into the stands to spin the turntables, with several tunes reverberating through the crowd.

Rosario, who had three hits, belted a two-run homer off starter José Suarez (5-7) in the first inning.

Lance throws 2 TD passes as 49ers down Chargers

Associated Press

INGLEWOOD, Calif. — Trey Lance's bid to be the San Francisco 49ers' starting quarterback was a bit of a roller coaster Sunday night, but the rookie rebounded from a rough start to keep his hopes alive.

Lance, the third overall pick in April's draft, threw two touchdown passes in a 15-10 victory over the Los Angeles Chargers. Lance played six series during the second and third quarters and finished 8-for-14 for 102 yards and an interception.

After struggling during joint practices against the Chargers on Thursday and Friday, Lance's problems continued during the first three series. But he settled down during his final three drives, completing seven of his last eight passes for 93 yards, including both TDs.

"I think this week was huge just for my development as a football player, not even necessarily for tonight, if that makes sense," Lance said. "I think I learned so much this week getting to practice against another defense, getting to be around different guys and have a different experience in a different setting."

Whether it will be Lance or Jimmy Garoppolo who starts the Sept. 12 opener at Detroit, coach Kyle Shanahan has not provided any clarity. He said Garoppolo remains the "presumptive starter," but hasn't given a complete endorsement.

When asked when he will name his starter, Shanahan said he would whenever he feels like it.

"It's hard for me to give a date when it's based off of when we know and we feel like naming it, so whenever that happens. But I promise it'll be by that Sunday," Shanahan said.

Garoppolo started and played only one series for the Niners. Garoppolo was 3-for-6 for 15 yards during the 15-play possession, which ended when his pass intended for Brandon Aiyuk went off Aiyuk's hands and was intercepted by Asante Samuel Jr. at the Chargers' 15.

Garoppolo might have played a couple more series, if the opening drive was shorter. But he said he is taking the whole competition in stride.

"There's just so many other things to worry about. Just, I'll let the chips fall where they may type of thing," he said.

Lance also won the duel of former North Dakota State quarterbacks. Easton Stick, who mentored Lance in 2018 when the Bison won their seventh FCS title in eight years, got the start for the Chargers and was 10-for-14 for 85 yards and a touchdown.

"Fargo, North Dakota, means a ton to us. It was a lot of fun to be out there with Trey and get a chance to represent the Bison a little bit," said Stick, who directed two scoring drives in his six first-half possessions. Michael Badgley's 50-yard field goal extended the Chargers' advantage to 10-2 late in the second quarter before the Niners rallied. San Francisco took over at its 25 with 57 seconds remaining in the first half as Lance directed a late TD drive.

Titans' Vrabel tests positive for COVID-19

Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee Titans coach Mike Vrabel said Sunday he has tested positive for COVID-19 and has quarantined pending further testing.

Vrabel told reporters he woke up with a sore throat and an earache. He went to the team headquarters Sunday morning to be tested, and the result came back positive. Another rapid test also turned up positive, so Vrabel was given a PCR test, which he expects will return Monday as positive.

Newton to miss time with Pats

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The Patriots say quarterback Cam Newton will miss at least three days of practice this week after traveling to a team-approved, out of town medical appointment over the weekend.

The team said in a statement Monday that Newton went to the appointment Saturday and tested negative each day for COVID-19.

McCarron out with ACL injury

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — Falcons quarterback AJ McCarron is done for the season after sustaining a knee injury in a preseason loss to the Miami Dolphins, putting Atlanta in the market for a quarterback to back up Matt Ryan.

The team announced Sunday that an MRI showed a season-ending ACL injury to McCarron's right knee. He was apparently injured while fighting for extra yards on a scramble early in the second quarter of a 37-17 setback at Miami on Saturday night.

Cyclones, Irish each land 3 on All-America team

Associated Press

Notre Dame and Iowa State each had three players selected to The Associated Press preseason All-America team, led by Fighting Irish defensive back Kyle Hamilton and Cyclones running back Breece Hall.

The preseason All-America team presented by Regions Bank was released Monday, five days before the first games of the season kickoff.

Eight teams have at least two first-team All-Americans, with

seventh-ranked Iowa State and ninth-ranked Notre Dame leading the way.

Along with Hall, Iowa State is represented on the first team by tight end Charlie Kolar and linebacker Mike Rose. Hamilton is joined by Fighting Irish teammates Cain Madden, a guard who transferred from Marshall in the offseason, and running back Kyren Williams, who made the team as an all-purpose player.

Oklahoma's Spencer Rattler is

the first-team quarterback and Sooners teammate Nik Bonitto made the team at linebacker.

Defending national champion Alabama is represented on the first team by outside linebacker Will Anderson Jr., and offensive tackle Evan Neal.

Clemson's two first-team All-Americans were receiver Justyn Ross, who missed all last season with a neck injury, and defensive lineman Bryan Bresee.

Ohio State's Chris Olave is the other first-team receiver, and

Buckeyes defensive tackle Haskell Garrett made the preseason first team after being a second-team selection after last season.

LSU (cornerback Derek Stingley Jr. and kicker Cade York) and Texas A&M (tackle Kenyon Green and defensive end DeMarvin Leal) each had two first-team All-Americans.

Hall and Northwestern safety Brandon Joseph were the only preseason All-Americans who are coming off first-team All-America seasons.

COVID causing angst as NASCAR playoffs near

Associated Press

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Joey Logano was taking every possible precaution to keep COVID-19 from eliminating him from NASCAR's impending playoffs.

He said he watches where he goes and who he's with and this week canceled three public appearances. He also went a step further and got vaccinated.

Corey LaJoie became an example of what can happen to unvaccinated NASCAR drivers: He missed Sunday's race at Michigan because the rules state that competitors who haven't gotten jabbed but are exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 must quarantine for seven days.

The playoffs begin in two weeks and if a title-contending driver is exposed to a person with the coronavirus, that will end his championship chances.

The vaccine is suddenly a topic in NASCAR, though many drivers don't want to discuss it.

"That's like me asking you if you've had a vasectomy," said Aric Almirola, one of 14 drivers who already has clinched a playoff spot.

Two spots remain open and regardless of whether they've qualified, most of the top 20 drivers opted not to discuss their vaccination status Sunday.

William Byron was an exception. He confirmed he got jabbed earlier this year in part because he wanted to prevent putting his mother, Dana, at risk while she is treated for a brain tumor. Besides, Byron said, most hospitals require visitors to be vaccinated or quarantined.

But Logano, the 2018 Cup champ, made the most compelling case in favor of vaccination.

"There's one thing I learned when we won (the championship): it affects so many people's lives with bonuses and other stuff," he said. "So if I get COVID and miss the race, then I'm taking away food from other people's families."

Missing any of the 10 playoff races could knock a driver out of title contention.

NASCAR does not have a vaccine mandate for its competitors. It used stringent protocols and a "bubble" to become one of the first major sports league to resume competition just three months into the pandemic, and the first to complete its 2020 season last November.

Series officials started loosening those restrictions this season and fully reopened garages to guests in late May.

The IndyCar Series still required anyone entering Gasoline Alley during May's Indianapolis 500 to be fully vaccinated or tested daily. The result: There's a 90% vac-

cination rate throughout the entire paddock.

NASCAR began retightening its rules this week as the number of virus cases has surged due to the highly contagious delta variant. Reporters were required to wear masks, inside or outside, when interviewing drivers and the series' trademark hauler limited inside occupancy to only four people because of social distancing rules.

Some teams also have jumped on board by limiting contact in their suites.

Rather than issue a vaccination mandate, though, NASCAR adopted a different set of rules for those who are inoculated and those who are not.

Proponents of the rules are hard to find.

"I look at all of that stuff as very personal, very choice-driven and nobody needs to know what people's choices are," two-time Cup champ Kyle Busch said. "But now everybody's asking for vaccination status cards and everything and where you go, so I guess HIPAA doesn't exist any more," he said, referring to the federal law restricting release of medical information.

While LaJoie did not test positive, he explained on Sirius XM NASCAR radio that a person inside the studio where he tapes his weekly podcast did.

That was enough to force LaJoie out of this race and ignite the debate.

Blaney takes lead on final restart, holds off Byron

Associated Press

BROOKLYN, Mich. — Ryan Blaney needed a push to pass William Byron on Sunday.

Kyle Busch provided the boost.

With Busch's help, Blaney took the lead on the final restart, then bobbled and weaved his way around Michigan International Speedway to beat Byron by 0.077 seconds. It was the narrowest victory margin in a Cup race at this track since electronic scoring began.

"I wouldn't say we had the best car," Blaney said. "We got pretty good, to a point where I thought we could run fourth or fifth and it just worked out to where he could give us a push and it just worked out."

Blaney won for the second

time this season and sixth overall, capping a big weekend for Team Penske, which won Saturday's IndyCar race in suburban St. Louis and then this victory, not far from Roger Penske's Detroit roots. Ford also has won seven straight at Michigan.

This one was unexpected.

With no practice and no qualifying race on a speedway race organizers added resin to the top of the track, Blaney started third and quickly found himself off the pace of Hendrick Motorsports teammates Chase Elliott, Kyle Larson and Byron.

Instead, Blaney kept his cool in the heat as his crew fine-tuned the No. 12 Ford. Blaney took care of the rest, methodically working way toward the front.

But Elliott lost track position

after stalling in the pits and two late yellows bunched the field together, suddenly putting Blaney in the top five.

When the top three cars took the outside lane on the final restart, Blaney chose the inside lane next to Byron and in front of Busch.

His decision — and Busch's push — changed the complexion of the race.

"It was fun, kind of like a superspeedway race," Byron said. "Unfortunately, he ran the bottom. You can only block so many lanes and I tried to block the top and cost myself the lead."

Larson and Byron took turns over the final seven laps trying to give one another a shot to pass Blaney. Nothing worked.

"Just made a couple of bad

moves, I guess," Larson said. "A little too impatient behind the No. 12 and allowed William to get by me and then I was hoping they would get racing and I could get side-drafting."

And Blaney sped across the finish line barely ahead of Byron.

"Really the push was the whole thing," Blaney said. "So thanks, Kyle."

Blaney also ended Kevin Harvick's winning streak at Michigan at three. But the consolation prize wasn't bad — clinching the 15th spot in the 16-car playoff that begins in two weeks.

Elliott beat Larson to the finish line to win the first stage, and Busch took the second stage over Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Christopher Bell.