

NO NEED TO PANIC YET

Silver: There's a silver lining in 49ers' slow start.

SPORTING GREEN, B1



GAS-PRICE HIKES DRIVE NEW LAW

Gov. Gavin Newsom signs measure to regulate supply shortages.

BAY AREA & BUSINESS, A5



A SALVE OF THE TIMES

'Angels in America: Part 2' is theatrical medicine.

DATEBOOK, B7

San Francisco Chronicle

SFCHRONICLE.COM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024

CONTAINS RECYCLED PAPER

\$3.00

Beyond soggy pizza and mystery meat



Photos by Jessica Christian/The Chronicle

Kindergarten students line up last month to receive their free lunch provided by outside vendor Revolution Foods at Commodore Sloat Elementary School. San Francisco school officials are hoping to move away from the vendor's prepackaged meals.

Chronicle critics dig into their toughest review: school lunches

By MacKenzie Chung Fegan and Cesar Hernandez

We're standing in line for lunch, and we've already been cut at least 10 times. Adding insult to injury? These ruffians are half our size.

We're at Commodore Sloat Elementary School in San Francisco, and we're crashing the kindergartners' lunch hour. School cafeterias aren't our usual beat — although you could argue this is one of the city's most exclusive tables. The menu is set, tables are communal, milk sommeliers recommend the white. The general vibe is raucous, alive. They don't

Review continues on A9



Lunch supervisor Jui-Mei Chang serves free lunches prepared in-house with fresh ingredients to sixth-through eighth-grade students at Marina Middle School.

"For our kids and many others, their top problem with their school is the (in their words) horrible food they are served."

Bernie Corace, a parent at Dolores Huerta Elementary

Measure would build kitchens to upgrade S.F. students' meals

By Jill Tucker

This is a tale of two school lunches.

In one, Mouad, a San Francisco sixth-grader, picked up a spicy chicken sandwich, one of three entrees at Marina Middle School's cafeteria on a recent day, and shoved a big portion in his mouth.

Minutes later, there was little left to toss in the trash, save a paper plate and sandwich wrapper. At nearby tables, the freshly assembled chicken sandwiches, raviolis and taco salads were, for the most part, also consumed by students.

Plan continues on A9

3-day office week is killing BART

Transit tax could help, but passage by voters in doubt

By Rachel Swan

Like many Bay Area workers, Sabrina Hardy is back in the office part time — and noticing a stark change in her commute. These days she can reliably find a seat on BART.

"There are definitely fewer riders," Hardy said, exiting the El Cerrito del Norte Station as dusk fell on a recent weekday. Although rush hour had set in, only a few people trickled through the turnstiles. Hardy and others marveled at how open and airy the trains have become — particularly on Mondays and Fridays, when people no longer have to jostle one another in the aisles or circle the station lots to find parking.

This new normal would have seemed unimaginable before the pandemic, when commuters logged 400,000 BART trips on an average weekday. Passengers routinely stood shoulder to shoulder in train cars thick with body heat; parking got so competitive that riders began selling permits on a gray market.

As major employers including Apple, Google and JPMorgan settle on three days a week in the office, according to a recent report from Business Insider, BART has come to mirror the pattern. Trains fill up on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, with crowds thinning out on Fridays and Mondays, when workers tend to stay home. If those sparsely filled Monday and Friday trains are more comfortable, they're also eerie — as though to signal the beginning of a long, slow crash.

"A three-day workweek would not work to fund our operating budget," BART spokesperson Alicia Trost said, citing a critical problem

BART continues on A10

Volunteers fight heat, voter confusion in Arizona

JOE GAROFOLI
IT'S ALL POLITICAL

PHOENIX — If Kamala Harris wins the critical battleground state of Arizona, where polls say she's currently trailing, it will be because a small army of volunteers nudged people like Arturo Aguirre Vincent to vote.

He's 32, works as a cook at a local restaurant and has never voted. But as the sun was setting in his south Phoenix neighborhood where there are no streetlights, Jessicka, a volunteer with an organization called Seed the Vote, knocked on his door and spoke to Aguirre Vincent in his native Spanish about his voting plans.

Initially he was noncommittal, and he seemed only vague-



Ash Ponders/Special to the Chronicle

Armando Mendoza, a recently naturalized citizen, speaks with Paige Lerman as she canvasses door to door Sunday in Phoenix.

ly aware of who the candidates were. But after 15 minutes of chatter on his doorstep, where

he stood shirtless with two tattoos in the shape of red puckered lips adorning his

chest, Aguirre Vincent said he would vote for "Kamala." Jessicka, a California resident who asked that her last name not be used because of previous online harassment she's experienced, took a selfie with him and texted him the address where he could drop off his ballot. He promised to text back a photo of him sporting an "I voted" sticker after he cast his ballot, a way for volunteers to keep in touch with potential voters.

Seed the Vote is chasing tens of thousands of voters like Aguirre Vincent. If even a fraction of them back Harris, it could provide the difference in a state that Joe Biden won by 10,432 votes four years ago and where Donald Trump is leading by two points in the latest

Garofoli continues on A8

BusinessA2
ComicsB8

Datebook.....B7
Obituaries.....A6

Opinion.....A12
Sporting Green..B1



WEATHER: A passing shower.
Highs: 61-79. Lows: 46-56. B6

