



Photos by Jana Ašenbrennerová/For the S.F. Chronicle

With friend Vince Crisostomo, Harry Breaux receives a cake at his 80th birthday celebration last week.

## Unimaginable celebration

AIDS survivor turns 80 after decades of fighting for his life

By Erin Allday

Harry Breaux sat at the edge of his seat in a booth at the back of Delancey Street Restaurant in San Francisco, his face tense but resigned, eyes watery, as two dozen friends came up to him, one at a time, to tell him how loved he is.

It was Breaux's 80th birthday, and like a lot of people, he has a complicated relationship with being celebrated. But 80 is a big one, his friends insisted between stories of his generosity, his compassion, his resiliency.

And for someone who's lived more than half of his life with HIV, 80 is almost unimaginable.

"This is a man I've known since the *Birthday continues on A8*



Breaux shows a photo of himself, taken about 50 years ago, during the celebration at Delancey Street Restaurant in S.F.

*"If I don't contribute, then I'm not participating in life, which is living."*

Harry Breaux

## Official paid \$80K for photo shoots

By Michael Barba

A top San Francisco city official spent \$80,000 hiring a company to take "dynamic portraits" of her small staff and to produce a video series that apparently never came to fruition, adding to mounting concerns about her spending habits.

Kimberly Ellis, who was placed on leave last week from her job as director of the San Francisco Department on the Status of Women, awarded a contract worth up to \$100,000 to a production company in September 2023, hiring the firm to snap portraits of 21 people and record a series of conversations

around gender equity. Ultimately the department paid \$20,000 less than the full amount of the contract.

A memo obtained by the Chronicle instructed staffers to gather at the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park for their photo shoots.

"Our goal is to represent the unique spirit, identity,

and character of each of the members for the Department's official website," the memo read. "Apply any makeup as you normally would. Our makeup artist will only be doing touch-ups, adjusting for lighting and weather conditions."

Among those who had their photos taken were *Official continues on A9*

## S.F. law firm stands up to Trump on attacks

Statement makes it one of first in U.S. to advocate for lawyers, judges

By Bob Egelko

As President Donald Trump moves to punish law firms that criticize or oppose him — revoking their security clearances, canceling government contracts, denying their attorneys access to federal buildings — one San Francisco firm is speaking up, regardless of the consequences.

"I'd had it up to my gills with all these attacks on lawyers and judges," Elliot Peters, a partner at Keeker, Van Nest & Peters, said Thursday. "Too many law firms are silent, and the risks right now to the legal profession and to the country are too great."

Peters drafted the statement that was reviewed, approved by other partners, and issued publicly Saturday. It was one of the first such responses by a U.S. law firm.

Trump's order to his Justice Department to penalize his legal opponents shows "how far removed this President, Attorney General and Administration are from our nation's Constitution and bedrock values," the statement said. "Our liberties depend on lawyers' willingness to represent unpopular people and causes, including in matters adverse to the Federal Government."

Some people in the legal community "are scared of what might happen to them if they speak out," said attorney John Keeker, who co-founded the firm in 1978. But he and his partners concluded that "if there's ad-

*Trump continues on A9*

## Feds investigate California's sex ed programs

By Sophia Bollag

SACRAMENTO — A week after Donald Trump signed an executive order to turn more responsibility for schools over to states, his administration is targeting California over its education policies.

Trump's Department of Education announced Thursday it is investigating whether California's law barring school districts from requiring teachers to out trans students violates federal law that makes children's education records private but allows parents to access them.

Later that afternoon, the federal Department of Health and Human Services announced a separate investigation into the state's federally funded sex ed programs. The letter to the California Department of Public Health announcing the investigation doesn't accuse the department of wrongdoing but requires state officials to submit curriculum information to the federal government by Tuesday. The investigation aims to ensure California's programs are "medically accurate and complete" and "age-appropriate," according to the letter.

The investigations come as Trump says he's trying to transfer more power to states over their education policies. Last week, he signed an executive order directing his education secretary to dismantle as much of the Department of Education as she can.

*Education continues on A8*

## Tesla protests grow over Trump threats

Organizers taking new precautions in response to administration's focus on demonstrators

By Shira Stein, Maliya Ellis and Molly Burke

The Trump administration's escalating threats against demonstrators targeting Tesla dealerships don't appear to have deterred Bay Area protesters. Some organizers told the Chronicle that attendance and interest have continued to grow despite — or perhaps because of — Trump's rhetoric.

Some, however, say they're taking new precautions in response to the administration's focus on protests against the company, where Elon Musk is CEO.

As Musk's Department of Government Efficiency has initiated thousands of firings, canceled contracts and worked to disman-

### INSIDE

Trump's auto tariffs stand to benefit Tesla CEO Musk. **A10**

Suit blaming Tesla for deadly crash takes step forward. **A10**

tle entire agencies, protests over his power and influence within the administration have steadily grown. In addition to widespread protests, have been instances of violence have been reported against Tesla vehicles and dealerships.

In Walnut Creek, where the most recent iteration of a weekly Tesla protest drew over 1,000 people, organizers have recruited "peace ambassadors" to make sure participants follow nonviolent principles.

*Protests continues on A10*



Jana Ašenbrennerová/For the S.F. Chronicle

Demonstrators protest Elon Musk and President Donald Trump outside the S.F. Tesla showroom in February. Protest leader Patty Moddemog says attendance at her protests has grown every week.

