



Photos by Lizzy Montana Myers/For the S.F. Chronicle

Calder Storm, center left, and Tristan Storm, parents of two teens — one who is nonbinary and one who is a transgender girl — are searching for answers as Bay Area clinics halt treatment for transgender kids.

Clinics in state stop transgender care

‘We thought we were in a place of privilege. ... We’re in the line of fire’

By Erin Allday
STAFF WRITER

Calder Storm’s daughter had been treated at Stanford’s gender-care clinic for years when the family got word this summer that the center was halting surgical procedures for transgender kids.

Stanford said its decision was a response to political pressure; the Trump administration had been hurling threats at providers of gender-affirming care since January.

That Stanford had caved in was concerning, Storm said, but he wasn’t alarmed. He would switch his 15-year-old daughter to Kaiser, where Storm and his spouse, who are both transgender, already got their health care.

But then Kaiser, too, abruptly decided to halt all surgeries for trans kids. And though his daughter has no immediate need for such procedures, Storm — along with dozens of other Bay Area parents of trans kids — now is trying to figure out where he can get



The Storms’ daughter holds Blåhaj, the Ikea shark that has become a trans icon. “I just want to be a girl living in this messed-up world,” she said.

reliable care for his child.

It’s a situation he never imagined unfolding in the Bay Area, long perceived as one of a handful of safe places for transgender kids and their families in the U.S., with multiple clinics offering gender-affirming care.

“It’s shocking to see our large California institutions capitulate, because everyone thought we were literally in one of the safest places,” said Storm, who lives in San Francisco. “We thought we were in a place of privilege. Now we’re in the line of fire.”

At least three major California providers of transgender care for youths have shut down or scaled back services for patients 18 and under this summer. The largest move was in Southern California, where Children’s Hospital Los Angeles closed down its pediatric gender clinic entirely in June, leaving thousands of patients and families scrambling for care.

Soon after, Stanford announced it would stop surgeries for youths, then

Care continues on A9

Developer pivots to affordable housing

425-unit market-rate S.F. project shifts after financing dries up

By J.K. Dineen
STAFF WRITER

Mark MacDonald was at a loss.

Like market-rate developers across San Francisco, his approved 425-unit mid-rise building at 300 DeHaro in Potrero Hill was stuck, victim of the familiar combination of high interest rates and construction costs. The cost of the project had doubled since he bought the site in 2019, and with San Francisco struggling to recover from the pandemic, the pension funds and banks that typically bankroll such projects were missing in action.

But, rather than wait for the economics to make sense, MacDonald did something he had long wanted to do: He got into the affordable housing business.

On Monday MacDonald’s company, DM Development, celebrated the groundbreaking of a 300 DeHaro building that will feature 425 studio and junior one-bedroom units. The project is unusual not just for its size — it is two or three times the size of a typical affordable complex — but because DM Development is a market-rate builder entering a world of affordable housing development that is renowned for a byzantine regulatory calculus that can make for-profit building seem like basic math.

Over an 18-month period MacDonald navigated a maze of funding sources that included LIHTC — low-income housing tax credits — and tax-exempt

Housing continues on A9

‘Girl Climber’ offers raw look at athlete’s mind

By Gregory Thomas
STAFF WRITER

There’s a scary moment midway through the new rock climbing documentary “Girl Climber” when the film’s subject, Emily Harrington, has to leave the theater during viewings.

During a nighttime climb up one of the tougher routes on Yosemite’s El Capitan in 2019, Harrington took a terrifying 40-footfall that can be heard on camera but not seen through the darkness enshrouding the wall. After being lowered on her rope to the base of the cliff, she is carried out on a stretcher by emergency responders and delivered to a hospital.

Harrington, a professional mountain athlete in Tahoe who is now 39 years old, fortunately avoided major injury that night. But her fall was widely reported on television and in newspapers while being picked apart on social media.

“I was afraid of not being good enough and now the entire world thinks that as well,” she says in the film, confiding to her boyfriend in the aftermath of the incident.

It’s these moments of raw honesty that pull viewers of “Girl Climber” into the mindset of a

Climber continues on A8

Parents worry as S.F. cuts crossing guards

By Jill Tucker
STAFF WRITER

Last week, on the first day of school, parents across San Francisco saw empty street corners at their schools. Then they started asking questions.

“All it took was the first day for people to realize a crossing guard was missing,” said Rasheq Zarif, president of the PTA at McKinley Elementary School. “By Day 2, they were asking, ‘Why is this happening?’”

The answer: money.

Across the city, 17 public schools and four private schools are missing one or more crossing guards this year com-

pared to last year, city officials said. With previous unfilled vacancies, there are now 40 unfilled crossing guard positions, out of 195.

The city’s significant budget struggles have led to myriad cuts, and more specifically a noticeable hiring slowdown, requiring a drawn-out process to fill all vacant positions.

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, which is responsible for the crossing guards, faces a \$322 million shortfall next year. Currently, the hiring is so slow it’s more like a pause, making it hard to recruit and fill vacancies given

Guards continues on A8



Lizzy Montana Myers/For the S.F. Chronicle

Clifton Despanie helps a family cross 16th Street in San Francisco. The city’s budget struggles have led to a hiring slowdown, including of crossing guards.