

San Francisco Chronicle

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PG&E tries to cope with crisis

Court order: 'Perfect compliance' to laws infeasible, firm tells judge

By Matthias Gafni

Following orders from a federal judge who has sharply criticized its safety record, PG&E filed a response in court Friday painting itself as a changed utility that has learned from past tragedies caused by its equipment and understands that a drier, hotter state needs more effective wildfire prevention.

The company, however, told U.S. District Judge William Alsup, who is overseeing PG&E's federal probation, it cannot assure him it is in total compliance with state laws that dictate vegetation clearance around power lines. "Given the dynamic conditions of vegetation, it is impossible for a utility to achieve perfect compliance or to represent

PG&E continues on A8

In Business

▶ **Legislation:** Bills seek more oversight of PG&E. **D1**

Online extras

▶ **PG&E coverage:** Find all of The Chronicle's stories on the company's troubles. www.sfchronicle.com/pg

▶ **Bay Briefing newsletter:** The Bay Area's best journalism to start your day. www.sfchronicle.com/newsletters/bay-briefing

Bonuses: Bankrupt utility pulling plug on \$130 million for workers

By J.D. Morris and Matthias Gafni

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. will not award any of its planned \$130 million in 2018 performance bonuses to thousands of employees after deciding the payments were inappropriate in light of the company's bankruptcy and the wildfires that have killed dozens of people and destroyed tens of

thousands of homes. John Simon, interim CEO of the utility's parent company PG&E Corp., announced the decision Friday in an internal message to employees that was reviewed by The Chronicle. The payments were set to be awarded next month and about 14,000 employees were eligible, PG&E previously told the bankruptcy court.

Bonuses continues on A8



Photos by Noah Berger / Special to The Chronicle

No strike progress cited

Plans for Oakland schools picket lines extend to next week

By Kimberly Veklerov and Ashley McBride

Talks between Oakland school district officials and leaders of its teachers' union were expected to continue into the weekend, following a second day of picketing, marches, near-empty schools and contract negotiations on Friday. Bargaining teams for Oakland Unified School District and the Oakland Education Association met behind closed doors Friday and discussions continued into the evening. Teachers, counselors and



India Leeward, a teacher at New Highland Academy, wears protest earrings.

Top: Ryan Nam rallies with educators and supporters at DeFremery Park, Oakland.

nurses were making plans to remain on the picket line next week while district officials said they are prepared to meet every day until an agreement was reached.

"If I had a child, I'd be figuring out child care for Monday," said Franco DeMarinis, a physics teacher and head of the science department at Oakland Technical High School.

Friday's negotiation session yielded "very little movement," said Keith Brown, president of the union, which he said had ordered thousands of ponchos

Strike continues on A9

JEFF ADACHI 1959-2019

Public defender sought justice

By Lizzie Johnson, Evan Sernoffsky and Heather Knight

San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi, a renowned advocate for the accused and an outspoken watchdog on police misconduct, has died.

He was 59. Mayor London Breed confirmed Friday night that Adachi had died, saying that San Francisco had "lost a dedicated public servant." He was the only elected public defender in California.

The exact circumstances and cause of Adachi's death were not immediately known, but sources said he died of a heart attack.

"As one of the few elected public defenders in our country, Jeff always stood up for those who didn't have a voice, have been ignored and overlooked, and who needed a real champion," Breed said in a statement. "He was committed not only to the fight for justice in the courtroom, but he was also a relentless advocate for criminal justice reform."

Adachi continues on A8



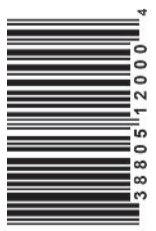
Lea Suzuki / The Chronicle 2011

San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi had a heart attack, sources say.



Partly cloudy.
Highs: 50-58.
Lows: 38-47.

D4



Scott Strazzante / The Chronicle

Reuben Zellman, founder of New Voices Bay Area, rehearses with the group for singers who self-identify as transgender, intersex or genderqueer.

"Until very recently, these issues were just not on anyone's radar. Now ... it's ballooning."

Ruth Rainero, San Francisco voice teacher

Trans singers bend musical gender rules

By Joshua Kosman

Growing up in England, Elspeth Franks felt sure that singing would be her career of choice. She had a large and versatile vocal range, and the stylistic flexibility to sing opera, concert works and choral music.

After moving to the Bay Area in 1990, Franks, now 55, established herself as a go-to mezzo-soprano. She performed with regional opera

companies, sang with the chorus of the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra and worked as a church cantor.

The other thing Franks knew — even without the terminology to describe that confident inner knowledge — was that she was transgender.

Five years ago, Franks transitioned to male, taking the name Elliot. Suddenly, the voice that had seen him through all those years of per-

Singers continues on A9

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