

BOSA SHOWS WHO HE IS

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SPORTING GREEN, B1



PREPARING FOR VOLATILITY

Election will test new guardrails to ensure peaceful transition of power.

NATION & WORLD, A11



\$4.6 MILLION PHOTOS

Auction of Ansel Adams' works shatters records.

DATEBOOK, B7

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Photos by Santiago Mejia/The Chronicle

Franchisee Anjam Singh heads out of Round Table Pizza to deliver customer orders in Oakland. Singh's pizza business is the first restaurant to open in the Hegenberger corridor in over two years.

Betting on troubled Oakland corridor

Round Table opens on Hegenberger Road, where others have closed

By Connor Letourneau

In the 2½ months since franchisee Anjam Singh opened a Round Table Pizza in East Oakland's Hegenberger corridor, he has seldom gone a day without hearing some variation of the same question: *Why here?*

The six-block-long corridor stretching from Interstate 880 to San Francisco Bay Oakland International Airport is widely considered an epicenter for many of Oakland's most glaring problems. There are boarded-up storefronts, chain-link fences with huge holes cut out, and visitors worried about getting robbed while pumping gas or grabbing fast food.

But this past spring, around the same time the area was receiving an unwelcome wave of national attention for a spike in car break-ins that convinced In-N-Out to shutter an



A spike in car break-ins persuaded In-N-Out this year for the first time in its 76-year history to shutter an outlet, its store on Hegenberger Road in Oakland.

outlet for the first time in its 76-year history, Singh signed the lease on a long-vacant retail space across the parking lot. It seemed to him like shrewd business. With so many restaurants fleeing the notorious corridor, the more than 100,000 residents in the surrounding neighborhoods were suddenly low on food options.

"People need to eat,"

Singh said, "and everyone likes pizza."

Still, it's risky. Unlike some other franchisees who oversee an expansive portfolio of businesses, Singh, 39, supports his wife and two children on the money he makes from his two Round Table pizzerias. If his Hegenberger Plaza location joins the over half-dozen restaurants that have closed in

the crime-ridden area in recent months, it would be devastating — not just for him, but also for Oakland.

The corridor forms the first impression of the city for many travelers after they touch down at the airport. Over the past nine months, as high-profile closures of In-N-Out, a Denny's, a sprawling Hilton hotel and other longtime staples fueled a negative narrative of Oakland, local officials were desperate for something — anything — to help signal a new era in the sector.

This explains why City Council Member Treva Reid, representatives from Oakland's police and fire departments, and several Bay Area TV stations gathered outside Singh's Round Table Pizza at 8450 Edgewater Drive on Oct. 10 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony. **Round continues on A8**

Insurance problems kill more home sales

Survey finds 31% of most recent buyers had trouble finding policies

By Megan Fan Muncie

About 1 in 7 California Realtors had a home sale fall through due to difficulty finding insurance in the past year, nearly double the figure from 2023, according to a new survey.

The California Association of Realtors is California's largest industry group, with about 200,000 members. In a survey of those members conducted earlier this year, 13% reported a transaction falling out of escrow due to the buyer's inability to find insurance, according to CAR's Annual Housing Market Survey.

In 2023, the first year CAR asked the question, 6.9% of Realtors replied yes.

Over the summer, CAR added a specific insurance contingency to its home sales template, giving buyers the option to take back their offer or renegotiate if they aren't able to find an "acceptable" insurance policy.

Experts have told the Chronicle the problem hasn't become dire enough to have a measurable impact on home values, especially in high-demand markets like the Bay Area. But it can add other issues into the process — such as delays in escrow or costly renovations that must be done in order to make a home insurable. California In-

Insurance continues on A8

5 landowners grow footprint in the Bay Area

By Emma Stiefel

Bay Area property is constantly changing hands. It can be difficult to tell who is buying and selling the most land as many owners operate through obscure LLCs, but a Chronicle analysis was able to identify some organizations that grew their portfolios over the past year. We used county assessor data and the Chronicle's previous reporting to identify five owners that bought new property between mid-2023 and mid-2024, ranging from one of the world's largest companies to a local supportive housing provider.

The property data was provided by Regrid, a company that aggregates and processes assessor rolls, or public information used to calculate property taxes. We compared the mid-2023 data with the mid-2024 data, grouping properties with the same owner name or mailing address. Many owners, however, use different owner names and mailing addresses on property records, making it

Land continues on A9

Coit Tower stair murals rise in popularity

By Sam Whiting

It was a bonus when Timothy and Judy Jensen of Chicago arrived at Coit Tower on Sunday and saw a sign taped on the elevator saying it was out of order, while another sign ominously said it is 234 steps to the top.

Perfect. That way they could take the stairs, which are normally closed off unless one signs up for a \$7 stairway mural tour on top of the \$10 admission. So they were \$14 ahead as they set their Apple watches and began the climb, 13 flights up a narrow and twisting concrete staircase.

"It adds to the experience," said Timothy Jensen, who clocked it in 9 minutes and 40 seconds. "Effort in, reward out."

In its 90 years as an attraction

on San Francisco's Telegraph Hill, Coit Tower is only now trending with the stair-climbing set, thanks largely to an 18-month shutdown of the elevator, which means that everyone who wants to see the view from the top has to take the stairs. Concerns that this would cripple the revenue for riding to the top have proved unfounded. Having to make that climb hasn't hurt admissions, and it may be helping among those like the Jensens, who don't mind being able to log 234 valuable uphill steps on their fitness apps.

"There are people who run up the stairs and time themselves," said Terry Grimm, general manager of Coit Tower, who has been studying the phenomenon since the old elevator conked

Murals continues on A9



Sam Whiting/The Chronicle

The narrow staircase is now the only way to the top of Coit Tower, putting stress on the historic fresco "Powell Street."

