

Voters head to the polls on Prop 50

What to watch for in the hours and days after Tuesday’s special election statewide

By Joe Garofoli
POLITICAL COLUMNIST

Proposition 50, whose fate California voters will decide on Tuesday, is overwhelmingly favored to pass. One Democratic pollster quipped to the Chronicle the race would be over at “8:01 p.m.”

Two major nonpartisan polls out in the past week clock support for Prop 50 at 60% (Berkeley IGS Poll) and 56% (Public Policy Institute of California) among likely voters. The anti-Prop 50 side has virtually stopped run-

ning ads, and its biggest benefactor, Charles Munger Jr., hasn’t contributed any money toward the effort since late September, both typically signs of a campaign raising the white flag in the political world.

A Prop 50 win isn’t a certainty, of course. Crazy things can happen in a lower-turnout special election in an off-election year. And polls aren’t always accurate. Just ask President Hillary Clinton.

Nevertheless, there is still much to watch for Tuesday as the results roll in for the only

item on the statewide special election ballot. Prop 50 asks voters whether California should redraw the boundaries of its House districts. They would replace California’s current congressional maps, drawn by an independent commission, with new maps drawn by Democratic state lawmakers that aim to flip five seats from Republican to Democratic control. They are designed to help Democrats wrest control of the House to provide a check on President Donald Trump, and to counter moves by Republican-controlled states that are redrawing their own maps to favor Republicans. If Prop 50 passes, the new maps

Election continues on A8



Gabrielle Lurie/S.F. Chronicle
Gov. Gavin Newsom and local officials host a phone banking and canvassing event on Monday at IBEW 6 headquarters in S.F.

Fear of raids doesn’t dampen Oakland fest



Photos by Carlos Avila Gonzalez/S.F. Chronicle
The Hernandez Olivero family welcomes guests into an altar during Día de los Muertos festivities in Oakland’s Fruitvale district.

Mood is celebratory as thousands honor deceased loved ones on Día de los Muertos

By Jessica Flores
STAFF WRITER

The scent of burning palo santo filled the air Sunday as thousands of people gathered in Oakland’s Fruitvale district for the annual Día de los Muertos festival.

The mood was celebratory at the event, which stretched along International Boulevard between Fruitvale and 42nd avenues. Attendees purchased pan de muerto, tamales and aguas frescas from local food vendors; spectators admired bright-colored stationed lowriders; local organizations handed out prizes and information to attendees; and children played soccer in the kids



An Indigenous dancer, part of several participating groups from around the Bay Area, performs during Día de los Muertos in Oakland.

zone.

On 12th Street, community members and local groups set up colorful altars to honor their deceased loved ones. Every year on Nov. 1 and 2, Mexican and Latin American families honor their ancestors by creating altars, or *ofrendas*, at home or bringing sugar skulls, flowers and their loved ones’ favorite foods to their graves. The tradition became more popular in the United States after the 2017 release of Disney’s animated movie “Coco,” which was inspired by the holiday.

The festival’s turnout was a relief for some Fruitvale merchants who worried that fears

Festival continues on A9

Funeral home had unusual path to high-rise

By J.K. Dineen
STAFF WRITER

Demolition crews descended on the 1100 block of Sutter Street in San Francisco’s Lower Polk neighborhood last month, turning the former Halsted N. Gray-Carew & English Funeral Home into a heap of wood and rebar and bricks.

By the end of the week, all that could be seen from the street was what looked like a row of golden organ pipes. It turned out that the pipes were decorative.

“We had an expert come in to tell us if there was any value there. She said they were fake,” said developer Patrick McNerney, CEO of Martin Building Co. “Sheet metal.”

While some of the funeral home decor may have been of suspect authenticity, the 22-story tower that is set to rise on the property is very much real — and one of the most ambitious development projects to break ground in San Francisco since the pandemic.

With demolition complete, Martin Building is set to start construction on ElevenEleven, a 303-unit tower at 1111 Sutter St. that is noteworthy for its size and complex financing.

At a time when 70,000 approved housing units are languishing in San Francisco’s development pipeline due to lack of investor interest, McNerney managed to attract financing from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, California

High-rise continues on A9

Muni retiring last Breda trains that debuted in ’90s

By Rachel Swan
STAFF WRITER

Muni rolled out its first Breda trains when Boyz II Men’s “On Bended Knee” was the hottest song on the radio and “the Rachel” haircut was, unironically, in style.

The light rail trains, gray with winking signs on the front cab, and iconic worm logos on the side doors, were cutting-edge for their time. They arrived at San Francisco bus yards on Jan.

12, 1995, assembled partly in Italy but with final tinkering at Pier 80, a shipyard in Potrero Hill.

Now, these iconic trains are ready for retirement. Transit nerds and nostalgists can take one last ride in a Breda on Nov. 12, when the final vehicle returns to the J Church line.

“We will miss the Bredas, and they will always be part of San Francisco’s history,” said Julie Kirschbaum, head of the San Francisco Municipal Transpor-

Trains continues on A9



Jerry Telfer/S.F. Chronicle

A Breda train is at work in 1996. The trains helped shape the city through multiple dot-com booms and more.