

Thao trial subverts Oakland measure

Proposition would convert city to a strong-mayor setup

The federal corruption trial of former Oakland Mayor Sheng Thao is unfolding at the worst possible time for supporters of Proposition EE in Oakland, which would revise the city's charter to give the mayor more power.

JOE GAROFOLI
IT'S ALL POLITICAL

The trial has even convinced Steven Falk, the former Oakland city administrator who was the driving force pushing Oakland to change its charter, to vote against the strong-mayor plan.

Falk told me that Thao's trial is "a stark reminder in real time of everything that can go wrong with a strong-mayor system." Falk worked for three months as city administrator under Thao and is on the prosecutor's witness list for the trial.

Prosecutors say Thao agreed
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'Flying ferries' in action on Tahoe

By Gregory Thomas
STAFF WRITER

In a harbinger of how transit in Tahoe could soon change, electric hydrofoil ferries are crisscrossing the lake this week, showcasing a future in which travel from one end of the lake to the other could take just 30 minutes.

Dubbed "flying ferries" by SF company FlyTahoe, the New Zealand-made vessels are capable of carrying 10 passengers at a cruising speed of about 30 mph.

Because the crafts travel "on foil," meaning their hulls lift above the water's surface when they get up to speed, they cruise smoothly and quietly, generating almost no discernible wake. The company promises "no seasickness."

They're also outfitted to carry skis, snowboards and bikes, FlyTahoe says.

FlyTahoe has pitched the con-
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DOLORES HUERTA 1930-2026

'Si, se puede' — and yes, she did



Court Mast/Associated Press file

United Farm Workers leader Dolores Huerta, center, leads a rally in San Francisco's Mission District on Nov. 19, 1988.

One of country's most celebrated activists cofounded UFW

By Ko Lyn Cheang
STAFF WRITER

Dolores Huerta, the labor activist who co-founded the United Farm Workers, died Wednesday at age 96. The news was confirmed by her family in a post on social media.

A daughter of New Mexico raised in California's Central Valley, Huerta left a stable teaching career to become a farmworker organizer while raising 11 children from three relationships. She went on to become one of the country's most celebrated women activists, with schools and streets named after her.

Huerta was part of National Farm Workers Association leadership during the five-year nationwide Delano grape boycott of the late 1960s, a nonviolent strike that won farmworkers higher wages and health and safety protections, establishing the union as one of the most influential civil rights juggernauts for the next two decades. During her decades of ac-



Stephen Lam/S.F. Chronicle

Iconic labor activist Dolores Huerta, shown before an event in S.F. celebrating her 94th birthday, grew up in Stockton.

tivism, Huerta was arrested by police more than 25 times for nonviolent protests.

A feminist icon in the male-dominated farmworker movement, Huerta had long talked about the sexism she endured. But it was only in 2026 that she came forward to accuse Cesar Chavez of sexually assaulting

her decades earlier. The revelations came amid accusations that the late labor leader had groomed and raped underage girls.

Chavez died in 1993 at the age 66.

In 1960, when Huerta started organizing farmworkers, they were paid extremely low wages

— between 75 to 90 cents an hour on average nationally, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics — and had virtually no labor protections.

She and other organizers helped win California farmworkers the right to collective bargaining, as well as health-care and overtime.

Huerta was born in Dawson, New Mexico, on April 10, 1930 to a first-generation Mexican American father who was a coal miner and a third-generation New Mexican mother.

Her parents divorced when she was three and her mother, Alicia Chavez, moved the family to Stockton three years later. Huerta was raised by her single mother alongside her maternal grandfather, who encouraged Huerta's early verbosity, calling her "seven tongues" because she talked so much, according to researcher Mario Garcia. Huerta's mother, who volunteered for charity work through their church, inspired

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Everyone's welcome on Ballhalla bandwagon

The first rule for joining the Valkyries bandwagon: No muted colors.

Put away your sad beige, and pull out your outfit from the Pride Parade. Put bright purple bandannas on the dog. Dig some sequins and rhinestones out of the costume bin. You're a disco ball now. This is a quest for a championship, and also a glittering citywide fashion show.

Every great team has its late-arriving fans. (Some are named Zendaya.) But as Golden State gets ready for Thursday morning's potential clinching Finals game against Angel Reese and the Atlanta Dream, the Valkyries train has more room for last-minute riders than most.



Clara Shuku Mokri/For the S.F. Chronicle

Valkyries fans cheer on the team during Game 5 of the WNBA Finals on Monday night at Chase Center.

This is a team that leads with inclusiveness. They are "for the gays" and everyone else. And considering the Valkyries didn't exist as recently as *the last presi-*

dential election — there are dairy products in my refrigerator older than this squad — the violet paint on the bandwagon is definitely still drying.

But you will need to know some basics. Here's an FAQ primer on the Valkyries, the players, the fans and the lingo, so you can join the best conversation in the Bay Area right now.

What do I call the team?

The Valkyries players have complex secret handshakes, but the fans have it easy: "Valkyries" or "Valks" are interchangeable. If you meet another fan on the street, "Go Valks!" is standard, but be ready for a "V's up!" followed by fingers made into peace signs held aloft.

What's Ballhalla?

The Golden State Valkyries play inside Chase Center arena, which is nicknamed Ballhalla — a play off the name "Valhalla," where slain Nordic war-

Hartlaub continues on A9

