Table of Contents

To view an individual section, please click on a title

I. Suffolk University Bellwethers
Scott Brown and Elizabeth Warren made frantic final appeals to a few of those key areas Monday, hugging babies and holding rallies in places such as Framingham, Worcester, and Fall River.

WORCESTER — Just as the presidential election may turn on Ohio, Florida, and other battleground states, the Massachusetts Senate race has its own crucial communities that Senator Scott Brown and Elizabeth Warren will be counting on to help them roll to victory on Tuesday.

After spending about $70 million combined to influence voters, Brown and Warren made frantic final appeals to a few of those key areas Monday, hugging babies and holding
rallies in places such as Framingham, Worcester, and Fall River.

Brown, fighting what he characterized as a determined Democratic machine, was pushing to win big in towns along Interstate 495 such as North Attleborough and Marlborough, while minimizing losses in urban centers such as Boston.

Warren was working to win big in Boston and Worcester, while trying to stay competitive in the conservative towns surrounding Springfield and New Bedford, where Brown rolled up large margins in the 2010 special election.

Brown’s travels on his final day of campaigning were an ode to suburbs and blue-collar cities.

Riding a campaign bus, he made nine stops that took him from Lynn to Worcester, to his hometown of Wrentham for one last evening rally in a function hall where he has marked important moments in his political career.

At Lake Pearl Luciano’s, he stood with his wife before several hundred supporters, a scene similar to the one just prior to his 2010 victory and on the night of his election to the state Senate in 2004.

“You know Scott Brown. You’re his neighbors; you’re his friends,” Brown’s wife, Gail Huff, said.

Throughout the day, Brown pounded the message that he is best equipped to break gridlock in Washington.

“The energy level feels even greater than 2010,” Brown told volunteers at a Walpole campaign office, hoping to summon the groundswell of enthusiasm that characterized the last heady days of his 2010 campaign. Still, he cast himself as an underdog.

“It’s a numbers game at this point,” he said. “It’s the peoples’ army versus the machine.”

Warren, too, held a series of minirallies Monday, vowing to fight for the middle class in the mold of Edward M. Kennedy, the late liberal whose seat Brown won in a victory that continues to sting the Democratic establishment.
Standing with Warren outside a Dorchester coffee shop, two of Kennedy’s sons, Edward Jr. and Patrick, the former Rhode Island congressman, said Warren would carry on the Kennedy family’s fight for the less powerful.

She ended the night with an outdoor rally before hundreds of supporters, many of them union members waving campaign signs, in West Roxbury.

“This is what it all comes down to, all the hard work,” she said, standing on a platform and looking out at the crowd. “Out here I see people who have been at this for more than a year now. We’ve made phone calls. We’ve held signs. We’ve knocked on doors. . . . We’ve done it all, but it comes down to one day.”

Warren is hoping her grassroots efforts, backed by volunteers and union members, will help her stay competitive in conservative-leaning suburban communities Tuesday, just as Governor Deval Patrick did in 2010 when he defeated Republican Charles D. Baker.

Boston is shaping up to be a particularly heated battleground.

Warren wants to win at least 70 percent of the vote in Boston, not out of the question, given that Democrat Martha Coakley won 69 percent of the vote in the city in her loss to Brown in 2010.

Brown has been fighting to make inroads in Boston, spending time and money in West Roxbury, South Boston, and Charlestown and campaigning frequently with former mayor Raymond L. Flynn.

Warren has harnessed Mayor Thomas M. Menino’s vaunted political operation to drive up turnout, particularly in minority and blue-collar neighborhoods.

To be sure, Warren needs to perform well in the South End, Jamaica Plain, and other liberal enclaves.

But she is also focused on winning working-class neighborhoods such as Neponset in Dorchester, which Brown won in 2010.

Secretary of State William F. Galvin predicted record turnout Tuesday of as many as 3.2 million, or about 100,000 more than showed up for the last presidential election, in 2008.

That would also be about 1 million more votes than were cast in the 2010 special Senate
Warren’s camp considers the forecast of high turnout good news, a sign that she will benefit from the Democratic Party’s advantage in registration and organization.

In Hampden County, for example, Brown won every town except for Springfield and Holyoke in 2010, said Rob Gray, a veteran Republican consultant.

But turnout in Springfield was very low that year, about 32 percent, compared with about 54 percent statewide.

So if turnout, as predicted, increases in Springfield Tuesday, and Warren carries the city by at least the same margin as Coakley, she can rack up thousands of additional votes, diminishing the impact of Brown’s victories in the surrounding towns.

In one positive sign for Warren, she was ahead in two final polls of so-called bellwether communities, Gloucester and Waltham, that Suffolk University released Monday.

Suffolk considers those communities bellwethers because the results there mirrored the statewide results in the last three Senate elections that coincided with presidential elections.

In Waltham, Warren was ahead, 50 percent to 47 percent, according to the poll.

In Gloucester, she was up, 53 percent to 45 percent. Both polls had margins of error of plus or minus 5.65 percentage points.

Mark Arsenault of the Globe staff contributed to this report. Noah Bierman can be reached at nbierman@globe.com. Michael Levenson can be reached at mlevenson@globe.com.
Romney Narrowly Holding Bellwether Ohio County, N.H. Towns

By Jim Geraghty

November 5, 2012 3:04 P.M.

Credit Suffolk for doing some of the most interesting polling of this cycle. Rather than toss another statewide poll onto the pile, they took a detailed look at one bellwether county in Ohio and two bellwether towns in New Hampshire. The verdict? Good news for Romney, but not much room for comfort:

In Lake County, Romney led Obama 47 percent to 43 percent with Independent Richard Duncan receiving 4 percent and Stewart Alexander (Socialist Party) receiving 1 percent, while 2 percent were undecided and 4 percent refused a response. Romney led 49 percent to 44 percent among those planning to cast ballots and led 43 percent to 41 percent among those who had already voted. Duncan, an Ohioan listed on the presidential ballot, received most of his support from voters who have already cast ballots for him in Lake County, causing neither major candidate to reach a decisive 50 percent there.

“What better place to decide this presidential election than on the banks of Lake Erie,” said David Paleologos, director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center in Boston. “A word of caution about Lake County. It is widely recognized as an Ohio bellwether, correctly predicting the last four presidential elections. But there have been some elections where it has trended more Republican. That was the case in 1996 and 2008, where Lake County voted for the Democratic nominees who won, but still leaned more Republican than the statewide vote.”

Meanwhile, over in the Granite State:

Two New Hampshire towns, Epping and Milford, have mirrored the statewide New Hampshire vote in four out of four presidential elections going back to 1996. In Milford, Romney led Obama 51 percent to 46 percent and in Epping, a closer bellwether, Romney led Obama 49 percent to 47 percent.

At the link they provide the history of the county and towns and how they compare statewide.

Of course, any trend may be broken. Vigo County, Indiana, is a county that has voted for the winner in every election since 1956 and is being mentioned as a bellwether again this cycle — except the Obama campaign hasn’t really contested Indiana this cycle, and Romney’s expected to win the state by a healthy margin — so perhaps the dynamics in Vigo won’t be quite as representative of the country as a whole this cycle.

One local station did call 100 residents, a quite small sample: “The result: 42 residents planning to vote for President Barack Obama and 48 in favor of Governor Mitt Romney; which matches other polls across the country.”

The web-comic XKCD made a humorous observation about precedents in presidential campaigns.
Scott Brown: A Day Late and a Few Poll Numbers Short

By Charles P. Pierce

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The U.S. Senate race back up in Massachusetts, which got rather frozen in place in its closing weeks by the arrival of Miss Sandra, saw a late change in approach from incumbent Scott Brown. He started getting smart again. He unveiled a shrewd "Vote the Person, Not the Party" theme, even embarking on a statewide bus tour to that effect. It was a campaign completely consonant with the persona he’d built to win the special election in 2010, and one that played to his undeniable strength as a politician that people seemed genuinely to like. The problem, of course, was that this approach probably came about three weeks too late.

If Brown loses, as the polls seem to indicate that he will, he will have to blame whomever it was that advised him to run most of this campaign as though he were auditioning for a weekend slot on WRKO in Boston. He spent a month on the nothingburger "scandal" regarding what may or may not have been on Elizabeth Warren's job applications 20 years ago. Then, he tried to paint her as a corporate shark screwing dying asbestos workers out of their settlement money, only to have a group of those workers, and their lawyers, show up to endorse the work Warren had done. Whereupon, Brown suggested that, perhaps, some of the people appearing in the ads that supported Warren's work were "actors." This got him the attention of pissed-off survivors of dead asbestos workers. He was angry. He was petulant. And, on a few occasions, he was more than a little truthless. He ran his own reputation for likability straight into a ditch and, without that, he’s just another Republican in an overwhelmingly Democratic state.

Too late we grow wise, I guess. Brown could still win. He still has a substantial firewall in the suburbs between Route 128 and Worcester, where I grew up. But if late town polling data is any indication, he's taking bigger hits from Democratic bellwethers than he ever had to confront in 2010. A Suffolk University poll showed Warren leading in two distinct bellwethers — blue-collar Waltham (50-47) and blue-collar/touristy Gloucester (53-45). (A late Boston Herald poll had Brown up by a point statewide. The Herald has functioned as a Brown fanzine for the better part of two years, so YMMV here.) Moreover, it seems also that Brown has not yet let loose entirely of the talk-radio-guest attitude that has cost him so dearly. On the radio the other day, he explained his deficits in the polls by the possibility that the people being polled not knowing whether it was their "union boss or their employer calling." This is, to be charitable, a little goofy, even as an alibi. Most times, what we squander, we never get back.

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ELECTION-NIGHT RESULTS ANALYSIS...

• MASSACHUSETTS: Charles P. Pierce on How Elizabeth Warren Got Here

ELECTION DAY ON THE POLITICS BLOG: LIVE FROM EVERY SWING STATE...

• FLORIDA: Charles P. Pierce with the Voting-Rights Watchdogs
• OHIO: Mark Warren Traveling with Governor John Kasich (and with Romney)
• NEW HAMPSHIRE: Margaret Doris in 5-Vote Territory (and with Romney)
• VIRGINIA: Elizabeth Sile on Voter-ID in New Blue County
Mitt Romney’s got the biker vote. Rolling Thunder, the exuberant nonprofit membership organization for motorcycle enthusiasts, military vets and old-school patriots are near unanimous in their support of Mr. Romney following a vote Saturday during a conference in the nation’s capital. Ninety percent of the delegates support Mr. Romney. The biggest motivation? Executive director Artie Muller cites the group’s concerns over veterans’ rights and benefits, the ongoing push for the return of prisoners of war and troops still missing in action, and support of wounded warriors.

“Coast to coast, pass this information to members on the importance of voting for the Romney/Ryan ticket,” Mr. Mueller tells his membership. More than 500,000 of them, incidentally, came to Washington in May for the group’s 25th annual Memorial Day ride.

EXCRUCIATING DETAILS

Mitt Romney “has a path to 270 electoral votes, but no room for error,” predicts Suffolk University in Massachusetts, based on polling numbers from bellwether areas in Ohio and New Hampshire. Mr. Romney leads President Obama 47 percent to 43 percent in Lake County, Ohio. He also leads the president in the wee towns of Epping and Milford, N.H., 49 percent to 47 percent, respectively. The university’s bellwether model has been used since 2002 and is 95 percent accurate in predicting outcomes but is not designed to predict margin of victory.

“What better place to decide this presidential election than on the banks of Lake Erie?” asks David Paleologos, director of the political research center on the Boston campus, who notes that the Ohio bellwether has correctly predicted the last four presidential elections.

Gallup, meanwhile, declares its “final allocated estimate of the race is 50 percent for Romney and 49 percent for Obama,” adding that both candidates hold “strong advantages among men and women, respectively, and are closely matched among political independents. This suggests that turnout of partisans could be particularly important in deciding the election, with Romney poised to benefit slightly more if they do, with 96 percent of Republicans backing him, as compared with Obama’s 93 percent support from Democrats.”

NOT THE BOSS

Yes, millionaire roots rocker Bruce Springsteen rode Air Force One with President Obama on Monday and declared it a “pretty cool experience,” this according to the official White House pool report. And like Mariah Carey, Ricky Martin, Jay-Z and other celebrity stars, he has done his bit in recent days to ensure that Mr. Obama remains in the White House as pundits and poll numbers collide over election outcome.

But some interesting numbers are in on "The Boss" himself.

Consider that in 2004, his campaign concert for presidential hopeful Sen. John F. Kerry attracted 80,000 people. Four years later, Mr. Springsteen’s big event for then-Sen. Obama also drew 80,000. But alas, on Monday, a Springsteen concert for Mr. Obama in the traditional liberal stronghold of Madison, Wis., unfolded before 18,000 fans.
Warren, Brown enter final week of campaigning
Candidates in dead heat, poll shows

STEVE LEBLANC
Associated Press

BOSTON — The U.S. Senate race in Massachusetts is entering its final stretch with a question mark hanging over a fourth and final debate and a new poll showing Democratic challenger Elizabeth Warren holding a slight edge over Republican incumbent Scott Brown.

Warren has agreed to participate in a rescheduled debate on Thursday, but Brown has refused to say whether he would attend.

The debate originally was set for Tuesday, but was delayed after first Brown and then Warren said they didn't want to take part at a time when many residents were struggling with the effects of a powerful storm that lashed the East Coast.

On Tuesday, Warren's campaign manager Mindy Myers released a statement saying that while "our focus over the next 48 hours must be on public safety and holding the utilities accountable for restoring power," Warren has contacted debate organizers and agreed to the Thursday match-up.

Brown, who toured portions of the state Tuesday to survey storm damage, referred questions about the debate back to campaign staff, who haven't responded to requests for comment.

Also Tuesday, a Suffolk University and WHDH-TV poll showed Warren with an apparent lead. She had support from 53 percent of likely general election voters compared with 46 percent for Brown. The poll was of 600 likely Massachusetts general election voters.

Other polls have reflected a tighter race.

The Boston Globe released a poll Monday showing Brown and Warren in a dead heat. That poll of 583 likely voters showed each candidate receiving the support of 47 percent of those polled, including voters who are undecided but said which candidate they are leaning toward. Among that poll's likely voters, Brown received the support of 45 percent compared with 43 percent for Warren.
STATE HOUSE NEWS: Galvin says a record 3.2 million could vote Tuesday in Massachusetts

By Matt Murphy
State House News Service
Posted Nov 05, 2012 @ 04:06 PM

After a record 3.1 million Massachusetts voters cast ballots in 2008, Secretary of State William Galvin on Monday projected that as many as 3.2 million Massachusetts residents could head to the polls on Tuesday with intense interest in the presidential and U.S. Senate contests.

With heavy turnout and a lot riding on the outcomes for campaign candidates as a result, Galvin said his office had concerns about long lines at the polls and efforts by campaigns to interfere with privacy rights of voters as an effort to lock in or keep out any voters.

Galvin said during a press conference at the State House that he had concerns about long lines at the polls, and said any effort by campaigns to interfere with privacy rights of voters would “not be tolerated.”

Galvin said his office had concerns about long lines at the polls, and said any effort by campaigns to interfere with privacy rights of voters “would not be tolerated.”

Galvin vowed to “enforce rigorously” the prohibition on campaigning within 150 feet of polling locations, and said poll observers from campaign organizations which has been demonstrated to our citizens very thoroughly over the last few weeks, we are particularly concerned about conduct in the polling places,” Galvin said.

Galvin attributed the changes to less voter registration intensity than in 2008, but greater interest in absentee voting due to publicity without the mass registration drives in other states about early voting. Massachusetts does not allow early voting, which Galvin addressed in a press conference on Monday.

One of Galvin's main concerns for election-day is lines and the potential that voting delays will occur when inactive voters – those who may be registered and eligible but have not voted recently or responded to Census surveys – show up to a polling place before 8 p.m. will be allowed to vote until 9 p.m.

Galvin stressed that everyone who shows up to a polling place before 8 p.m. will be allowed to vote even if voting goes past that hour. However, those who arrive after 8 p.m. will not be allowed to vote.

Galvin said he was “very confident in the integrity of our voting process,” and does not believe there is “rampant voter fraud” in Massachusetts, but would be on the lookout for irregularities.

While President Barack Obama is expected to win Massachusetts over the state’s former Republican Gov. Mitt Romney, the contest between U.S. Sen. Scott Brown and Democratic challenger Elizabeth Warren remains tight with both candidates barnstorming the state on the final day before the election.

After multiple polls over the past week of campaigning showing Warren holding a small lead over Brown, a UMass Lowell/Boston Herald poll released Sunday night had Brown ahead of Warren 49 percent to 48 percent among likely voters, but trailing Warren 49 percent to 47 percent among registered voters.

The poll surveyed 956 Massachusetts registered voters, 800 of which were deemed likely voters, between Oct. 31 and Nov. 3 and had a margin of error of 4.1 percent.

Brown’s bus tour was rolling through the North Shore on Monday morning hitting Lynn and Beverly before making its way to Lowell, Fitchburg, Framingham and other destinations, while Warren had campaign stops planned in Boston, Fall River, Worcester, Framingham and West Roxbury.
A Suffolk University poll of bellwethers in Massachusetts released Tuesday afternoon showed Warren leading Brown 50 percent to 47 percent in Waltham and 53 percent to 45 percent in Gloucester.

According to Suffolk, both communities accurately predicted the outcomes in races for U.S. Senate during the last three presidential election years and were close to the statewide vote.
Suffolk University Bellwether – Nov. 5, 2012
Electronic Media Coverage

Suffolk University on New England Cable News - Boston, MA
11/05/2012 18:06:30
Broadside With Jim Braude (News)

... hampshire. the suffolk university "bellwether poll" checked with voters in the town of milford and found ...

Suffolk University on New England Cable News - Boston, MA
11/05/2012 18:18:55
Broadside With Jim Braude (News)

... pollster david paleologos of suffolk university found that voters in the city of waltham favor elizabeth warren by three ...

Suffolk University on New England Cable News - Boston, MA
11/06/2012 03:37:19
Broadside With Jim Braude (News)

... hampshire. the suffolk university "bellwether poll" checked with voters in the town of milford and found ...

Suffolk University on New England Cable News - Boston, MA
11/06/2012 03:49:42
Broadside With Jim Braude (News)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Headline</th>
<th>Outlet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/28/2012</td>
<td>Poll: Romney Opens Up 20-Point Lead in Florida</td>
<td>Suffolk University SUN - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/28/2012</td>
<td>Bellwethers Show Brown Widening Lead over Coakley</td>
<td>Suffolk University SUN - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/28/2012</td>
<td>Presidential Bellwethers: Close Election; Electoral Path for Romney</td>
<td>Suffolk University SUN - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/07/2012</td>
<td>SWING STATES COULD PROVIDE AN EARLY PEEK</td>
<td>Boston Herald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Romney +4 in Ohio Battleground County (Lake) — Suffolk Polling (Nov 4)</td>
<td>Audacity Of Hypocrisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Latest poll: Warren may be in a for a big night</td>
<td>Sentinel &amp; Enterprise - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Bellwether towns toll for Warren, says survey</td>
<td>Lowell Sun - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Deval Patrick pulls out the stops for Obama</td>
<td>Boston Herald - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Mitt Romney sweeps into N.H. with high hopes</td>
<td>Boston Herald - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Inside the Beltway: Thundering for Romney</td>
<td>Washington Times - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/06/2012</td>
<td>Brown, Warren stake out vital turf</td>
<td>Boston Globe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>Presidential Bellwethers: Close Election; Electoral Path for Romney</td>
<td>Suffolk University SUN - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>Both sides see victory in polling data</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>OH, NH Bellwethers Give Romney 95% Chance of Victory</td>
<td>Breitbart.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>Suffolk 'bellwether' poll has Warren up</td>
<td>Lowell Sun - Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>Broadside With Jim Braude</td>
<td>Broadside: The News with Jim Braude - New England Cable News (NECN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05/2012</td>
<td>Election polls: Both sides see victory in polling data</td>
<td>Politico - Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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