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Texarkana Gazette

$2.00 | WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2026 | texarkanagazette.com | 2 SECTIONS, 20 PAGES

Democrat Gina Hinojosa elected Texas' first Latina governor, ousts Republican incumbent Greg Abbott

JESSE BEDAYN
AND ANNA WILDER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

AUSTIN — In a stunning upset, Gina Hinojosa was elected the first Democratic governor of Texas in more than 30 years on Tuesday, ousting Republican incumbent Greg Abbott and catapulting a decided underdog to national prominence leading what has long been the nation's most populous red state.

She will become Texas' first Latina governor — and the first Democrat to hold the office since Ann Richards in the 1990s — following a groundbreaking victory that topples one of the nation's most prominent Republican governors and steadfast supporters of President Donald Trump, possibly accelerating the state's shift to an emerging battleground.

Her victory was part of an electrifying night for Democrats in Texas, where James Talarico won election to the U.S. Senate over Republican Ken Paxton.

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Democratic Texas gubernatorial candidate Gina Hinojosa speaks to supporters Tuesday at an election night event in Austin. (AP Photo/ Ashley Landis)

Tale of the tape



Miller County Elections Commissioner Jamie Finley calls out absentee ballot totals taped to a pole as general election votes are counted at the American Legion on Tuesday in Texarkana, Ark. (Staff photo by Stevon Gamble)

Spencer leading for Texas House District 1 seat

GAZETTE STAFF

Republican Chris Spencer is poised to be the next representative of District 1 in the Texas House.

Spencer, a Cass County businessman, raked in 14,303 votes to Democratic challenger Sean Huffman's 7,231 in the general election Tuesday, according to unofficial results from Bowie County.

The unofficial tallies were much the same across the other four counties in the district.

In Cass, Spencer pulled 8,445 of the 10,769 ballots cast.

Spencer grabbed 70.45% of the 4,156 votes in Morris and 74.94% of the 4,190 ballots in Red River.

In Lamar, the count was 11,821 for Spencer and 4,377 for Huffman.



CHRIS SPENCER

Spencer had received the endorsement of Gov. Greg Abbott. Abbott, who has served as Texas' governor since 2015, lost his bid for reelection to state Democratic Rep. Gina Hinojosa.

The District 1 seat has remained vacant since the resignation of Gary VanDeaver in September.

Spencer has said he hopes to serve on the House Natural Resources Committee, if elected.

Incumbent Bryan Hughes appears headed for another term as state senator for District 1. Unofficial results show the Republican bested Democratic challenger Laticia Ambroz by wide margins in Bowie County (14,635 to 6,907) and Cass County (8,638 to 2,122).

Texas Senate District 1 includes Bowie, Camp, Cass, Delta, Franklin, Gregg, Harrison, Hopkins, Lamar, Marion, Morris, Panola, Red River, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, and Wood counties.

Harland, Crabbe, Nix elected to Arkansas-side board

KARL RICHTER
TEXARKANA GAZETTE

TEXARKANA, Ark. — City voters chose three new members of the Board of Directors on Tuesday.

Jennifer Harland will represent Ward 3, Natasha Crabbe will represent Ward 4, and Laura Nix will represent Ward 5, according to complete but unofficial election results.



JENNIFER HARLAND



LAURA NIX

WARD 3

Harland defeated Otha Williams Jr. 564 votes to 404 to win the seat currently held by Director Steven Hollibush, who chose not to run for re-election.

"I have decided to step forward and offer my leadership experience, skills, and passion to serve Ward 3 and our Texarkana community in a greater capacity," Harland wrote for the Texarkana

See **BOARD**, Page 2A



Natasha Crabbe waits as ballots are counted on Election Day at the American Legion on Tuesday in Texarkana, Ark. Crabbe won a three-way race for the Ward 4 position on the Board of Directors, according to unofficial results. (Staff photo by Stevon Gamble)

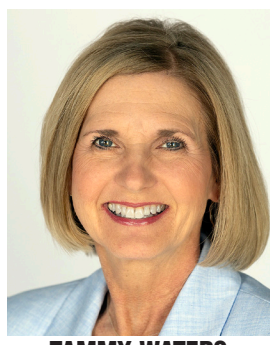
Waters elected mayor on Arkansas side

KARL RICHTER
TEXARKANA GAZETTE

TEXARKANA, Ark. — Tammy Waters will be the city's next mayor, voters decided Tuesday.

Waters defeated her opponent, Ward 2 Director Laney Harris, by 4,571 votes to 2,022, according to complete but unofficial election results.

"This whole experience has just been amazing," Waters said Tuesday. "It's been a privilege to get to get out and talk to citizens of our community over the last several months, and I'm really quite overwhelmed, to be honest with you. People's support has been amazing.



TAMMY WATERS

"I can't thank the voters of Texarkana enough for taking the time to listen to me, share their ideas, ask questions. And at the end of the day, they're placing their confidence in me, and I don't take that responsibility lightly. So I'm super excited to get started in January."

Waters will take office Jan. 1, succeeding two-term Mayor Allen Brown.

"I am running because I love our city and believe its best years are ahead of it," Waters wrote for the Texarkana Gazette Voter Guide in October. "Our biggest opportunity is to bring our community's many strengths together around shared priorities. Texarkana has the people and the potential; we need to work together as one cohesive team to get things done.

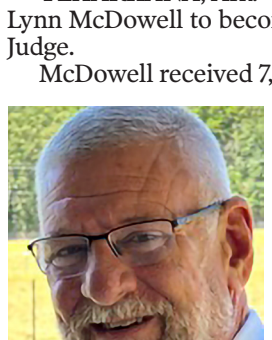
"As mayor, I will listen to residents in every neighborhood and work with the city manager, board of directors, businesses, and community organizations to set shared priorities, explore solutions, and measure results. We may not always agree on every issue, but we can respect different perspectives and remain focused on what is best for Texarkana, Arkansas."

Lynn McDowell wins judgeship in Miller County

KARL RICHTER
TEXARKANA GAZETTE

TEXARKANA, Ark. — Voters on Tuesday chose Lynn McDowell to become the next Miller County Judge.

McDowell received 7,624 votes to Ulysses Brewer's 3,082, according to complete but unofficial election results. He could not be reached for comment by presstime.



LYNN MCDOWELL

I'd just like to thank the people in Miller County for all their support, and especially my team for helping me throughout this long process, the primary, the runoff, and everything," McDowell said Tuesday night. "And I'm ready to sit down Jan. 1 and work together with the city, with law enforcement, with my volunteer fire department, and work in a partnership with them to make Miller County better."

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VOL. 150,
ISSUE NO. 308
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