

Bush

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supporters shortly after phoning her congratulations to Bush.

"I don't want anyone here to feel like they lost a thing. I don't want any of us to go home with anything but a great deal of pride in our hearts. We had a great four years.

"We have done a lot of good for Texas. This is not the end of the world, it is the end of a campaign," Richards said.

Bush's stunning victory came on the same night U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison breezed to re-election.

Since 1874, the only other Republican to gain the governor's office was Dallas oilman Bill Clements. He was victorious in 1978, lost in 1982, then won again in 1986.

Richards, who hadn't lost an election since entering public life with a run for Travis County commissioner in 1976, trailed Bush about 54 percent to 46 percent with 99 percent of precincts reporting. Libertarian Keary Ehlers had about 1 percent.

Vote returns from counties showed Bush winning substantial support across the state.

Bush called his win "a rather significant victory. ... And I believe it will give me a chance to have some political capital ... to make necessary changes for Texas."

An exit poll of voters conducted outside precincts around the state found Bush's anti-crime and education reform messages played well, while Richards' criticizing his lack of political experience failed to strike a significant chord.

The poll was conducted by Voter News Service, a cooperative of the four television networks and The Associated Press. It also found that voters didn't give Richards much credit for the state's robust economy or her record of building 75,000 new prison beds.

The survey showed that Bush also enjoyed the support of more men than did Richards, and that he won the backing of his father's base of support. The elder Bush carried Texas two years ago in his race against Bill Clinton.

Richards, 61, was no stranger to close elections. She defeated Republican oilman-rancher Clayton Williams by fewer than 100,000 votes in 1990.

Campaigning furiously in the closing days, she picked up the endorsement of billionaire Ross

Perot, 1992 independent presidential candidate. She had ridiculed Bush as being too inexperienced to serve as governor.

Bush is managing partner of the Texas Rangers baseball team. This was only his second try for office, having lost a 1978 election for Congress to then-Democrat Kent Hance of Lubbock. He said voters who wanted change would cast ballots for him.

The younger Bush had waited until the campaign's final day to involve his father, who attended a rally in Houston on Monday.

"I did not want to confuse the electorate nor give my opponent the chance to blast my dad," Bush said. "And now, in the last days of the campaign, it is fully appropriate for someone who is not only a Texan, but one of my strongest voters, to stand up and express his pleasure at the way I've conducted myself."

During the 1988 Democratic National Convention, Richards had delivered a speech on the elder Bush most remembered for the phrase: "Poor George, he can't help it, he was born with a silver foot in his mouth."

During their battle, Richards had turned her acid tongue on the younger Bush, calling him a "jerk" and a "Johnny-come-lately," among other things.



Tim Moog/The Battalion

Due to the hotly contested race for Texas Governor between George W. Bush and Ann Richards, Texas A&M students turned out in droves to cast their ballot for this and other offices on Tuesday.

Texas election results

Lt. Governor

DALLAS (AP) — Democratic Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock, arguably the most powerful officeholder in Texas, was headed toward an easy victory Tuesday over Republican Tex Lezar.

Vote returns from counties showed Bullock winning substantial support across the state.

With 24 of 9,131 precincts reporting, Bullock had 57 percent of the vote compared with Lezar's 43 percent.

The lieutenant governor presides over the Senate, makes committee appointments, sits on several key boards and committees and controls the flow of legislation in that chamber. It is one of the most important political jobs in the state.

Bullock, 65, took off from campaigning from late September through October to recover from heart surgery.



Bullock

Attorney General

Democratic Texas Attorney General Dan Morales won a second term in office Tuesday night, defeating a strong challenge from Republican state judge Don Wittig.

With a little more than half the vote counted, Morales had 55 percent to Wittig's 43 percent. Libertarian candidate Vicki Flores trailed with 66,074 votes, or 3 percent.

Early results had showed the race almost a dead heat, but Morales pulled way ahead in later returns.

"The votes that came in were no surprise. All along we said this was going to be a very close race," said Mary Elizabeth Jackson, a Morales campaign spokeswoman. Morales was not immediately available for comment.

Wittig said he believed he lost because his opponent outspent him.



Morales

Comptroller

Democratic state Comptroller John Sharp captured an early lead in his bid for a second term Tuesday, but GOP political newcomer Teresa Doggett was trying to thwart his effort.

Returns from 23 of 9,131 precincts show Sharp with a commanding 58 percent lead compared with 42 percent for Mrs. Doggett.

Sharp, 44, has aggressively conducted extensive state government audits, making recommendations for savings and budget changes that he says have saved \$6 billion for the state.

Mrs. Doggett, an Austin businesswoman, is in her first race for public office. If elected, the 44-year-old would break barriers: The comptroller's post has never been filled by a black or a woman.

Sharp has said he doesn't intend to run for comptroller a third time if he wins re-election.



Sharp

Ag Commissioner

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Rick Perry easily won re-election Tuesday over Sulphur Springs dairy farmer Marvin Gregory.

With about 60 percent of the vote counted, the Republican incumbent led 61 percent to Gregory's 37 percent. Libertarian nominee Clyde Garland, a Houston manufacturer, captured 2 percent.

Perry told voters he deserved another term for delivering on promises to downsize the Texas Department of Agriculture and push for the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Perry, 44, used to farm cotton and wheat and raise cattle. He was elected in 1990 in an upset over Democrat Jim Hightower.

Perry said he would spend his next term working to promote Texas farm goods globally, and increase exports.



Perry

Railroad Commission

DALLAS (AP) — Republicans staged an unprecedented clean sweep of the Railroad Commission of Texas with the first woman ever elected to the post winning one of two seats for grabs this year.

The three-person commission regulates the state's oil and gas industry. Republican challenger Charles Matthews of Garland narrowly edged Democratic Chairman James E. Nugent in Tuesday's balloting for a six-year commission term, ending more than four decades in government for Nugent.

With 95 percent of the vote counted early today, Matthews had 50 percent of the tally to Nugent's 48 percent, a difference of 69,038 ballots, almost more than 4 million cast. Rick Drheim, a Libertarian from Rockwall, had 2 percent.

In the other race, Democratic incumbent Mary Scott Nabers became the second consecutive woman appointed to the commission by former Gov. Ann Richards to lose her job at election time. Lena Guerrero was the first.

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