

Republicans Sweep Court of Appeals Seats

By Administrator
Thursday, 10 November 2016 13:33 -

Republicans swept the Court of Appeals seats up for grabs in Tuesday's election. Phil Berger Jr., son of the Senate leader Phil Berger defeated incumbent Linda Stephens. Berger won by fewer than 27,000 votes.

Hunter Murphy, a Republican, won the seat formerly held by Martha Geer, who stepped down in 2016 to practice law. Her term would have expired in 2018. Murphy also beat Margaret Eagles, the Democrat, and Independent Donald Ray Buie.

Incumbent Republican Bob Hunter defeated Democrat Abe Jones, 54 percent to 46 percent. Hunter was appointed to the Supreme Court by Gov. Pat McCrory in 2014 to fill a temporary vacancy but he lost in that November's election to current Justice Sam Ervin IV. McCrory then appointed Hunter to the Court of Appeals to fill the vacancy left by Ervin.

Richard Dietz, the Republican, defeated Vince Rozier, a Democrat. Dietz got 54 percent of the vote to Rozier's 46 percent.

Republican incumbent Valerie Zachary, appointed by McCrory in 2015, beat Rickye McKoy-Mitchell, the Democrat, 54 percent to 46 percent.

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The N.C. Court of Appeals is comprised of 15 judges who sit on three-judge rotating panels. The panels review errors in legal procedures or in judicial interpretation of the law. The court hears civil and criminal appeals from the lower courts and makes decision based on law, not fact. Judges serve eight-year terms. A 2015 state law added to the ballot party affiliation for candidates vying for a seat on the state's appellate court.