

THE GRAY AND NEW GLOUCESTER GAZETTE

By Mabel Ney Opinion/Editorial

Clean Elections

• Support for Candidates Who Choose that Option

Oct 19, 2010 – I am disheartened by a recent letter to the editor which represented David Van Wie and his participation in the Maine Clean Election Fund as an unsavory use of tax payer's dollars. A quick look at www.maine.gov/ethics/mcea/index.htm shows that "Maine voters passed the MCEA as a citizen initiative in 1996. Candidates who choose to participate may accept very limited private contributions at the beginning of their campaigns. After a candidate begins to receive MCEA funds from the State, he or she cannot accept private contributions, and almost all goods and services received must be paid for with MCEA funds."

The Clean Election Fund was established to make for a fair playing field for candidates who don't have deep pockets of funding from special interest groups. Because it is run by the Ethics Commission these candidates are held to more rules and transparency than those who elect not to participate. I commend Mr. Van Wie for his participation in this program and showing he is committed to running a fair and ethical campaign with limited funding.

Having seen what can be done with deep pockets in past elections, I feel we can be proud that we voted to pass this legislation, led the nation in campaign reform and have a local candidate joining the 81% of candidates who has chosen to participate.

Mabel Ney
New Gloucester