

# mentary

## Letters

### Rescue gratitude

To the Editor:

I am eternally grateful to all who helped me survive a serious accident recently on the municipal pier in Bar Harbor. Because of you, I am alive and am able, through these words, to tell you how much I appreciate and thank you.

To my dear friend Peggy Hobbs who was with me as I took pictures from the Bar Harbor dock, and saw me fall into the water, her friendship and loyalty mean so much to me. To Max Blandford, the fisherman I was photographing, who jumped out of his boat and turned me face up in the water. I owe him everything.

To Kevin Parkhurst and Nick Foster, nearby construction workers, who were in the water in seconds to pull me out – thank you.

To all the people who ran to call 911 and to the first responders who took me to the Mount Desert Island Hospital and to the excellent emergency team doctors and nurses who kept me alive – thank you.

The medical care I received at the hospital has been outstanding, and I continue to recover day by day, I know how lucky I am to have been cared for by all of you. You are my heroes. I thank you for coming to my rescue and giving me back my life.

Nancy Rohan  
Bar Harbor

### Cash out

To the Editor:

“Do you want to get the

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

*The Mount Desert Islander welcomes letters to the editor. Letters may be edited for libel, slander, taste or length.*

*Submissions recommending commercial products or establishments will not be accepted. All letters should bear an original signature (e-mail letters must be independently verified) and a telephone number. Letters or submissions for Community Forum should be neatly prepared, and received in the office by Tuesday morning at 10 a.m.*

*Contact information is printed at the bottom of the page.*

money out of politics?” was the question posed on Election Day to voters in Mount Desert Island towns and others across Maine. Volunteers for Maine Citizens for Clean Elections were out in force to invite voters to sign a signature card to be delivered to the state legislature. The card demanded that the legislature’s support a Constitutional amendment that would overturn the Supreme Court’s infamous 2010 “Citizens United” decision that opened the floodgates to the billions of dollars that created the attack ads we’ve been forced to endure.

People from all across the political spectrum were eager to sign. Statewide, more than 10,700 cards were signed. On MDI there were 1858. In Bar Harbor there were 860, Mount Desert, 357, Southwest Harbor, 471, and in Tremont, 170.

True, the results of the last election showed that money isn’t everything. It quite often didn’t translate into victory. But

any politician who wins in spite of a well-financed opposition knows that if he or she doesn’t give in to the opposition’s policies, there will be a barrage of attack ads (and maybe worse) the next time around.

So big money has to go.

But why do we need a Constitutional amendment?

The Supreme Court “Citizens United” decision that started the money flood asserted that limiting campaign finances violates the First Amendment-guarantee of freedom of speech. It supported this by claiming that corporations are people and money is speech. So any law that tries to impose such limits will be declared unconstitutional. The only way to get around this is to change the Constitution. So we need a Constitutional amendment.

But why in the state legislature?

Of the various ways to propose and amendment, the only likely one at this point involves

2/3 of the state legislatures (34) telling Congress to call a Constitutional Convention. And for a proposed amendment to take effect, it must be ratified by 3/4 of the state legislatures (38). That’s why we’re targeting the state legislature.

Now, a convention to amend the Constitution is not something to be taken lightly. It not only hasn’t ever happened, but here is also disagreement about whether a Convention can be limited to one issue, or could become a free-for-all for all kinds of extreme ideas. So it is potentially risky.

But it’s obvious to almost all of us that if the Citizens United decision is not overturned, our voices as citizens – and our democracy – will be washed away in a torrent of corrupt cash. We hope that presenting more than 10,700 signature cards to the legislature will make that case clearly.

Dick Atlee  
Southwest Harbor