

Van Grack runs low-budget campaign; other coffers full

by Joy Nurmi

Staff Writer

As he campaigns to unseat incumbent U.S. Rep. Costantine A. Morella, Democrat Steven Van Grack does not ask voters for political contributions.

"When I'm out campaigning I don't ask the voters for money ... They are astonished," said Van Grack, a former one-term Rockville mayor.

That could explain why Van Grack's election committee has raised just \$3,462, while owing more than \$10,000, according to the latest Federal Election Commission records.

By comparison, election records show Morella, seeking her fifth congressional term, has raised more than \$492,000. She has spent about \$97,000. Both are vying for the



Morella



Van Grack

District 8 seat held by Morella. The district takes in most of Montgomery County.

Morella's campaign reported having \$395,312 in cash on hand as of Sept. 30, the last day for the cur-

rent federal campaign reporting period. Van Grack had \$2,041 in cash for the same period.

According to the public interest group Common Cause, the average total of political contributions raised in 1992 by an incumbent U.S. representative was \$552,851. The average for the challenger was \$156,427.

Despite his Lilliputian war chest, Van Grack maintains he is mounting a serious challenge for Morella's seat, noting in the primary he beat his opponents in every precinct by garnering more votes than Morella.

While that is true — Van Grack received 23,919 votes from registered Democrats compared to Morella's 23,299 votes from registered Republicans — more than 25,000 registered Democrats chose to leave their ballot blank rather

than vote for Van Grack.

Morella said she expects a good number of those 25,000 Democrats to vote for her in the Nov. 8 general election. "I couldn't win without the crossover Democratic votes," Morella said.

In the Maryland U.S. Senate race, incumbent Democrat Paul Sarbanes, who is seeking a fourth term, has raised more than \$2.08 million, of which he has spent about \$1.3 million.

His opponent, Republican Bill Brock, reported raising \$1.85 million, of which \$714,000 was a loan from the candidate to his own campaign.

Common Cause reports the average raised by incumbent senators in 1992 was \$1,366,423, while challengers averaged \$235,982.

Brock's supporters note that 39 percent of Sarbanes' campaign con-

tributions have come from political action committees (PACs). About 12.5 percent of Brock's contributions came from PACs.

The latest federal election records, which cover spending and contributions up to Sept. 30, show Brock has spent more than \$1.72 million, compared to Sarbanes' \$1.35 million.

In the District 4 congressional race, incumbent Democrat U.S. Rep. Albert Wynn's campaign reported raising \$229,000, while his Republican opponent, Michèle Dyson, raised about \$71,000. District 4 includes Aspen Hill and Silver Spring, as well as a large part of Prince George's County.

Wynn has spent about \$184,000, leaving his campaign with \$45,857 in cash on hand. Dyson reported spending \$64,479, leaving her with \$6,608 in cash on hand.