

Election campaigners toast winners, losers at parties

By Mary Jo Howe

Thronged of sweaty, suited, campaign sticker-tattooed bodies crowded into five smoke-filled party rooms across Lincoln Tuesday night cheering and supporting their candidates to the last ballot count.

That politician flash-white smile and firm handshake was evident everywhere. And not just from the stars of the evening. Everybody seems to want to be a politician on election nights. With all the hardy backslaps, "We did it" clutched hands, it's hard to tell who the true office seeker is.

Then you see a face you've seen a thousand times in the past six months, beaming from billboards, newspaper ads and bumper stickers. It has that little something, the comfortable familiarity that makes it stand out in the sea of faces crowding up to shake hands with "the man."

Party flavor

Each party had its own flavor, seasoned by a winning or losing candidate, the age group of the supporters and the variety of refreshments, ranging from "free bar" to champagne.

Donkey-bearing campaign workers and friends crowded into the Knolls Country Club to await results on the Whelan, Dyas and Wesley races.

They had reasons to rejoice.

Although there was a mixture of celebration and disappointment over the Democratic races, at least one woman was enthusiastic about the election results.

Former Lancaster County Democratic chairman Yvonne Hardesty, dressed in a red, white and blue smock dotted with "vote" and starred donkeys and elephants, said she was "nervously, nervously" awaiting the results.

Win some, lose some

"Some of the good guys will win and some of the good guys will lose," she said philosophically, adding that she thinks there were "more super candidates than (the Democrats) have had in any election."

"It was an A-1, Class A election campaign," she said.

By far Hardesty's most striking feature was her golfer's hat, sporting buttons ranging from "Vote for Dyas" to a rhinestone-studded donkey pin. Hardesty said she has a collection of hats just like it from previous elections.

"I always get a hat for election time," she said.

Few supporters would give up hope in the Whelan and Dyas campaigns until all votes were in and apprehensively stuck close to the numerous television screens around the room.

"At least Democrats are more fun to party with even when they're losing," said one UNL grad student.

No post-mortem

As of one o'clock, Shasteen was still not ready to do a post-mortem on his campaign which had been declared a lost one by both the UPI and AP news services.

About 50 persons in the Clayton House banquet room, however, had no problem: executing post-mortems on the expensive layout of food and two kinds of champagne. There was little to do but eat and discuss the other races. The mood was formal, sophisticated, reserved. And most of the parties were later seen making the rounds of the other parties.

One young campaign worker, Willie Watters, a junior political science and pre-law student at UNL, remained positive as Shasteen. He enthusiastically pointed out how Shasteen had made the best effort to meet Nebraskans by jogging across the street and emphasized that the polls are extremely inaccurate.

Western results

"Just wait until the western part of the state comes in," added Lorraine Orr, co-campaign chairperson for the Shasteen campaign. "These results are premature. The largest part of the state in the west is Republican. There are good Republicans out there."

Orr was beginning to feel the effects of the long campaign however.

"I drove 230 miles to get here yesterday morning (Friday)," she said. Then drove back home (North Platte) last night, just so I could vote this morning. And some people won't even cross the street to vote!"

Switching from Shasteen's headquarters to the Hilton pavilion, headquarters for Nebraska's new governor, Charlie Thone, was practically a culture shock.

Over 500 people, mingling with friends, drinking, nibbling cheese and crackers, and

pushing through the impromptu receiving line to greet the man of the hour; gave the party a national convention-like quality.

Brightly lit, red, white and blue balloons and streamers, and three active bars kept the people partying. Supporters of all ages joined the group most dressed in formal evening wear seemed confident and happy throughout the night. Although Thone didn't accept the nomination until late in the evening, he daughter Amy, 14, practically accepted it for him when she said she was looking forward to living in the governor's mansion.

Thone feels good

Thone said he was feeling good, and people kept pouring into the room. Exon's party too, at the American

Legion Club, was a confident, and jubilant celebration. Supporters there didn't have long to wait for their man to be declared the winner of the U.S. senatorial race and happy cheers greeted Exon's acceptance speech.

Once the apprehension was over, thoughts turned to other issues, like how thick the state patrol was on the road from Omaha to Lincoln, and the defeat of the lid bill.

"I'm just so happy, I can't even tell you," bubbled Candy Exon, 20-year-old UNL student and daughter of the new senator.

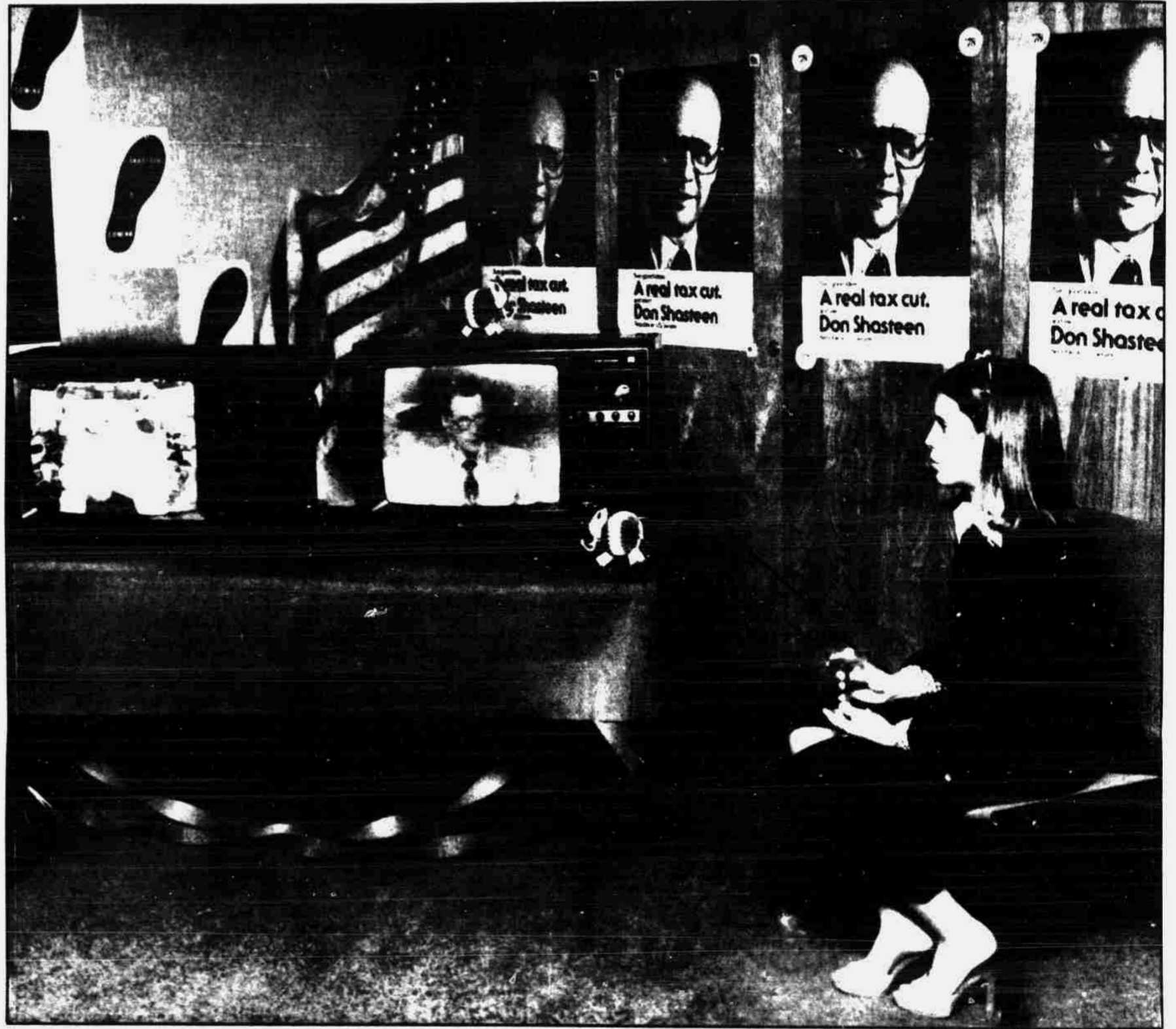
"I'm getting married soon so I won't be going to Washington, but it will be fun to visit there," she said.

Candy worked on the youth campaign for Exon.

Join the re-election team Congressman Bereuter in '80, proclaimed the new stickers given out at the Bereuter headquarters on top of the NBC bank building.

Young people were more evident here than at the other parties, probably due more to the wide-campus support rather than the rumors of a "free bar." But even dyed-in-the-wool Democrats were mingling at this party as the night wore on the tight race eventually pointed to Bereuter.

"We were always confident," said Bill Mueller, UNL law student and former ASUN president, "but now the party is just starting to roll."



Daily Nebraskan photo

A dazed and dejected Shasteen supporter watches the campaign results come in Tuesday night. Gov. J. James Exon defeated Don Shasteen for the U.S. Senate seat now held by Carl Curtis.

Beutler, Landis, Wesley win election

By Barb Richardson

David Landis, Chris Beutler, and Don Wesley were the winning candidates in Lincoln's legislative districts Tuesday.

Final vote tabulation of the Lincoln legislative races on KETV showed Don Wesley 5,337 over Tom Novak with 3,646 in the 46th district. In the 26th district David Landis defeated JoAnn Maxey 2,775 to 2,035. And in the 28th district Chris Beutler was the winner over Marge Schlitt with 5,119 to 4,127 votes.

Commenting earlier in the evening, 46th district candidate Wesley said that he expected to win but with a tight race.

Twenty-four-year-old Wesley said that the only people that questioned his age and qualifications during the campaign were young people. "I also had problems with 50 and 40-year-olds who didn't believe that I was qualified but, overall I was generally accepted as a candidate," Wesley said.

Wesley commented that he had experienced political problems with his opponent Tom Novak.

"Novak changed his position on a questionnaire to the Catholic Conference that said he was pro-life when a month ago in two questionnaires he said that he was pro-choice," Wesley said.

He added that on Friday, Novak sent out a letter to the voters that indicated that Wesley said he has lived in the 46th district for 20 years.

"I was also disappointed in my opponent because he would not agree to any debates or public appearances," Wesley added.

Landis, 26th district victor, said "This is the end of about nine months of a phenomenon unlike anything I have experienced before."

Landis, who beat incumbent State Senator JoAnn Maxey, said that he is pleased that he won and that he wants to get his life going in a normal fashion again.

"During my campaign I could sense, while talking to voters, that my opponent was very popular and well respected," Landis said.

Student control over student fees, a right of privacy statute, and repulsion of the state tax on food are goals of Landis during the next four years as Senator.

Chris Beutler, winner in the 28th district, said, "although I am very happy tonight about winning, I have a great deal of sympathy for Marge Schlitt."

He added that he had great respect for Marge and that she was a good opponent.

Learning the legislative process and issues of Nebraska's Legislature, developing a fair tax assessment procedure, and developing a comprehensive state water plan are Beutler's goals after assuming his position as State Senator.

