

Out with the old, in with the new *A-team is the most promising party for needed change*

We believe there is something fundamentally wrong with ASUN. And so do a lot of other UNL students.

It doesn't matter if ASUN is productive in reality. In representative government, perception doubles as reality. The perception of the student government on campus is pervasive and obvious - ASUN is an insider organization of students looking to pad the resumé.

For the time we've been in college, this apathy has remained the same. The same parties emerge every year, offering a slew of senators, a pinch of professionalism and a dash of promise that this time, maybe the process will change.

It doesn't. And it isn't good enough anymore.

In some years, it wouldn't matter. But the new century brings a chance to break the chain of mistakes. The party is A-Team; its president, Joel Schafer. The party and president represent the Daily Nebraskan's shift in ideology. Typically, we've championed the established parties. Now we ask the student body for radical change, an election-day grassroots movement for the underdog.

A-Team and Schafer were selected by a 5-2 vote, the dissenting votes going to Impact and its president John Conley. Our choice was between them. The other two parties, Empower and Duff, stayed on the outside for various reasons.

Duff fits the mold of the reformist A-Team, except it has goals that fly completely in the face of UNL's powers-that-be, so much so that they are unattainable. A wet campus is not a reality here. Better football seats? We'd all like them, but the athletic department holds all the cards, student demands be damned.

Duff president Jason Kidd's answer: Stand up to the powers-that-be. We think this would be a long, fruitless stand.

Empower, on the other hand, is the establishment party we speak of above. Its goals seem orientated toward strengthening ASUN, not the campus as a whole. To be fair, the party does have an action plan, which outlines how Empower will achieve its goals. But these goals don't go far enough.

Beyond that, presidential candidate Heath Mello says his goals will be met whether or not he's elected. Well, then we don't see the point in electing him. If the statement was used as a political ploy, it failed.

Which leaves Conley and Schafer. We all like Conley and Impact's idea of bringing big-name talent to campus in lieu of smaller events. And Conley would be an effective leader.

But Schafer represents a fundamental shift in thinking, more so than Conley, and that's what we're championing here. We think Schafer has an advantage with no senators on his ticket; he can conduct business without concerning himself with loyalties.

A-Team and Schafer have a chance of winning. And it's time to let activism win over the usual order of business.

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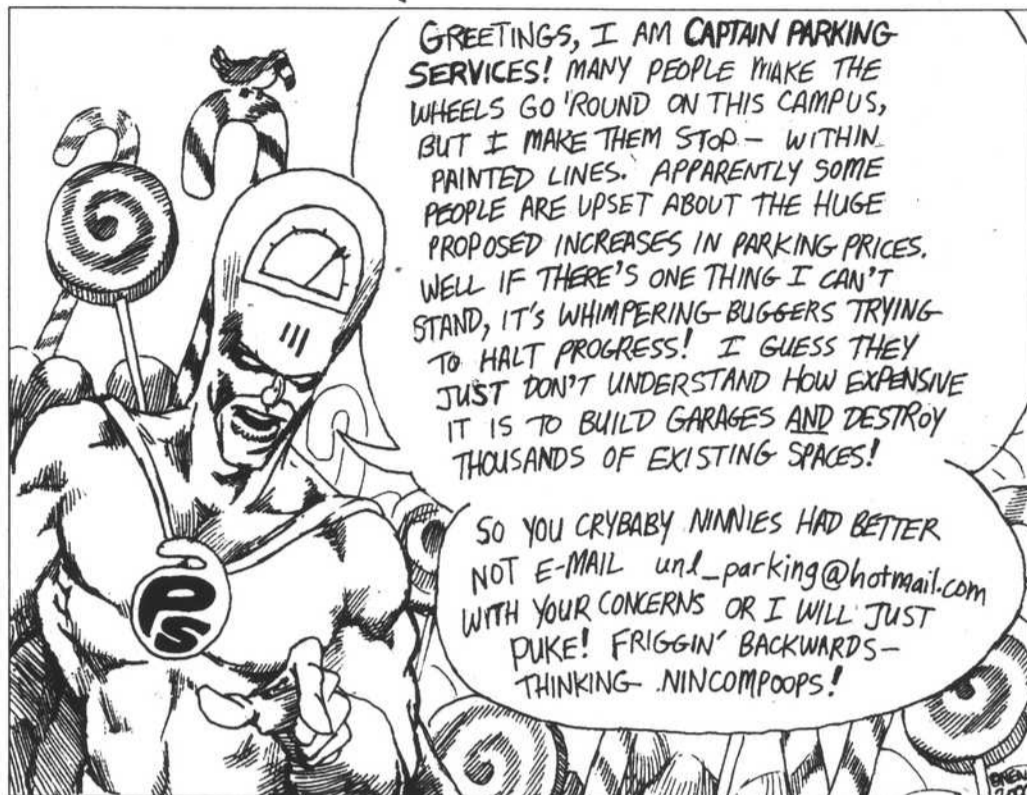
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Obermeyer's VIEW



Letters to the EDITOR

Lack of Independence

As the current and former presidents of the Independent Student Association, we were very surprised to find that there was a proposed amendment that would remove representation to ASUN for the Division of Continuing Studies. The amendment would give our seat to General Studies if a student taking 12 or more credit hours cannot be found to take the seat. Currently, the cap is at three credit hours.

The Division of Continuing Studies is one of the few areas where non-traditional students are not the most apparent minority. Continuing Studies students are generally older students with jobs, families and a vast amount of life and problem-solving experience from which to draw.

Forcing us to provide a candidate who is willing to take the seat and is enrolled in 12 credit hours is nearly insurmountable. To then give our seats to General Studies is an affront to our viability as leaders.

Apparently there is a feeling that as older students, our views do not count - or even worse, we are not interested.

You should be ashamed, ASUN. This proposal does nothing but show that you are not interested in diversity. You just want everyone to get along and never bring any problems that really need to be solved. That is a poor expression of leadership at any institution.

Jared Solomon, Dan Reiber
current and former presidents
Independent Students Association

Make a change

On February 26, French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin visited BIR-ZEIT University (BZU), a Palestinian university located a few miles north of Jerusalem in the West Bank, to give a speech.

Jospin had said previously that France considers the militant resistance movements in Lebanon that fight to get Israel out of south Lebanon "terrorist" organizations (Israel invaded south Lebanon late in the '70s and has occupied it since then).

At BZU, Jospin didn't apologize for what he said.

He finished his speech, then angry students clashed with him and his guards. The prime minister was injured, and his limousine was seriously damaged. A short time after that, students protested against his words in Palestinian territories and in nearby countries.

Jospin was called back to France by Jack Shirak, the head of the French government, and France officially rejected Jospin's stance.

These results would have never been achieved without the students of BZU. These students are deeply involved and concerned about various issues that touch them - even if it's not directly related to their campus.

As a previous student at BZU and member of its student council, I feel that my life as a UNL student has been a depressing experience so far.

Tuesday I was at the union and attended the debate and was sick with the number of students who attended the debate.

When I started at UNL, I was shocked by the few who voted for ASUN elections - I still wonder why students are so careless. But when I was trying to act more caring and attended the debate, I felt that, as an international student, I probably was not represented.

I think that before we talk about improving the campus atmosphere, students need to feel they belong here. We need to act as one body to make changes. If we really get involved we will be able to make significant changes someday, just like

the students of BZU do every single day.

Ahmed Midhat Ismail
computer science
junior

The game of life

UNL Students for Life has taken an initiative to become more informed on how the ASUN presidential candidates stand on fetal tissue research. We sent a questionnaire to all the candidates, but the response was not exactly what we had hoped for. We received few answers to the questions; many were worried that our group would attempt to harm their candidates with their responses.

There have been concerns that we are encouraging single-issue voting and that we are violating student code by publishing the way that candidates feel about the issues that ASUN has chosen to confront. Well, students have the right to be informed, and students should be able to choose what issues they want to vote on. That is what democracy is all about. I would like to encourage all candidates to openly communicate with students about this and any other issue.

Because many of the candidates were concerned with being misrepresented, we have put all of the responses we have received on a Web site: www.geocities.com/studentsforlife_a_sun. We aren't trying to misinform anyone, but rather trying to get accurate information about candidates. The responses are as we received them in their full and unaltered state. We are just trying to inform the campus about these issues. We hope ASUN will continue to support informing students and gaining student opinion.

James R. Andrews
mechanical engineering
senior
UNL Students for Life member

P.S. Write Back



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