

A-Team ad strategy helped

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and spending money on paid media." Hansen, who has been friends with Peterson since grade school, put his real-world campaign skills to work, designing light-hearted ads that attempted to expose platform issues at the same time. He then bought space in the Daily Nebraskan.

Without senatorial candidates or numerous supporters to do a lot of leg-work, Schafer said the word had to get out efficiently.

"We couldn't compete with Impact or Empower on the little things like building table tents," Schafer said.

But with Hansen's help, the party spent money smartly.

"We could've spent \$300 on a banner - but how many votes are you going to get with a banner?" Schafer said.

The strategy wasn't cheap. The A-Team ended up spending \$3,700 - as much as the Impact party, which had donating senatorial members and other supporters.

The Empower party spent more than \$5,000.

Each candidate had to chip in a couple hundred dollars to pull off the campaign. Hansen chipped in a fair share, as did Schafer's friends.

Schafer even canvassed the places he's worked for donations. The party got money in matching funds, which every party receives from the university.

Contrary to popular belief, his father only donated about \$300 to \$400, Schafer said.

But before the two-week ad blitz, A-Team didn't know if it'd have enough steam to fight Impact or Empower.

That was until the first debate, anyway.

Schafer said the debate proved he and Peterson had ideas and could speak and were serious about the election.

"I thought we showed really well at the debate," Schafer said. "It got Impact

and Empower on their heels thinking, 'We have to react to these guys.'

"It gave us the boost we needed."

Fast forward three weeks to the first election. A-Team's small crowd of supporters gathered at the downtown Valentino's for their election-night party, waiting for the results while eating pizza buffet.

Unlike other parties, the A-Team didn't have a large orchestrated event at a hopping bar.

Instead, the candidates sat in the Valentino's party room, hoping the ASUN electoral commission would call before the place closed down at 10 p.m.

When they didn't, the crowd voted to shift their informal party to Crane River.

The call eventually did come. Schafer found out they had lost - but not by enough for Empower to take the election. The party, which had picked up the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board's endorsement that day, found out they really did have a chance.

A week later at the run-off election, a substantially larger crowd had gathered at Crane River - the party's new unofficial place. But the atmosphere was different that week. This time, the results would bring a finale.

At Crane River, minutes after 10 p.m., Schafer approached Peterson and told him he was going to begin his speech, which would be an opportunity to thank supporters before the call came.

His friends were assembled. Schafer began his speech, filled with "Thank you's" and "No matter what happens's."

In the middle of a speech, which carried the tone of defeat, Schafer's phone rang unexpectedly.

But instead of escaping in the back room to take the call with his running

mates or closest supporters, Schafer answered it right there, in the midst of about 50 supporters and his own parents.

"Yeah, yeah..." were the only words that came out of his mouth.

The crowd waited expectantly. Some girls covered their faces, not wanting to look at what they were sure would be a reaction of defeat on Schafer's face.

Everyone waited. Schafer hung up the phone, and after a moment of silence, said it.

"We won!"

A long road ahead

Today, Schafer occupies his newly acquired office, which sits in the first-floor ASUN office.

He reflects on the campaign. When asked about the Empower party's feeling that the Daily Nebraskan ultimately secured A-Team's victory, Schafer disagrees.

But Schafer acknowledges that his party had the editorial endorsement behind them. But they earned their spots fair and square, he said.

"I think there were distinct reasons why we were picked," he said.

Peterson echoed Schafer's feelings on election night, saying everyone started out on equal footing.

"They had just as much a chance to get respect as we did," Peterson said.

But Schafer acknowledged that four editorial cartoons supporting A-Team and bashing the other parties would get frustrating.

But the race is over. Instead of focusing on what-ifs, Schafer has to get used to his new position.

He wears ties to school. He preps for the weekend's Board of Regents meeting. He talks with the person he's appointed to help implement his plans of creating a new freshman orientation.

He adjusts to a 40- to 50-hour work week. Now that the election is over, the real work has begun.

As Schafer sits in his not-yet-decorated office, he expounds on crossing the line from campaigning to governing.

"Campaigning is a little bit of work and a lot of glory," he states.

"But it's a lot of work and only a little bit of glory actually governing."

"I thought we showed really well at the debate. It got Impact and Empower on their heels thinking, 'We have to react to these guys.'"

Joel Schafer
A-Team presidential candidate

Law & Order

Freshman cited for alcohol, marijuana possession

A University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman was cited Wednesday for possession of marijuana and minor in possession of alcohol.

Daniel A. Wallace, 19, was cited in his room on the eighth floor in Abel Residence Hall at 9:18 p.m., said Mylo Bushing, assistant university police chief.

An officer responded to a report of a marijuana smell on the floor.

When Wallace was approached, he showed the officer a small container with less than an ounce of marijuana in it, Bushing said.

The officer then noticed several empty beer cans and asked Wallace if beer was in the refrigerator.

University police confiscated three cans of beer and the narcotics and cited Wallace, Bushing said.

Though others were in the room at the time, Wallace took responsibility and said the beer and marijuana were his, Bushing said. Wallace will appear in court April 13.

Police say two burglaries likely committed by same man

A man matching the description of a burglar from an incident Sunday struck again Wednesday. A man walked into Castles Liquor, 6001 Havelock Boulevard, at 9:30 p.m., showed a knife and demanded money, Lincoln Police Ofc. Katherine Finnell said.

The man is described as a white male, 5 feet 4 inches tall, 120-135

pounds and in his early 20s, Finnell said.

The man was wearing blue coveralls, a dark stocking cap, had a nylon stocking pulled over his face and a dark curly wig, Finnell said.

Sunday's robbery occurred at Shop EZ, 3735 N. 70th St., at 10:40 p.m.

In Wednesday's burglary, a man of the same stature, wearing a Halloween-style mask, walked in, showed a knife and demanded money, Finnell said.

Police have no suspects at this time.

Man arrested after family disagreement escalates

A man was arrested while trying to defend his sister Wednesday.

During a fight between William and Kristin Restuccio, both 23 of 13005 Pioneers Boulevard, David Conway, 21, 2411 NW 55th St., insisted his sister, Kristin Restuccio, and her children should leave with him, Chief Deputy Bill Jarrett said.

But, Jarrett said, Kristin Restuccio said no, and a fight began around 5:25 a.m.

During the altercation Conway hit William Restuccio in the face and knocked out one of his teeth, Jarrett said.

Then Conway knocked down one of the couple's children when the child tried to stop the fight, Jarrett said.

Conway was arrested on two counts of third-degree assault and one count of disturbing the peace.

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