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Re: MUR-⁵³⁵⁰~~6350~~

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HERALD-TRIBUNE / SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 2003

Jan Schneider, ex-aide in feud

The former congressional candidate is in a court tussle with a manager she fired.

BY ROBERT ECKHART

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SARASOTA COUNTY — Michael Shelton wants his Hoover vacuum cleaner and his card table back from former congressional candidate Jan Schneider.

And Shelton, a 48-year-old Sarasota attorney, is ready to go to court to get them.

A small claims suit filed last week by Shelton's roommate is the latest in a series of tussles between Shelton and Schneider. The two Democrats have been feuding be-



Jan Schneider was defeated by Katherine Harris in the District 13 House race.

hind the scenes since last November, when she dismissed him as her campaign finance chairman.

Schneider says Shelton and the roommate, Allen McKeynolds, are harassing her.

"They're mad at me," Schneider said. "They don't want me to run again."

"What would I want with their vacuum cleaner? It was

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Schneider, former aide in squabble

FEUD FROM '18

an old piece of junk that didn't work right.

She said she doesn't know where the vacuum is now, but that Shelton had the opportunity to pick it up anytime after the election.

Shelton, a Sarasota planning commissioner, declined to comment about the vacuum, the table, or his rift with Schneider.

In court documents, he and McReynolds said the card table — in "excellent" condition — is worth \$42.95, and the Hoover is worth \$212.95. They said it had just been serviced.

The trouble between Shelton and Schneider started last November, three days before the election. According to Schneider, Shelton ran an attack ad without her permission, blasting her opponent, Republican Katherine Harris.

The ad tied Harris, Florida's former secretary of state, to controversial contributions from her earlier campaigns for the state Senate and the secre-

"I never saw their card table, I assume it was your standard card table. We've got one. They can have it."

JAN SCHNEIDER

tary of state job.

Schneider, who prided herself on running a clean race, immediately pulled the ad and called it "a horrible mistake."

She said she dismissed Shelton over it. Three days later she lost the election to Harris, who had raised about \$3 million in campaign contributions — 10 times as much as Schneider.

Since the election, Schneider has accused Shelton of refusing to return campaign finance records that belong to her.

Shelton says Schneider failed to pay him for \$8,000 in campaign expenditures.

In the midst of all that haggling, Shelton filed a complaint

against Schneider with the Florida Bar, accusing her of lying to voters when she said she was licensed to practice law in New York.

The bar dismissed the complaint last week because Schneider told the truth. She's a member in good standing of the New York bar.

Shelton had filed the complaint after learning that she hadn't paid her dues this year. But the dues aren't due until June.

Schneider paid up on March 12.

Her lawyer and Shelton's lawyer have been negotiating to settle the alleged \$8,000 campaign debt and the dispute over the finance records without going to court.

Schneider said the small claims suit has no more merit than the bar complaint had.

"I'm not the slightest bit worried," she said. "We offered to pay a reasonable price for them. I never saw their card table. I assume it was your standard card table. We've got one. They can have it."

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