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At Russell homecoming Dole weeps at hero's welcome

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Toward the crowd
President Gerald Ford and his vice-presidential nominee, Sen. Bob Dole, flank Dole's wife, Mary Elizabeth, as the 3 walk toward thousands of persons at the Salina Municipal Airport Friday. (Journal Photo by Bill Burke)

By PAT GASTON
RUSSELL — Robert Dole came home Friday to a hero's welcome and wept openly in the midst of 3000 friends and supporters.
It was Bob Dole Day in Russell and the community of 6000 persons 70 miles west of Salina turned out to greet a favorite son who thrust the town into the national limelight this week when he became the Republican candidate for vice-president of the United States.
Standing on a wooden platform at the Russell county courthouse, the Kansas senator, said:
"I never believed I would be in this position when I was county attorney. (One of Dole's first political successes.) It shows you can come from a small town in America. You don't need all the material things in the world to succeed, if, indeed, I have succeeded."
His voice showing emotion, Dole credited the people of Russell with his political success.



Fighting fears

GOP vice-presidential nominee Bob Dole fights back tears as he thanks the people of Russell for their help and support. (UPI Photo)

"I can think of all the times the people of Russell helped me when I needed help..."
He could not go on and sobbed into the microphone. President Ford, who picked Dole to run with him Thursday as a climax of the GOP national convention, arose from his seat behind the Kansas senator to lead an ovation.
The President also spoke to the crowd, explaining why he had picked Dole as the vice-presidential candidate and the strengths he thought the Kansas will bring to the GOP ticket.
He drew applause from the rural-ori-

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Big crowd greets Ford, Dole here

By JOHN SCHMIEDELER
President Ford brought his running mate to Salina late Friday morning and it was like old home week.

Force One — a great, blue, white and silver jet — to turbine-powered helicopters for the 70-mile flight to Dole's hometown of Russell for a picnic lunch.

More Ford-Dole pictures, stories on Pgs. 2, 8, 9, 14

Lots of cheers

Both men appeared delighted at the Salina welcome, and the stop here stretched from an announced 5 minutes to nearly 20. There were no

speeches, but lots of cheers as Ford and Dole moved along the fence at the (Continued on Page 2)

Ford challenges Carter to debate

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (UPI) — President Ford entered battle Friday against Jimmy Carter and his own underdog image, challenging the Democratic nominee to debate and predicting victory with "prosperity, peace and public trust."
Ford and his running mate, Sen. Robert J. Dole of Kansas, opened the day with breakfast with the Republican National Committee before leaving for Bob Dole Day in Russell, Kan., Dole's hometown. Ford arranged to leave later in the afternoon for a 10-day vaca-

tion at Vail, Colo.
Ford accepted his party's hotly-contested presidential nomination Thursday night at the final session of a turbulent Republican National Convention which overwhelmingly ratified his choice of Dole as the vice presidential nominee.
The President told the national committee that reform of the vice presidential process was a project it should consider in the next four years.
In a brief speech, he said he had closely watched efforts by challenger

Ronald Reagan to require that Ford be required by convention rules to name his vice presidential choice before nomination balloting — a proposal that was defeated by Ford forces in their first major convention victory.
Likes the idea
But Ford told the committee: "I happen to believe there is considerable merit in that approach, and perhaps the national committee can study it and lay the groundwork for 1980."
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Russell "stunned, delighted" by Dole selection



Mrs. Gladys Friesen, Russell, leafs through an album listing the accomplishments of her nephew, Sen. Bob Dole. (Journal Photos)

RUSSELL — "We were stunned, surprised, then delighted."
Bud Dawson's own emotional crescendo at hearing his old friend Bob Dole named to carry the GOP vice presidential standard, was repeated in city-wide chorus Thursday as Dole's hometown learned of his dramatic high-noon stride into the national spotlight.
The senator's aunt, Mrs. Gladys Friesen, was shopping at Mammel's when the piped-in music system crackled the good news to customers.
"Everybody kept looking at each other and saying, 'Bob?'. I went right home and the phone started ringing. I tried to fix lunch but I still haven't eaten," Mrs. Friesen said as the clock neared 6 and the last of a gaggle of interview-seeking newsmen moved toward the front door.
The Stars and Stripes flew outside the Friesen home, and "Aunt Gladys" — resplendent in a dress of red, white and blue, Dole campaign button tucked firmly to the bodice — was ready with ice tea and family scrapbooks for the journalistic hoards which began arriving minutes after President Gerald Ford's surprise announcement.
If Mrs. Friesen was more prepared than most for Russell's sudden and vicarious rise to prominence it was because she was one of the few who had advance word something was in the wind.



By Pat Gaston

"I had a call this morning from Kansas City that he was one of the 4 who had had breakfast with President Ford, but I didn't know for sure until I had heard it on the radio."
Donna Dawson — like her husband, Bud, a longtime friend of the Dole family — said, "We were just happy that he made it on the list (of vice presidential contenders). When we heard he had been picked, we just couldn't believe it."
City Manager Jim Boyd was ready with the figures. "Probably 4000 or 5000 people fainted when they heard the news," he laughed.
"I immediately contacted city employees and directed that the 'Welcome' and American flags be put up along main street."
The shock wore off quickly, but even so, there was little time for jubilation. Within hours of Dole's selection, the city was a beehive of media types, Secret Service agents and White House advance men.
The rush to Russell was prompted by the announcement that Dole and Ford

would visit the city the next day.
"After the glad tidings were digested, we came down to earth and started up meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, city officials and local media. Everybody from bank presidents to housewives was out in cars bringing in reporters from the airport and taking them back."
"It's been a Christmas in August atmosphere."
A baker's dozen advance men from Ford's press staff arrived by chopper at 6 and immediately called a meeting with law enforcement officials and newsmen to outline the schedule for Friday's activities.
So thick were the competing teams of TV and print journalists that, at one point, newsmen pounding Main Street in search of Dole friends and relatives appeared to outnumber the shoppers.
"Hey, you wanna interview me?" a youth called from a dusty pickup truck to a newsmen hot-footing it in the direction of the Dawson's Russell Flower and Gift Shop, Yards away, a television camera crew was busily shooting footage of local store fronts for the folks back east.
The frenetic pace called to mind the days of "Oil Patch Russell" a rowdy era ushered in with the city's first petroleum strike in 1923.
For Russell, the year was to be (Continued on Pg. 14)



Mrs. Nancy Poche, Sen. Dole's niece, is delighted as she watches televised repeat of Thursday news conference at which President Ford named Dole as his running mate.