

302. 1987

THE HAYS DAILY NEWS • MONDAY • NOVEMBER 9, 1987

## A grand old party for Russell

By BRUCE BAIR

RUSSELL — On Sunday, Russell partied.

Most of the work of preparing for Sen. Bob Dole's announcement of his presidential intentions today was over shortly after nightfall. The announcement stand was in place, television trucks were set up, tractor trailer loads of sound equipment were unloaded, firemen placing banners and flags from bucket trucks were breathing a sigh of relief.

The schedule handed out to more than 200 representatives of the press said the party would begin at 7 p.m. in Russell's Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall.

The building was packed by 6:30. Veteran Russell party goers know that it pays to nail down a space at a table early when the town intends to celebrate.

Earlier in the day, Dole circulated downtown, attended a dinner with about 250 family members and close friends, paused for publicity photos in the drug store he had worked in as a youth, and paid an unannounced visit to the Russell City Hospital.

"Just like him," said a supporter. At the VFW, the big party was really two parties. Upstairs, Rep. Pat Roberts was the masters of ceremonies for a party for any one who wanted to come. In the basement of the hall, free drinks and food were provided to members of the working press.

By 7:30, the parties had mingled. Security men were rolling their eyes.

Rep. Max Moomaw, R-Dighton, admitted to being fascinated. After years of being watched by the press, he had the chance to do the watching.

"What it is coming down to," he said, but only after shaking loose from a Los Angeles Times reporter, "is the press interviewing itself."

Anyone who had ever spoken with Sen. Bob Dole was fair game. Most popular were those who had known him in his youth. The L.A. Times reporter scribbled everything Moomaw uttered in his tiny notebook. He clutched a can of beer in his hand.

"How did this party get started?" he asked.

"Ask Russell Townsley," came the reply.

"Who's he?" asked the reporter. He was a short, bent man, given to standing on tiptoes. Given general directions, he scurried into the crowd, notebook in hand.

While the members of the working press worked, so did the politicians. A who's who of Kansas statehouse representatives circulated among the reporters, as the reporters circulated among them.

Upstairs, the party grew. The large hall, which can probably hold a standing crowd of over a thousand, was packed.

Even more packed, when word filtered to the basement that Dole had arrived. At first, only one or two reporters were on hand to hear his remarks. By the time he was nearly finished, dozens more had joined the fray, competing for space at table tops.

Dole was in fine form, remarking that his daughter Robin was still unmarried, and joking how his family had grown before Sunday's reunion.

Dole made a short visit to the press downstairs, by which time three-quarters had struggled upstairs to catch his remarks.

The journey was shortlived, as he shook hands and issued greetings. Dole left the building before the Russell Lawn Chair Brigade, a paramilitary group of women dressed in red hard hats, white shorts and blue Russell sweatshirts, high-stepped through their routine.

The entertainment ended with a showing of Dole's campaign video, but not before Rep. Pat Roberts told the crowd that \$100,000 in campaign donations had been collected in a cigar box placed at the door.

Robert's advice was to give some more on the way out.

By 9 p.m., the crowd was thinning. Many planned to be up by 6 a.m. to obtain good positions to watch the announcement this morning. Others thought watching the announcement on television made more sense.

Still the working press worked. The original six Dols for Dole, who now call themselves grandmas for Dole, submitted to interviews from television men and national news magazines.

It was good copy. They had punched open hundreds of cans of Dole pineapple juice during his first campaign for representative in 1960. But some of the grandmas were tired.

"Can we go now?" asked one. The answer was "no." The working press, a little woozy from beer, was still working.

## Students' cheers, music lead enthusiasm for Dole

By JAN LANDON

RUSSELL — Music of marching bands broke through the brisk autumn air.

Lines of students with letter jackets or name tags or carrying signs filled the bleachers. Other groups of students showed and nudged toward the bandstand.

This morning, Sen. Bob Dole, during the announcement of his candidacy for president, spoke about the responsibility adults have toward children.

He spoke about the need to reduce the federal deficit so future generations would not have to, the need to ensure equal education for all people and reduce the rate of young people dropping out of school.

More than 2,000 of those young people, students in schools from numerous communities in central and northwest Kansas, were among the crowd that Dole addressed this morning.

Several Hays students found a perch and balanced precariously at the edge of the crowd, proudly holding their Hays High School banner. The Great Bend High School band held up a huge sign that proclaimed, "Bob is in step with our band."

Members of the Russell High School drill team screamed and waved their pompons, chanting football and basketball cheers transformed into campaign slogans.

Cheers including, "Eat 'em up, eat 'em up, go Bob Dole!" entertained the crowd between speakers, while all of the students joined together to sing, "God Bless America."

And while there were many comments about cold feet and hands, the students were Dole's loudest and most enthusiastic supporters.

However, students in the Kennedy Middle School were a little less than enthusiastic at 6:30 this morning. They came into the band room with rosey cheeks and sleepy eyes, carrying instruments, flags, batons and clothes to change into when they came back to school.

Band director Tim Schumacher reminded the students of the importance of this morning's ceremony before the buses were loaded. Once loaded, they led a caravan of USD 489 buses and vans, carrying students, principals and teachers, out of town.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime thing," Schumacher said. "I don't think they realize what the honor is."



Thousands of schoolchildren help swell Dole's audience.

Photo by Jim Evans

"I'm real excited."

During the bus ride the students talked about what time they got up this morning, what went on during the weekend and Dole's announcement.

"He's come along way from a small town," said Misty Augustine. "Kansas never gets anything."

Misty, 13, is an eighth-grader at Kennedy and a flutist in the band. She is the daughter of Ron and Debbie Augustine, 1322 Lawrence.

In another decade, when Misty is 23, she said one of the biggest problems facing the world would be keeping peace among nations. She said she would tell Dole, if he is elected president, "that the world should have peace ... everyone should get along."

Misty would give the presidential contender a bit of moral support. "Hang in there," she would tell Dole. "You're doing great."

All of the students from Damar Junior High, about 45 of them, traveled to the Russell event.

"It's history," said 13-year-old Heather Alphin. "It's going to be history."

She said it would be exciting in 50 years to tell her grandchildren that she was witness to part of Dole's presidential campaign. Heather is the daughter of Charlie and Cathy Alphin, Damar.

"We'll never have this opportunity again," said Charles Stahl, principal of the junior high. "The experience of being down here and seeing democracy in action ... They can see that it's possible to do it."



Sen. Robert Dole greets hometown supporters after announcing his presidential candidacy this morning.

Photo by Charlie Riedel

## Protesters were a minority

By MIKE CORN

RUSSELL — The number of people who chose to disagree with Bob Dole's ideology were clearly in the minority this morning.

But the presidential hopeful was well aware of the message they carried. Lined along a back street, the protesters waved banners and signs as Dole's motorcade by Dole waved.

Protest issues centered on the farm crisis and aid to Contras. A tractorcade that had been suggested last week never materialized, although at least one black-draped tractor stood guard at the south end of Russell.

The protesters, numbering about 100 in all, were generally unobtrusive, except for the signs and banners they carried.

Anti-Contra forces carried their signs and banners into the area surrounded by bleachers, as did a few farmers. Most farmers, however, remained outside the bleachers, talking among themselves and with reporters.

The darling of the press was Stephen Anderson, an Alma farmer and state spokesman for the American Agriculture Movement. Reporters were attracted to Anderson — and his wheelbarrow filled with horse manure — like flies. The "Farm Policy" placard atop the manure announced his views of the nation's attitude toward farming.

As far as conditions on the farm are concerned, the message was straightforward. "The crisis is not over," one unidentified farmer said.

"We're here to say it's not over," said Prait farmer Ed Petrovsky. "It hasn't gotten any better. I don't think there's a small town in Kansas that's not in a world of hurt."

Anderson said the tractorcade had been canceled, adding that his group had been asked to move the tractor from its initial location at the sale barn, directly across the street from Dole's headquarters.

"Under (Dole's) guidance we've suffered some of the worst economic times in my lifetime," Anderson said.

Anderson went on to say that he thinks

farmers should be paid for the food they produce at levels on par with that paid for military equipment. Instead, he said, military equipment is sold at a profit and commodities are sold as surplus.

"We just came up to mingle," he said. "We're a disorganized, organized mass of confusion. We're farmers and proud of it and would like to continue to farm for a profit."

Anderson went on to say that he plans to resign as state spokesman for the AAM in December, because of the farm economy. "It's too much for the nerves," he said. "Two years is long enough."

Opponents of aid to the Contras were better represented, but well-behaved. After learning Dole's exit route, they positioned themselves and followed instructions from sheriff's officers.

In all, 14 groups, most concerned with the Contra-aid issue, protested. "Aid Farmers Not Contras," banners and buttons read.

"We just don't like his policy on Contra aid," said Kim Ricke, a Marymount sophomore.

"Everybody here thinks he's great. Nobody's going to say anything bad. Somebody has to."

Father Frank Coady, a former Russell resident, was among those objecting to Dole's Contra stance.

"We're a peace group," he said. "We're not really opposed to Dole for president, but if he does go to the White House, he ought to know he has constituents who are concerned about aid to Contras."

Coady said he is also concerned about what is happening to the state's farmers. His brother still farms in Russell County, and is not unlike other farmers today.

"He's struggling like all of them," he said. "Our concern is that we stop Contra aid ... and see peace in Central America," said Tom Lamar, a Wichita man.

"And we may be looking at the next president of the United States," he said.



Photo by Jim Evans

Signs of protest were scattered among the hundreds of supportive signs.

## Dole pledges a strong US defense

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The Europeans, he said, "must recognize that an alliance is a two-way street. It is high time for those who owe their security to American military might to assume their rightful roles and bear their rightful burdens in the defense of their common interests."

Dole said President Ronald Reagan's policies had rebuilt the strength of the country. He pledged to continue them. "The Strategic Defense Initiative is our best insurance policy for securing a future," he said. "There must be no curbs on research."

Dole said he would begin deployment when SDI is ready, but he would also be willing to negotiate with the Soviet Union, as long as the negotiations led to reductions in missiles that could strike "right here."

Any treaty with the Soviets, he said, must be verifiable, and must be accompanied by a restored balance of conventional forces.

"Will you give me the opportunity to make a difference by being elected the president of the United States," he asked the crowd at the end of the rally.

He was greeted with a cheer; 10,000 yellow and blue balloons were released into the air. He will ask the same question twice more today, but perhaps slightly behind schedule. He was scheduled to leave Russell by 10 a.m., but was still in the crowd shaking hands at that time.

His schedule called for him to make similar announcements today at the Bernie Thomas farm, outside Waukeech, Iowa, near Des Moines, and later in Manchester, N. H.