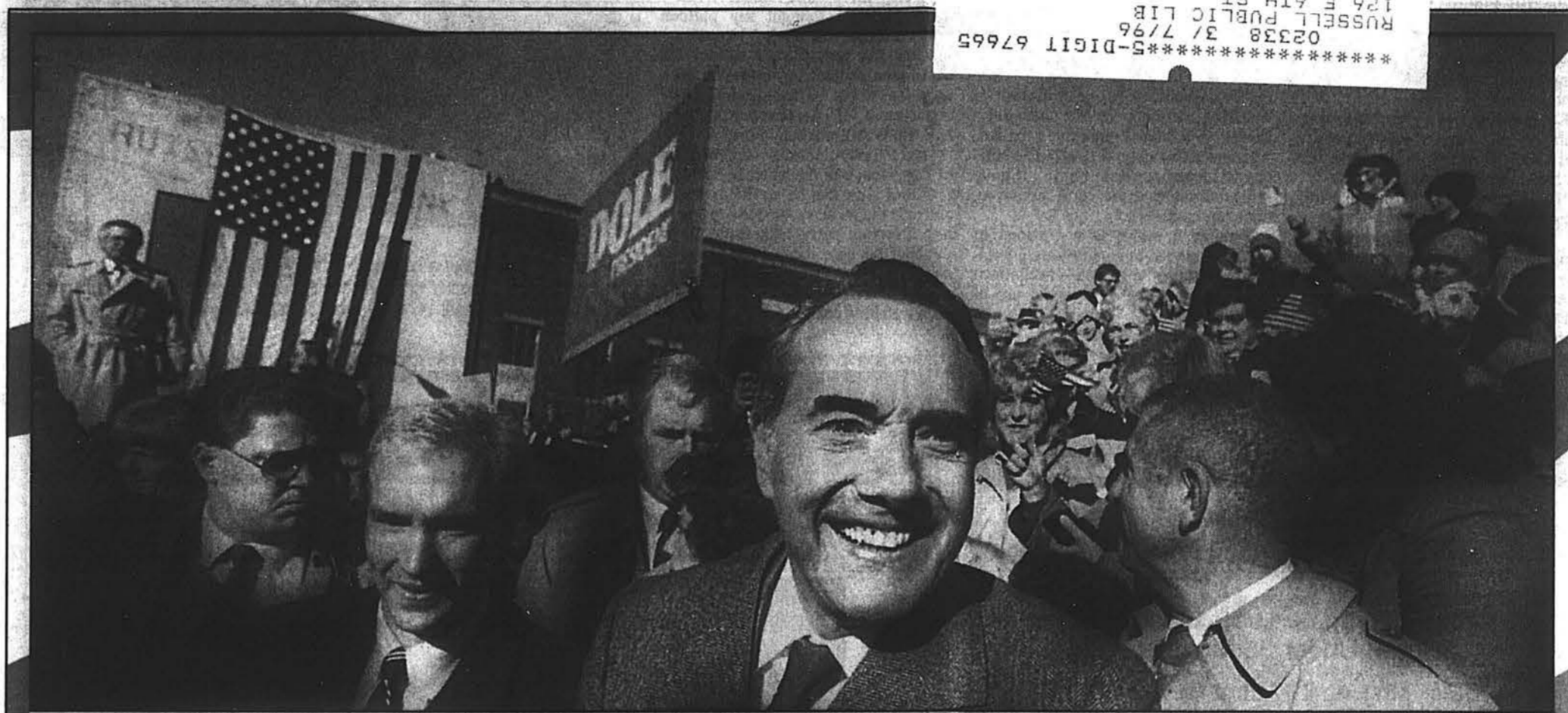


The Hays Daily News

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Bob Dole works the crowd after announcing his bid for the 1988 presidential nomination in Russell in November 1987.

CHARLIE RIEDEL / Hays Daily News

Russell's tradition continues with Dole appearance

Town has gone all out for his previous stints

By MARY CLARKIN
Hays Daily News

RUSSELL — When President Gerald Ford and Sen. Robert Dole launched their 1976 Republican presidential campaign with a visit to Russell, it sent Dole's hometown scrambling for hotdog buns, even sending out an order as far away as Hutchinson.

The Ford-Dole visit to Russell on that Friday in August 1976 lasted only about an hour, but Russell prepared a hotdog barbecue picnic for well over a thousand people on the Russell County Courthouse lawn with less than 24 hours notice.

Dole returned to Russell in 1979 to announce his bid for the Republican presidential nomination in the 1980 race for the White House, and again when he threw his hat in the ring in 1987 for the 1988 presidential election.

Dole will keep the tradition going when he attends a pancake breakfast in Russell Friday morning, nearing the end of a whirlwind week marking Dole's entry into the 1986 Republican presidential sweepstakes.

A Dole announcement has the power to double, at least temporarily, the population of his hometown of Russell, with not quite 5,000 residents.

And the visitors are not all members of the media, although sometimes it may seem like that.

"They're like ants on a hot skillet," Russell businessman Dean Banker was quoted as saying in 1976 when the national press trailed Ford and Dole from the Republican National Convention in Kansas City to Russell.

A Russell Chamber of Commerce official estimated at the time that the hotdogs and politicians attracted 10,000 visitors to Russell on Aug. 20, 1976.

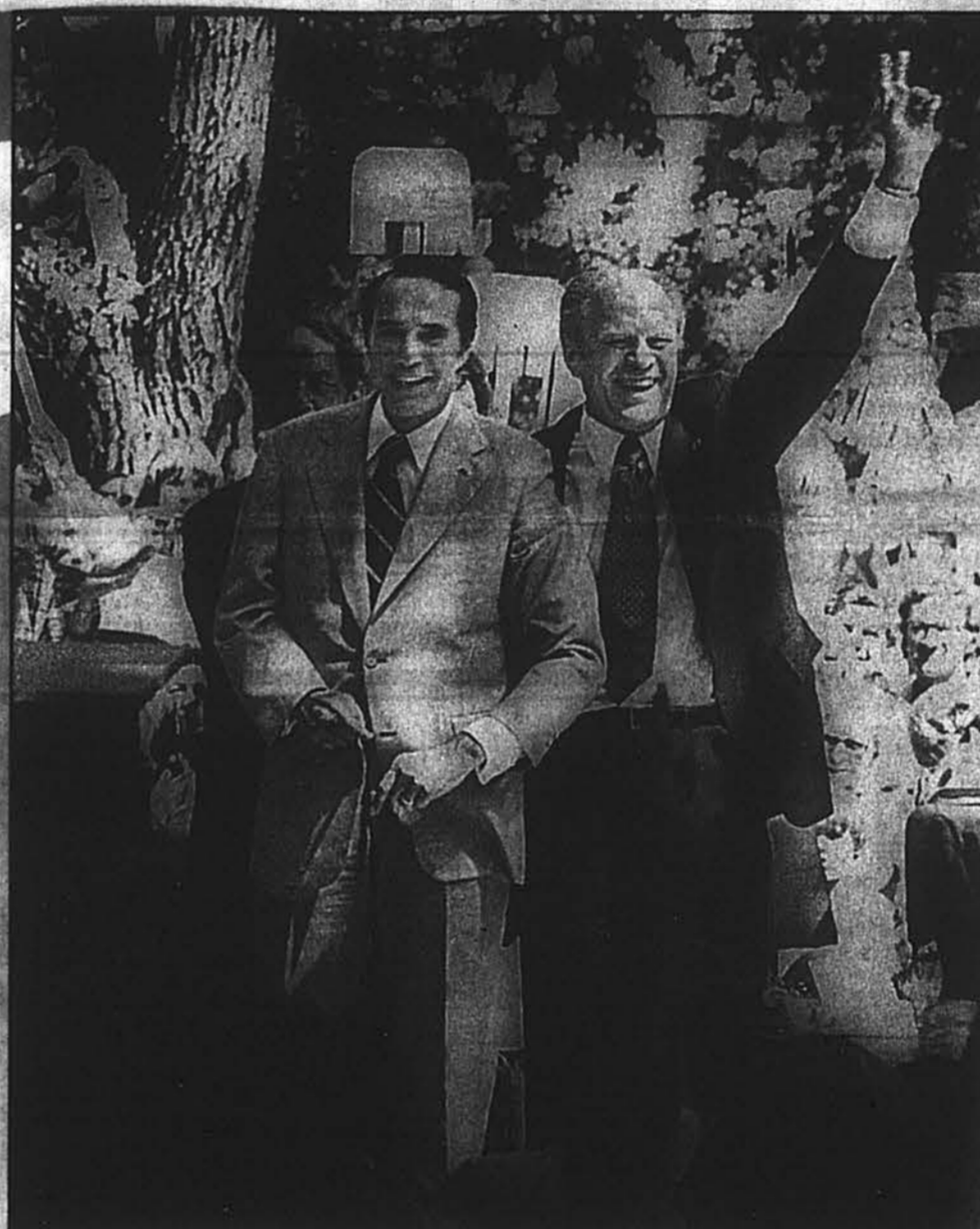
Russell resident and retired teacher Blanche Caldwell remembers that "the town was absolutely jam-packed."

By comparison, Dole's entry into the 1980 race was considerably calmer. There was an outdoor announcement on May 14, 1979, at Eighth and Maple — between the city administration building and The Russell Daily News.

"Of course, The Russell Daily News didn't pick the place," said former publisher Russell Townsley, but he allowed that it was quite convenient.

While the event drew several thousand people, Caldwell said she doesn't recall too much about the occasion.

Balloons, bands and hoopla were plentiful on Nov. 9, 1987, when Dole made another cam-



FILE / Russell County Historical Society

Dole, the 1976 vice presidential candidate of President Gerald Ford, and Ford campaign in Russell shortly after the Republican National Convention.

paign declaration — this time near Eighth and Main. The crowd size was larger than in 1979, with estimates of between 6,000 and 7,000 people.

"Oh, it was cold," Caldwell said. The chilly weather on that November Monday also was the most vivid memory for Tim Schumacher, who was then director of Hays' Kennedy Middle School Irish Marching Band.

Schumacher felt particularly sympathetic for the flag girls, dressed in small outfits, so he loaned his trench coat to a couple of girls

who huddled in it.

Caldwell has not missed a Dole announcement celebration, and she plans to attend the pancake breakfast Friday.

"He is so loyal to this town. He always said, 'I know where I came from,'" Caldwell said. "You can tell I'm a pretty good fan of his," she added.

Both Caldwell and Townsley spoke of Dole's photographic memory and his ability to remember names and faces.

"A lot of people feel real close to Bob Dole," Townsley said.

Pancake feed Friday will have an informal feel

By ADELE SHAVER
Hays Daily News

RUSSELL — Bob Dole has never made it a practice to appear at public gatherings where people are charged admission to see him, according to Russell resident Russell Townsley.

So it has turned out that the Dole campaign will pick up the tab for a pancake breakfast townspeople wanted to have as a reception for the Kansas senator and Republican presidential candidate on Friday.

"The idea was to have a celebration," Townsley said. "Bob decided pancakes would be a great idea."

Townsley, part of an impromptu committee organized to arrange the breakfast about a month ago, said that they estimated the cost could be as much as \$5,000.

The committee had agreed to raise the money and had already started when the Dole committee offered to pay for it, Townsley said.

"We're not charging his friends to come and see him," he explained. "We want everyone to come."

Townsley said he expected as many as 1,500 people to turn out.

The pancakes will be served from 8 to 11 a.m. Friday at the Memorial Park adjacent to the Russell VFW. In case of bad weather, the event will be moved inside the VFW hall.

The Russell visit caps Dole's first week of official campaigning with a public homecoming as well as several private family gatherings.

Since Monday's official announcement in Topeka, Dole will have crisscrossed the country and campaigned in a half dozen states.

But the main point of Friday's event is simply to visit family and friends. No formal campaign events have been planned for Friday afternoon, so as not to conflict with Good Friday services.

Still, Dole picked the date on purpose. April 14 is the 50th anniversary of the day Dole was wounded in a battle in the Italian Alps in World War II. His near-fatal injuries changed the course of his life, making him abandon plans to become a doctor. With his wounded arm, he put aside plans to work with his hands and turned instead to a career in law that eventually led to public office.

Townsley said part of the significance of remembering that day in Russell comes from the contributions Russell people made to Dole's recovery.

The \$1,800 they raised paid for surgery the Army couldn't provide.

War hero Dole ready for 'one more mission'

By CURT ANDERSON
Associated Press

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — Fifty years ago, young Lt. Bob Dole went down in a hail of Nazi bullets on a rocky field in Italy. His sergeant, frightened and crying, crawled into the line of fire and edged toward the severely wounded officer.

German machine gunners, hiding in a stone house surrounded by a mine field, had pinned down units of the Army's 10th Mountain Division as they tried to advance on Hill 93 in the waning days of World War II.

Dole's platoon was trying to get close enough to the house to throw in grenades and take out the machine gun nest.

"They had a perfect field of fire," Sgt. Frank Catala said of the Germans. "They could have killed every person that went out on that field."

In an emotional interview at his home, Caldwell said he remembers how the Dole Dole called out his name, and how he crawled into the unexpected field as the New



An undated photograph shows a young Bob Dole looking through the sights of a rifle during the war.

Dole tells Colorado he's the man for the West

DENVER (AP) — Republican presidential hopeful Sen. Bob Dole launched his campaign Monday with a bid for tax cuts and a balanced federal budget.

He signed a pledge to cut taxes. His failure to do that is what he blames for the demise of that presidential bid. Dole said this time a Republican-controlled Congress would ensure tax cuts are coupled with spending reductions.

Dole also called for reform of the welfare system, saying that states should be given more authority to administer their own welfare programs. He said he would like to see the federal government take more responsibility for the welfare of its citizens.

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