

Friendly warning: When you see Dole motorcade, get out of the way

By KRISTEN L. HAYS
The Capital-Journal

NEW YORK -- A motorcade through New York City on a typical smog- and traffic-filled Tuesday morning is no walk in Central Park.

OK, it may resemble Central Park after dark. Last Tuesday, the second day of U.S. Senate majority leader Bob Dole's weeklong presidential candidacy announcement tour, Dole, his campaign staff, and 13 reporters and photographers hopped in a string of cars

and vans in a motorcade to New York's La Guardia Airport from the Sheraton New York in Manhattan.

For at least half the trip, New York police weren't in sight for traffic control. And although streets have the same painted lines and stoplights as any other city, no one pays attention.

That can make it pretty difficult for so many vehicles to stick together, but this motorcade stuff is serious business. It was white-knuckle time for CNN reporters Candy Crowley and Mike Roselli.

But Dole campaign staffers in the front of

one of the vans paid little attention as driver Steve Hulden swerved within inches of cars to the right and left to prevent other drivers from merging with the motorcade. Seat belts? They didn't even reach for them.

"Only in New York would this be impressive," Crowley said.

"You're a dynamite passenger," Hulden said to Dole's political director Jill Hanson, who sat nonchalantly in the passenger seat during jerky stops, starts and swerves.

"I haven't flinched once," she noted. Hulden took his job seriously. When a New York cab driver nearly cut in front of the van,

Hulden gunned the engine and stuck his left hand out the window. "No!" he barked, pointing at the cabbie.

"Hey, we're a populist campaign," a staffer joked. "Get out of the way."

Hulden was equally unbending with pedestrians, cutting in front of walkways and eliciting annoyed glares.

"We just lost a few votes there," the staffer said. "Maybe we should throw up a Gramm sign."

Each vehicle sported a "Dole for President" sign on the dashboard. Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas is one of Dole's most ardent

competitors for the GOP nomination.

At the airport, the staffers jumped from the van while reporters shook off fear from the wild ride. Hulden said he works for a security company hired to transport Dole's staff and media. "safely. I might add."

What security company?

"That's classified," he said. Crowley recalled a similar motorcade experience with Ronald Reagan during his administration.

"Hey, I don't mind dying for a cause," she said. "but somehow with Reagan on the way to a golf course just won't do."

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For '96, it's plain ol' Bob so far

In Washington, he's "the Senator," but on his home turf, he is simply "Bob." The biggest trick of U.S. Senate majority leader Bob Dole's third run for the presidency may not be unifying the split between GOP conservatives and moderates.

The secret to his success may be whether the 35-year Washington insider and power broker can be the "Bob" so fondly embraced in Russell to voters across the country.

"Oh, we went to school with Bob," said Russell native Rich Reynolds as he and his wife, Nat, waited for the taping of "Meet The Press" on Saturday in the auditorium of Ruppenthal Middle School. "We started at the same

time and ended up at the same time." "I'm Bob's cousin," Nat Reynolds chimed in. "Third or fourth somewhere, I don't know."

Whether the overt softening of Dole's persona in Russell came from fatigue after touring 10 states since Monday, a carefully crafted public relations effort or the return to a hometown as comfortable as a down pillow, there was a marked contrast between Bob the hometown hero and Bob the candidate.

On the road Dole's every move is part of a master schedule. At stops in five cities Monday and Tuesday, he had barely a few minutes to wave to small crowds that gathered to greet his arrival before hopping in a motorcade to rush to a scheduled appearance.

If he took time to shake a few hands after those appearances, campaign staffers stood close by waiting to whisk him to yet another fund-raiser or out of the public eye.

In the speech he gave during those stops, he said he wants to rein in government "so ordinary people like you and me can fill out a tax form without a lawyer or an accountant, or both."

"Dole, an ordinary guy? Even his most fervent supporters may doubt that.

But among his own people in Russell, the formal veneer disappears. Gone were the prepared speeches, TelePrompTers and tight schedules.

When he stepped off an airplane at the small Hays airport Thursday, he walked straight to the cheering crowd, shedding any semblance of aloofness.

When he arrived at his sister Norma Jean Steele's home in Russell less than an hour later, he lingered on the driveway, greeting neighbors and showing no annoyance at the few members of hovering news media.

Throughout the week campaign staffers insisted Dole, 71, is relaxed and at peace with himself. The quick temper that emerged during his 1988 presidential run and 1976 vice presidential run has melted, they say, enough that Dole has indicated if he doesn't win this third time around he may hang up his political hat when his current Senate term ends in 1998.

"Oh, yeah, I'm cool," he said during Saturday's taping when asked if he could keep his cool through the long months ahead.

We'll see. After all, he doesn't really need to campaign in Russell.



Sen. Bob Dole waved to supporters and media last Tuesday at New York's La Guardia Airport. Dole's presidential campaign is run by a staff of 30 people.

What it takes to keep Bob Dole In the light

Endless travel. Roughly 18-hour days. A knack for the

unexpected. And all for one man. For the seasoned crew of Sen. Dole, life doesn't get much better.

Finding a presidential candidate's campaign staff in a crowd isn't too tough — just look for the suits with wires.

They wear mini-microphones in their sleeves and ears, much like those worn in the Secret Service. At any given time, they either have a cellular telephone to their ears, the microphones to their lips or eyes on crowds at rallies, ever-conscious of schedules and what lies ahead.

An organized campaign is of paramount importance. Inner disorganization hurt U.S. Senate majority leader Bob Dole's second bid for the presidency in 1988, and this time his 30-member staff is taking no chances.

With help from hundreds of volunteers and GOP officials from the 10 states visited last week during Dole's presidential candidacy announcement tour, his staff planned rallies and fund-raisers designed to reflect positively on their boss down to the most minute of details.

That includes anything from the number of signs waving in crowds to the baskets of fruit and numerous newspapers provided to national media traveling with Dole on his campaign airplane.

Staff members appear unflappable because any sign of fatigue or disorganization on their part reflects badly on the candidate. As so-called "spin doctors," all the positive "spinning" or pro-Dole talk, in the world can backfire if careful planning doesn't come with the words.

Campaign life isn't easy. It means 16- to 18-hour days and often traveling to several cities in different states with different time zones in one day.

"All the days just fall into one," a staffer said in New York during Dole's tour. "My wife and I live here, but I go to Washington every Monday and come home on Saturday. You have 16-hour days."

They also shrug off minor inconveniences. "I left my makeup in Topeka," said Jennifer Rider, assistant press secretary for Dole, last Tuesday. Topeka was the first stop of the tour last Monday. "All I wanted today was some lipstick, so I asked that reporter from Vogue if I could use hers."

"I think it's been great," campaign political director Jill Hanson, predictably, said of Dole's

tour up to that point. "He's very upbeat. We're pretty up."

This campaign hired a team of professionals, Hanson said, who are bent on winning the nomination and then the presidency. That goal overrides everything else — personal lives, children, wives, husbands, and a full night's sleep.

Hanson is a campaign veteran. She worked for the successful Reagan-Bush ticket in 1984, and Bush's unsuccessful re-election attempt in 1992. She also has various Senate races on her resume. Dole's campaign manager, Scott Reed, was chief of staff of the Republican National Committee for two years prior to the campaign.

Though similarities between Dole's current campaign and Bush's successful 1988 campaign have been noted — such as early endorsements, particularly from state governors — Hanson waved off the notion that Dole "confiscated" Bush's 1988 playbook.

"We're running our campaign," she said. "Certainly Bush in '88 was similar, but Dole's maneuvers are 'by our choice, by our own strategy.'"

An added complication is the balance between Dole's duties as Senate majority leader and as a presidential candidate.

While the Senate is in session, Hanson said, the team works from its home base in Washington during the week. But weekends bring a furious campaign schedule, she said.

"I was on the team eight years ago and we learned from our mistakes very well," said deputy campaign manager Bill Lacy, who has been on Dole's staff for a decade. This time planning and organization replace 1988's inner turmoil.

Lacy also organizes state political races for govern-



Mark Rosenker, press advance director for Sen. Bob Dole's campaign, spoke to reporters on Dole's chartered jet last Tuesday.



"Let us begin today. Thank you." Those were the last words to appear on the TelePrompTer in Sen. Bob Dole's announcement speech last Tuesday in Des Moines, Iowa.

Story by Kristen Hays
Photographs by David Eulitt

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Dole in the light

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nors and other top state officials in different areas of the country. Interestingly enough, those jobs pay better. Money flowing into presidential campaigns has to stretch to cover costs of expensive national advertising and cross-country travel as well as staff.

That's why Dole was elated at raising \$3 million during his tour last week and gaining enough free national publicity to negate any need to buy advertising. It's a lifestyle choice, Dole's staffers admit loving politics as much as Dole.

"This is a quantum leap from statewide campaigns," Lacy said. "I do those to eat, but this is what I love — the snap decisions, the changes in direction."

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