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Business

Wavy Gravy makes debut 'Gravy Train' rolls into Austin

By PAT RYAN
Texas Staff Writer

On this quiet autumn afternoon the neighborhood should not have been disturbed, but it had no choice.

A bus pulled up in front of the house. The loud and oddly-dressed enchanter Skip Slyfield jumped out and directed the bus into the driveway with the greeting "Welcome to Squalid Oaks;" the door of the bus opened, and two men in red, two in blue, two women and a small child jumped out and began cavorting on the dying, autumn-browned grass.

The side of the bus bore the directive "Nobody for President in 1976."

According to the leader of this band of marauders, that is exactly who is running — nobody.

Wavy Gravy is the manager of the Nobody for President campaign. An old hand at presidential politics, Gravy ran a pig for president in 1968, "the first female black and white candidate." In 1972, he ran a rock for president and a roll for vice-president, making it possible "to eat the vice-

president."

"Nobody has been in the collective unconscious for a long time," Gravy said, "and we're just trying to bring it out."

Along with the presidential campaign, Gravy said he also is "trying to buy back the earth and deed it to itself, since nobody was here first."

The first rally for Nobody was last June in Berkeley. It caused such a wave of interest that a columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle ran a six-week series of columns on nobody.

From there Gravy took the campaign to New York for the Democratic national convention, setting up on the sidewalk in front of Madison Square Garden with buttons and bumper stickers, "pushing our wares and our awareness."

While in New York the Nobody campaign picked up the endorsement of the Under-the-Counter Culture, led by Margo St. James and Paul Kastner, among others.

Then it was off to Kansas City for the Republican soiree, where the Youth Inter-

national party abandoned its candidates, a kangaroo and Richard Nixon ("Kangaroo and Tricky, too"), and moved into the Nobody camp.

Gravy had a backstage pass in Kansas City. While passing out coffee and donuts to the press he was ousted by the Secret Service.

When they frisked him they found a bulge in his pocket: Gravy took out a set of chattering teeth. An agent who tried to speak was silenced by Gravy with the admonition "Our leader is talking." The agents hustled Gravy out of Kemper Arena telling him "You're much too weird to arrest."

The highlight of the week in Kansas City was a ticker-tape parade: an open convertible moved down the street with nobody in the back seat.

Gravy is one of the persons who thinks that Nobody won the first presidential debate. Since the League of Women Voters would not allow Nobody to participate, Gravy said Nobody "offed the amps" and spoke for 23 minutes, coming away the clear winner.

Nobody is picking up support from many and varied quarters, Gravy said happily, noting that the Teamsters Union just last week came out in favor of Nobody.

The object of the Nobody campaign is to give the American government back to the American people, Gravy said. "We want to see 'none of the above' or 'nobody' on the ballot."

Secondly, "We want to abolish the offices of president and vice-president and let Congress run the country. If we need an official greeter we'll get Paul Newman or Harry Belafonte. Probably Harry, because he needs the work more."

What if Nobody wins the election?

"Nobody's gonna win, because nobody's running."

"We're using humor to vibrate a concept — Nobody for President. And maybe, if we all work together, it will work," Gravy said.

The "Gravy Train," which just arrived from a rousing successful rally at the University of New Mexico, will be in Washington, D.C., next week,



—Texas Staff Photo by Howard Farnby

Wavy Gravy (center) with friends Skip Slyfield and Curtis Spangler

and will go from there to New York City where, on election night, they will host a party in Washington Square Park to celebrate nobody's victory.

They will stage a rally on the East Mall, in the Free

Speech Area, at noon Friday. Art & Sausages and the Austin Theater Group will perform "Brain Police," to be followed by the Uranium Savages, Nobody, and his spokesman, Wavy Gravy.