

Wine-making is hard, but can be profitable

(Continued from page 1.)

said, is the climate. "The best climate needed to produce high quality wine grapes, is one with low night temperatures during the growing season." Lubbock, El Paso, and the higher elevations of the Hill Country have this type of climate.

Another reason Texas is "ripe" for the wine industry, Perry said, is "we have so many lawyers and doctors and oilmen, who are looking for a tax shelter and the romanticism that grapes offer.

"These people are from urban areas," he said. "They buy a weekend ranch and hire someone to grow grapes for them."

Perry said a great deal of money is needed to get started in grape growing. "Your initial investment is high and it may take you five years to realize a profit."

"It will cost you \$1,500 to \$2,000 an acre to establish a vineyard," he said. "But if you are someone like a doctor or an oilman, with the necessary operating funds and the right people to care for your grapes, you can make money."

Perry said a large wine industry within the state wouldn't necessarily mean lower prices for Texas wine drinkers.

"The benefit would be more employment opportunities."

Perry explained that there are only four wineries in the state, and they process all the wine grapes grown here. If grape production increases, more wineries will have to be built, he said.

Perry said, as noting another benefit, the wine industry would offer an alternative to farmers.

Grapes are a high cash value crop he said. "You can probably grow 10 acres of grapes and make the same amount of money as somebody growing 200 acres of cotton."

Perry said even with the high initial investment "you can still net \$800 to \$1,000 an acre."

With an opportunity for such a profit, it may seem strange that only 350 acres of Texas land would be in grape production.

"We have lots of people who come to us and want to grow 100 acres of grapes," he said. "But when they see how much labor is required they lose their enthusiasm and plant a couple of acres.

"Growing grapes is a skill you have to learn," he said. "There are about 400 vines on every acre, and you have to train each one to grow the right way."

Perry said he knows an expanded wine industry in the state would not be totally accepted, because of the "conservative religious attitudes of many Texans."

However, attitudes are becoming more liberal, he said.

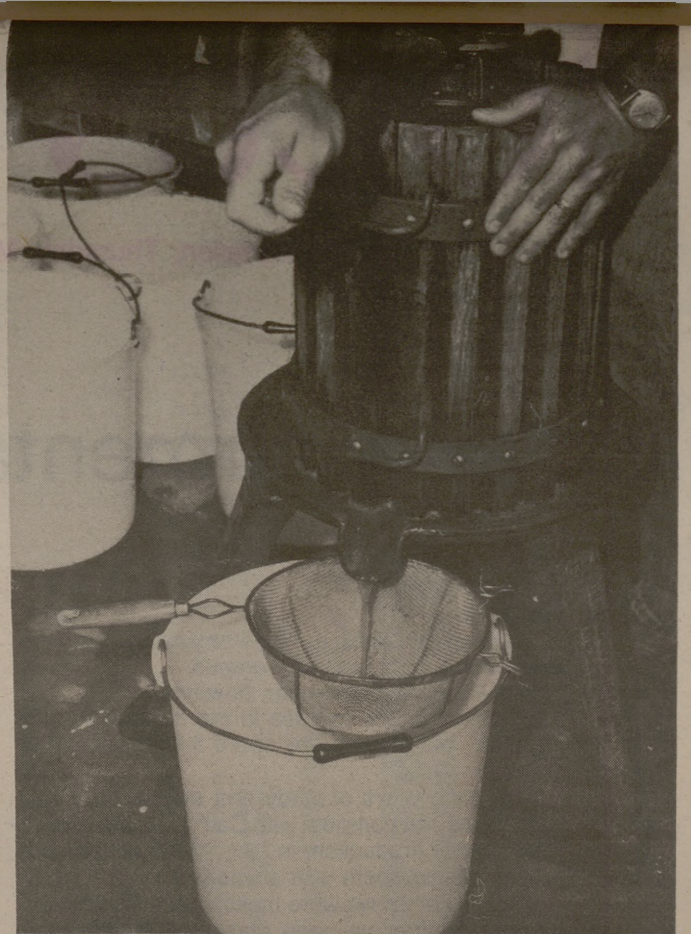
"More and more counties are becoming 'wet'."

Perry said a new law, called the Texas Farm Wine Law has been passed, that allows grapes to be grown and wine to be made in a dry county.

"We just can't sell it there," he said.

Perry predicted that 5,000 acres of Texas land will be planted in wine grapes in the next 20 years.

Perry said with the help of private funds, he will continue research in evaluating which varieties of grapes grow the best and produce the highest quality wine.



Photos by Doyle Gougler

Ron Perry presses French Columbard grapes to make his wine. On the cover, Perry crushes the Texas-grown grapes in the Pomology Lab on campus.

Beware of running; it can be addicting

By MARCY BOYCE
Battalion Reporter

To onlookers, those gazing out of windows or air-conditioned cars, running seems almost unnatural, a kind of self-inflicted pain, a physical

torture to which its victims refuse to surrender.

But, of the 25 million Americans who are out there daily putting one foot in front of the other, many say it's neither torture nor pain, rather

pleasure, satisfaction and a time totally for one's self.

Runners are no longer only track stars and athletes. Today all don their running shoes and head for the track, sidewalk or just about anywhere two feet can travel.

With this heightened interest over the past years, participants in marathons reached first the hundreds and then the thousands. Recently, for example, 650 participated in the Texas A&M University Marathon while 10,000 competed in the Boston Marathon a few weeks later.

In addition, according to Dr. George Jessup, the resident aerobics expert at Texas A&M, the physical education department had opened new sections in advanced aerobics to compensate for the increasing number of runners.

Industry, too, did its part in developing the craze by producing shoes and advertizing, presenting running as "something the beautiful people do," said Jessup. They created a brand new fashion, he said.

Both the manager at Athletic Attic and at Wyatt's Sporting Goods said that 75 to 80 percent of their customers seek merchandise related to running. They also said a runner will pay anywhere from \$19.95 to \$50 for a pair of shoes.

Jessup said this heightened interest in running originated back in the 1950s when the United States was pressing to keep up with the Russians, who at that time were much better fit.

However, Jessup said, people's reasons for improving their physical condition were wrong.

"People were doing it because they felt they had to," he said. "But then in the '70s a population gradually developed of people that just enjoyed running and it even became a type of social affair."

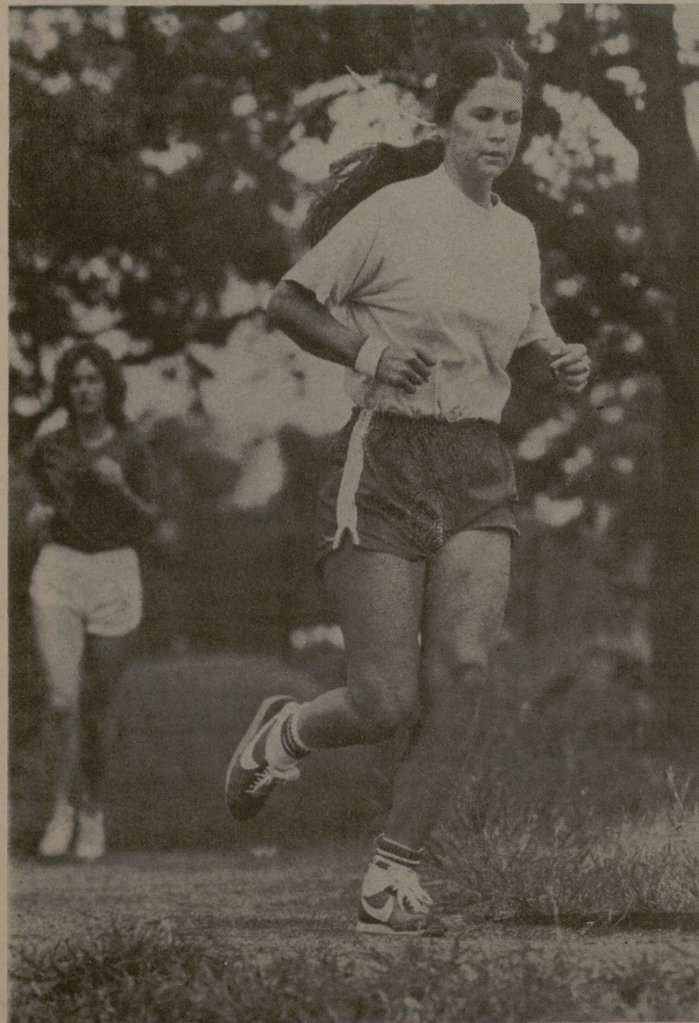
Craig Corder, a senior in veteri-

nary medicine who runs about 50 miles a week, said he started running in high school because, "I wasn't big enough to play football, I wanted to do something I was good at." Others said they weren't getting satisfaction from other sports. Some of the most common reasons given for taking up running, however, were to get in shape, exercise and lose weight.

Most of the runners found that as they continued their program they reaped some unexpected benefits as well. "Surprisingly, running ap-

pears to have helped me handle more diverse situations," said Don Kirby, a doctoral candidate in range science who completed a 50-mile run in 1975. "I can do three to four things at one time because I'm more relaxed," he said.

Scott Myers, a sophomore animal science major who recently competed in the Boston Marathon, said he feels better in general since he started running. "I have more energy and I like knowing I'm in shape," he said.



In the past few years, jogging has become one of the top forms of exercise, mental relaxation and weight reducing.

Photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

focus

THE BATTALION

Focus is published every Thursday as an entertainment section of *The Battalion*.

Policy: *Focus* will accept any stories, drawings or photographs that are submitted for publication, although the decision to publish lies solely with the editor. Pieces submitted, printed or not, will be returned upon request. Deadline is 5 p.m. the Friday before publication.

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