

Italian wine guide now available

United Press International
 NEW YORK — A wallet-sized, updated vintage guide to Italian wines is being distributed free by the Italian Wine Promotion Center. It covers the 1961 to 1977 vintages of 28 varieties, lists wines by types and

indicates which wines would benefit from aging and which are at their best drinking stage now. To obtain a copy of the guide, write: Italian Wine Promotion Center, One World Trade Center, Suite 2057, New York, N.Y.

Republicans look for gains in Texas primary elections

United Press International
 AUSTIN — The gains are not flashy but Republican Party officials believe political campaigns across the state demonstrate substantial growth in the GOP.
 The prospect of a hot race between four leading Republican presidential prospects — Ronald Reagan, John Connally, George Bush and Howard Baker — on the May 3 Republican primary ballot and the presence of

the state's first Republican governor since Reconstruction has spurred GOP activity in areas of the state where no one has ever been labeled Republican.
 "At the present time we have county chairmen in 235 of the (state's) 254 counties," said GOP state chairman Chester R. Upham. "We're anticipating a primary election in every county. This will be the first time that's ever happened."

In 1976 when Texas law for the first time allowed parties to conduct binding presidential preference primaries and the state became a critical battlefield for Reagan and then President Gerald Ford, primary elections were conducted in only 175 of the 254 counties because GOP officials could not find local residents willing to organize and ballot as Republicans.

"We got much more participation at the county level than I think we've ever had before," Upham said.
 GOP ballots for nomination to local offices across the state will be longer and in many cases include names of individuals formerly elected to office as Democrats.
 "We're enjoying more turnout in more places than ever before," Upham said. "We hope to double our representation in the Legislature."
 Republicans now hold only 24 of the 150 seats in the Texas House of Representatives and five of the 31 Senate spots.
 Three of the current GOP lawmakers were elected as Democrats and switched parties only late in

1979. Of that three, Sen. Bill Braecklein, R-Dallas, opted not to seek reelection and one of the two representatives, Rep. Clay Smothers, R-Dallas, is relinquishing his seat to run for Congress.
 Upham, however, said Republicans expect to retain their present seats and gain 20 to 30 new House members and possibly seven senators.

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Houston Chronicle

Boxer denies saying Carter used him in Africa

United Press International
 WASHINGTON — Muhammad Ali denies that he said President Carter may have taken advantage of him by sending him to confront African opposition to a boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics.
 The former heavyweight boxing champion returned to Andrews Air Force Base Sunday, looking tired and speaking almost in whispers. Carter's request, he traveled to African nations to seek support for the president's campaign to boycott the Olympics.
 He said the trip was "75 percent successful," and he would do it again if Carter asked him.
 Last week, Ali suggested his administration might have been using him, after reporters in Tanzania criticized him for seeking African support when the United States had failed to back black boycotts aimed at South Africa.
 Ali was quoted at the time as saying he would tell Carter that "what you want the Africans to do is something you wouldn't do for them."
 "Maybe I'm being used to do something that ain't right," he said.
 But Sunday, Ali told U.S. reporters, "I didn't say the Carter administration was taking advantage of me. I wouldn't say that about my president."
 Ali declined to talk about the trip in detail, saying he would have to report to Carter first.

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