

Taylor to host a 10K for women. After hearing the slogan, "Exercise your body, Bonne Bell your face," more than 600 women showed up on the Hike and Bike Trail to run the first-ever all-women's race in Texas.

L'eggs followed in Dallas in September while Avon sponsored a half marathon in The Woodlands in 1979 in conjunction with its push to promote women's running world-wide.

RIGHT: Houston mayor Jim McConn (right) proclaims "Bob Kaufman" Day. Still, it was a bitter year for Kaufman, picked by many experts to break Bruce Jenner's Olympic decathlon record, when President Jimmy Carter ordered an American boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980. Kaufman and other disappointed Texas athletes stayed home.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: In 1978, women's world marathon recordholder Jacqueline Hansen, Gulf AAU marathon champion Peggy Kokernot, national AAU marathon champion Leal-Ann Rinehart and Gulf AAU masters champion Mary Cullen were living proof women could run the 26.2-mile marathon distance. Hansen and Rinehart, both Californians, lobbied across the country for the inclusion of a woman's marathon in the Olympic Games, while Texans Kokernot and Cullen used their influence to gather support for women's running and the Olympic event in the Lone Star State. In 1984, their dream was realized in Los Angeles as Joan Benoit won a gold medal for the United States in the first-ever Olympic Marathon for women. —Photo by Joanne Schmidt.

Texas was the site of numerous national championship running events over the last decade, attracting the country's elite in distances from 10K through the marathon. Among the top events were the U.S. Cross Country Championships held in Waco in 1985 (above) and 1986, and in Dallas in 1987. —Photo by Cathy Gubin.