

Classes motivate gang members

Breakdancing teaches unity

United Press International
BOSTON — The throbbing music ignites the imaginations and bodies of the excited youngsters awaiting the signal from instructors Duggin and Marlene Hill.
 With the boys and girls spread over a basketball court, Hill shouts, "OK, let's see your stuff."
 As the more advanced members of the class polish their "windmills" and the beginners concentrate on "waves," these ordinarily gang-oriented adolescents are united in the comradery of break dancing.
 The Hills, teaching free classes in 10 neighborhoods in Boston each week, are determined to motivate aimless, bored and violence-prone youth with the lure of an acrobatic style of dancing born on New York City streets.
 "What you see is raw, wild talent," Hill said, as 50 participants ranging from gawky but diligent 4-year-olds to streetwise teens concentrated on the latest dance craze with its mix of disco steps, acrobatics and marionette-like

movements.
 The Hills, used to the sophisticated modern jazz numbers of Las Vegas nightclubs and the Playboy Club circuit, have found their biggest challenge in turning youths off drugs and delinquency and onto break dancing.
 "The kids know they can't get high and manage the body twirls, spins and flips they're so anxious to learn," Mrs. Hill said.
 "Since the maneuvers we teach and those they create can be practiced anywhere, they finally have something to occupy their time," she said. She added they can break dance on the street, on a piece of cardboard over the pavement.
 "Break dancing is a real breakthrough for these youngsters. It directs their energies toward something positive. It also promotes sharing and cooperation," Mrs. Hill said, adding these were qualities previously alien to many of them.
 Noticing the restlessness of the youngsters living in her own neighborhood, Mrs. Hill, 29, and her husband, who is 31, decided

to start break dancing lessons in a nearby park.
 "The kids loved it," Mrs. Hill said.
 Soon the couple's apartment was filled with youthful enthusiasts diligently working their way from the simplest body gestures to the more difficult "breaks" — floor movements such as the "windmill" spin on the back while bringing the legs overhead.
 Even the Hill's 4-year-old son is infatuated with his new pastime.
 The sessions became so popular the Hills decided to offer them throughout the city in facilities supplied by the Parks and Recreation Department.
 The turnout overwhelmed everyone except the Hills, who divided the hundreds of aspiring break dancers into smaller groups of 50 the pair could handle.
 The Hills find that tension between different ethnic and racial groups evaporates as youngsters synchronize into routines. Kids who used to quarrel now delight in forming a line and moving their arms to simulate the motions of a wave.


Young girls who previously balked at exercising now good-naturedly limber up with Mrs. Hill, adapting their stretches and leaps to the music.
 "I'm really getting into it," gushed Kari McBee, 11, acknowledging she would be "watching soap operas or hanging around" if it were not for the lessons.
 Pointing to her prancing friends, Kari said, "What we'd really like is to become good enough to perform as a group."
 "The discipline they learn here carries over to other areas of their lives," Mrs. Hill said. Grateful parents tell her of their child's improved attitude and better eating habits to keep in shape.
 The Hills discourage head spins, citing the possibility of broken necks, and continually emphasize proper weight distribution to avoid unnecessary sprains.
 The desire to emulate the successful, professional break groups and their symmetry is the most positive motivation, Hill said.
 "These kids are streetwise," he said. "Nothing has captured their imaginations like breaking."


Disney purchases greeting card firm

United Press International
BURBANK, Calif. — Walt Disney Productions continued its corporate buying spree, announcing Wednesday it plans to acquire Gibson Greetings Inc., the nation's third largest greeting card company, for an estimated \$300 million in Disney common stock.
 The Gibson acquisition is Disney's second major corporate purchase in as many weeks. At a May 17 press conference, Disney Chairman Raymond Watson and President Ron Miller announced the purchase of Arvida Corp., a Florida-based real estate firm, for \$200 million in Disney stock.
 Both moves are widely interpreted as means to avert a takeover by New York financier Saul Steinberg, whose family-owned Reliance Financial Services owns 12.2 percent of Disney stock.
 Miller refused at Wednesday's press conference to answer any questions about Steinberg on advice of Disney attorneys, he said.
 Disney decided to purchase Gibson, whose greeting cards have been sold at Disneyland for almost 30 years, after conferring

with Disney's New York investment counselor, Morgan Stanley. Stanley called the terms of the merger fair to Disney shareholders.
 Gibson was purchased by its current management from RCA in 1982 for \$80 million. Watson said it was unfair to compare that figure with the estimated \$300 million Disney will pay for the greeting card company.
 "Nobody would ever buy real estate if you compared past and present prices," Watson said.
 For the 12 months ended March 31, 1984, Gibson showed a profit of \$23.2 million. That figure could be used against Steinberg if he claims — as he did with the Arvida acquisition — that the Gibson purchase will be detrimental to Disney shareholders.
 Gibson, which is based in Cincinnati and also has a gift-wrap division, has exclusive rights to use on its cards the Garfield cartoon character, Bugs Bunny, Sesame Street characters and non-exclusive rights to use Disney cartoon characters.

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