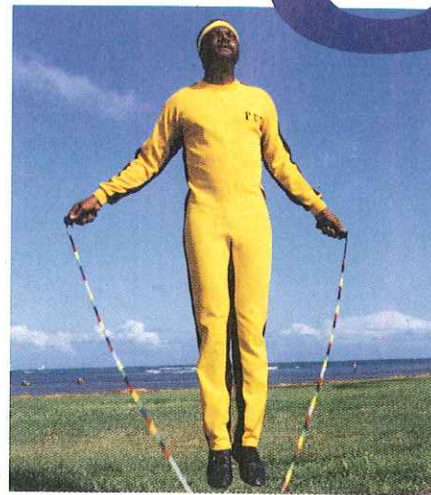


JUMPING,

T IRED OF JOGGING? SICK OF SWIMMING? Too chicken to rollerblade? Don't give up: Do like Donald Thomas, and jump rope your way to fitness. A vegetarian with seemingly boundless energy, Thomas is the creator of New Jump Swing, an exercise program that combines jumping rope with rhythmic music and aerobic dance. Advocated by the American Heart Association (AHA) because it improves coordination, relieves tension, enhances self-esteem and creates a positive body image, jumping rope has a couple of other advantages: "It's inexpensive, you can do it indoors, and you don't need eight other people to form a team," says Thomas.

On most days you can find Thomas, known as "the jump rope man" thanks to a stint as chairman of the AHA's Jump Rope for Heart program, skipping rope near Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, where he lives. That's where fitness trainer Stacey Cooper spotted him back in 1989. "Either the man's a crazy fool or he's about something important," thought Cooper. It wasn't the fact that Thomas was jumping that made an impression on Cooper. After all, jumping rope has long been recognized as a superb form of exercise by fitness enthusiasts and athletes—notably, boxers. It was the way he was jumping: In between typical one- and two-footed hops, Thomas was throwing in what looked like dance steps—toe, heel, toe, heel, side step, side step—intermittently swinging the rope like a cowboy with a lariat.

Calling attention to himself comes naturally to
(Continued on page 74)



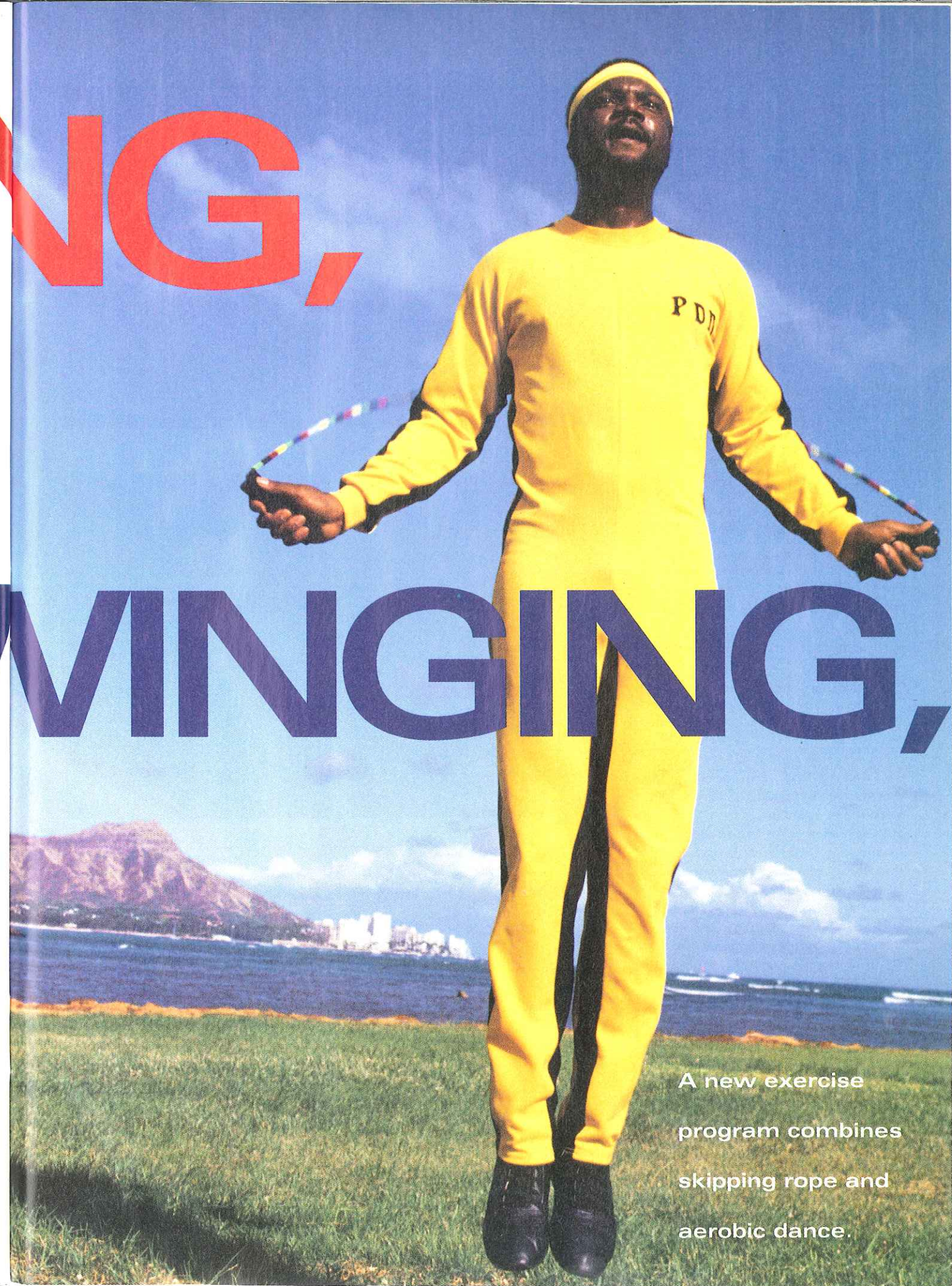
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN DE MELLO

Donald Thomas in mid-jump.
(Exercises appear on pages 82-83.)

SWINGING,

HAVING FUN

BY JEANNE RATTENBURY



A new exercise program combines skipping rope and aerobic dance.

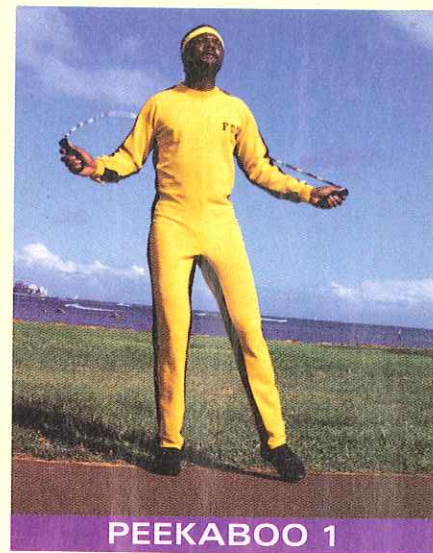
NEW JUMP SWING

New Jump Swing comprises 18 individual moves, but Thomas encourages creating your own repertoire of steps.

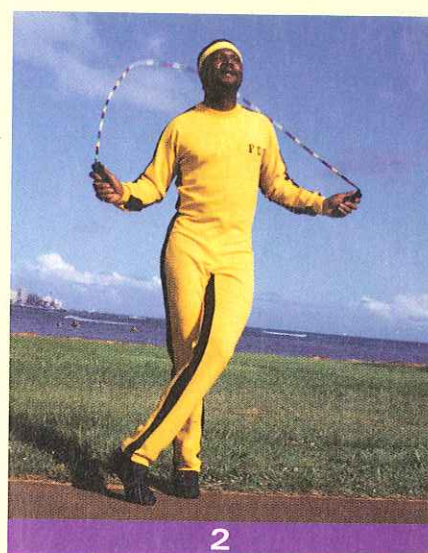
The following moves provide a sampling of New Jump Swing. Try them one at a time, then link them together to create a "dance." You can do all these moves jumping forward or backward.

TIPS ON TECHNIQUE

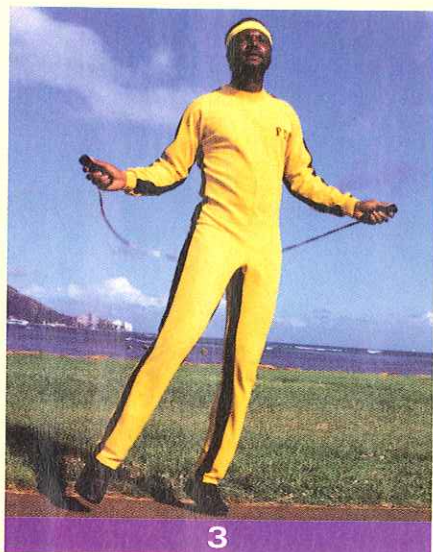
- Always do warm-up stretches before any exercise.
- Wear well-cushioned athletic shoes that allow both forward and lateral movement, such as aerobic, cross-training or tennis shoes.
- Hold the rope loosely.
- Keep your hands out to your sides at waist level.
- Stand erect with knees slightly bent.
- Practice techniques without a rope before trying them with a rope.
- Some techniques may actually be easier to do the faster you go.
- When you trip on the rope, simply change directions: i.e., switch from going forward to backward. This will keep your rhythm steadier.
- Don't move your arms while you're jumping; the action should be in your wrists. (You will need to move your arms when swinging the rope.)



PEEKABOO 1



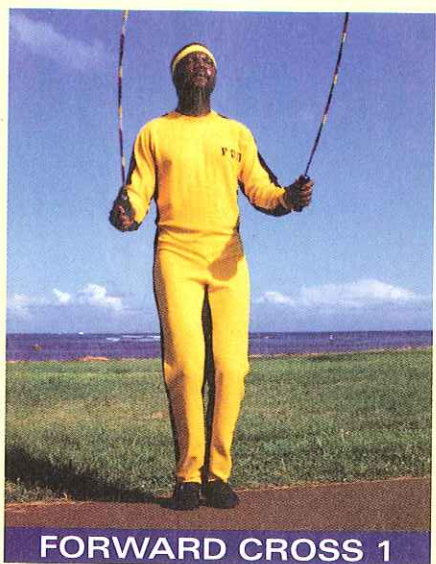
2



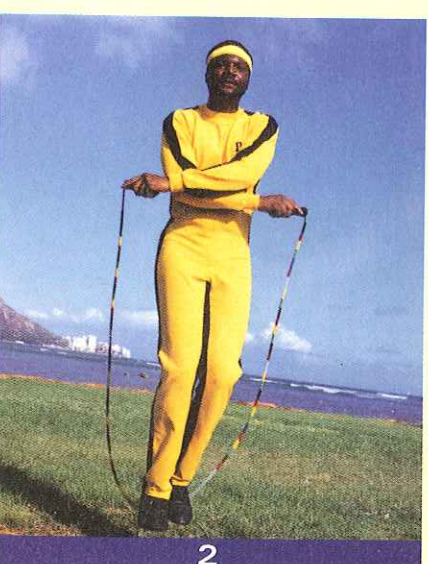
3



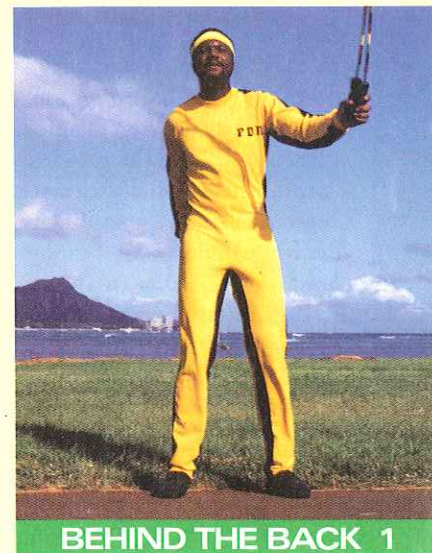
4



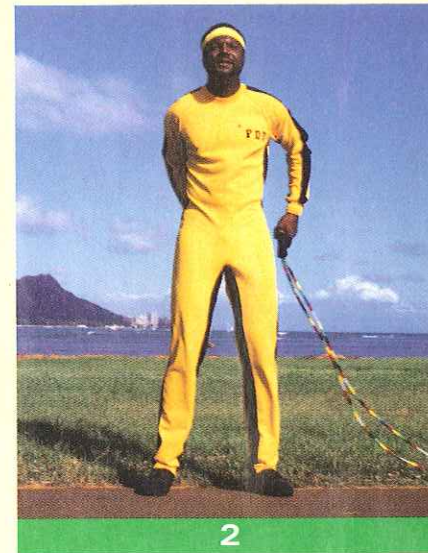
FORWARD CROSS 1



2



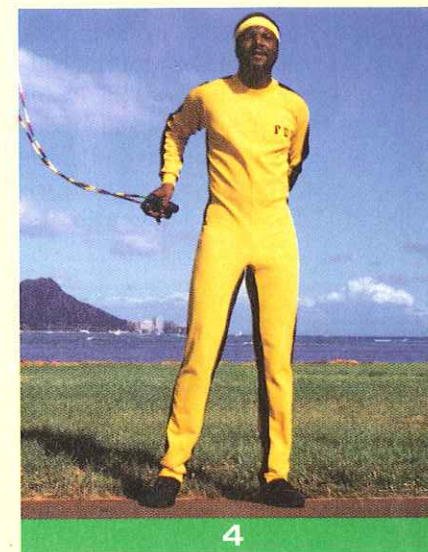
BEHIND THE BACK 1



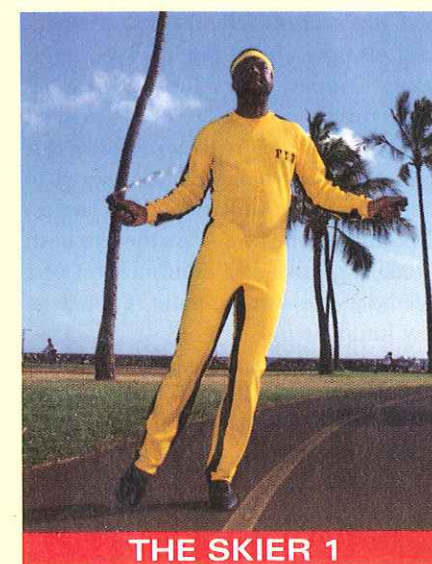
2



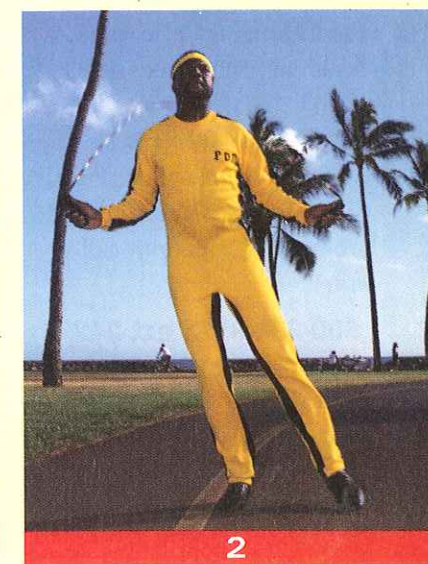
3



4



THE SKIER 1



2

THE BASIC JUMP
1. Jump once for each turn of the rope.
2. Land on the balls of your feet.
3. Keep knees flexed when landing.
NOTE: Try not to "double bounce." (You'll know what it is if you do it.)

THE ALTERNATING STEP
1. Follow basic jump but do not land on both feet; instead, alternate landing on balls of right and left feet.
NOTE: This move should resemble running in place.

THE SIDE SWING
1. Hold one rope handle in each hand, but hold hands together.
2. Alternate swinging the rope on both sides of your body.

THE SINGLE SIDE SWING AND JUMP
1. Swing rope on the left side of your body.
2. Do basic jump.
3. Swing rope on the right side of your body.
4. Do basic jump.

THE TWIRL
1. Hold both rope handles in right hand.
2. Rotate rope so that it is parallel to the right side of your body.
3. Repeat on left side.
NOTE: Do not jump while twirling. This is a chance to catch your breath.

THE SKIER
1. While jumping, move both feet laterally to the right, while trying to keep your torso centered.
2. Repeat, moving feet laterally to the left.
NOTE: It's helpful to find—or to tape—a vertical line on the floor to jump back and forth over.

THE HEEL TO HEEL
1. Jump and touch right heel to the floor as you land. (Your left foot should land normally.)
2. Jump and touch your left heel to the floor as you land.

THE TOE TO TOE
1. Jump and touch right toe to the floor as you land. (Your left foot should land normally.)
2. Jump and touch your left toe to the floor as you land.

PEEKABOO
1. Keeping right leg stationary, cross left leg over right, and jump.
2. Repeat, crossing left leg over right.
NOTE: A Basic Jump between each cross makes this easier to do.

BEHIND THE BACK
1. Hold both handles in right hand.
2. Twirl rope on right side of your body.
3. Pass rope handle behind your back to left hand.
4. Repeat on left side.

THE FORWARD CROSS
1. Holding a handle in each hand, cross your arms and turn rope until it passes under your feet.
2. Uncross arms and do a Basic Jump.
NOTE: Cross and uncross your arms only when you can see the rope before you.

THE TWIST
1. Keeping upper body straight, turn hips to the right and jump.
2. Repeat, turning hips to the left.
NOTE: Try to make these movements smooth.

Thomas, who serves as the executive director of a mental-health agency in Honolulu. New Jump Swing is just the latest in a series of rather extraordinary publicity stunts Thomas has undertaken—all, he says, in the name of vegetarianism. In 1980, Thomas secured a place in the Guinness Book of World Records by speaking for 93 consecutive hours on the vegetarian-diet aspects of several major world religions—earning him the honor of delivering the world's longest “sermon.” (He held that record until 1984.) Thomas still holds the Guinness record for the longest-ever “after-dinner speech”—32 hours and 25 minutes on a vegetarian athletic nutrition program. (And you think your guests don't know when to go home.)

“What do you want to know that you aren't afraid I'll take 93 hours to tell you?” jokes Thomas, who, unlike too many long-winded lecturers, has a sense of humor about his penchant to go on and on (and on and on). Despite his record-breaking volubility, Thomas speaks concisely and articulately about the events that brought him where he is today.



Donald Thomas displays his awards.

Born in 1953 in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, N.Y., Thomas was a physically active child who developed knee trouble at an early age, most likely as a result of running and jumping on hard surfaces. By the time he was 12, he was using liniment and children's aspirin on a daily basis to ease his pain. He was also starting to question conventional wisdom about diet and nutrition. “I was drinking a quart of milk each day because I'd read it builds strong bones,

but I began to have doubts because of my condition,” he says. At 18, he stopped eating meat—an anomaly in his neighborhood—and he's been touting vegetarianism ever since, especially within the minority community. “Minorities see vegetarianism as something for the white middle class, but they need it more,” says Thomas.

Thomas's bad knees also figured prominently in his conversion to jump-rope enthusiast. Convalescing after knee surgery in 1972, Thomas was flipping through a runners' magazine when he came across a story on jumping rope. “It seemed to have everything I was looking for,” he says. “It was low impact, low cost, taught you how to be light on your feet and didn't hurt your knees when done properly.”

Twenty years later, Thomas is still jumping; he teaches jump rope classes at Gold's Gym in Honolulu, and it was with his adult students in mind that he developed New Jump Swing. “The average person can't jump for half an hour,” explains Thomas, who recommends starting out with a mere 30 seconds of jumping followed by 30 seconds of rest.

New Jump Swing comprises a variety of techniques (see p. 72) that can be alternated in a freeform fashion like dance steps. Ideally, a full one-third of the workout should be devoted to swinging the rope—not jumping. In addition to providing a good cardiovascular workout, New Jump Swing can build upper body strength and improve coordination. A variety of movements helps avoid the perils of overusing the same muscles.

“Biomechanically, the way he's outlined his program is sound,” says fitness trainer Cooper. “New Jump Swing has cross-training benefits.”

It also has weight-reducing benefits, as Pam Roldan will attest. Engaged to marry Thomas in January, Roldan has lost 70 pounds in the four years they've been together, thanks to a combination of a vegetarian diet and a steady regimen of New Jump Swing.

(For more information on New Jump Swing, write Donald Thomas at P.D.N. Publishing and Health Products, 2048 Kapiolani Blvd., Suite #45, Honolulu, HI 96826.)

JEANNE RATTENBURY is a senior editor at CHICAGO magazine.

Home Health

Wash Your Face Without Aging It

Pamper your face, treat it like it's the only face you'll ever have. Sure, your face needs cleaning. But not with soap. Soap may be okay for your hands, but not for your face. Soap is too harsh for your delicate facial skin—it's drying, irritating, actually aging.

Keep your face youthfully soft and supple with our **Facial Cleansing Gel**. Actual skin irritation studies show **Facial Cleansing Gel's** base to be milder than others by 2 to 1. And no soap, no preservatives, or artificial



Soapless Cleanser Preserves Face

color either. Instead, natural antiseptics that eliminate bacteria better than soap, yet leave no irritating residues. No animal testing. Look for our **Facial Cleansing Gel** in your local health or natural foods store.

FREE OFFER

For a free sample of our **Facial Cleansing Gel** and detailed product information, call or write:

800-284-9123 ext 242

Home Health Products
1160 Millers Lane, Dept. 242
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Your Natural Home Pharmacy