

Martial Arts Council Becoming a Reality

January 8, 2001 – Leaders in the local Martial Arts community have shown interest in forming a Thunder Bay Martial Arts Council. Representatives of 12 different local martial arts clubs participated in a round table meeting held on December 8, 2000 led by Mayor Ken Boshcoff.

All in attendance were enthusiastic and expressed a desire to work together. "In most other cities, martial arts groups have not historically worked together and there might even be friction between organizations. They would certainly balk at an effort like our Martial Arts Council," says Mayor Boshcoff. "Here in Thunder Bay, leaders in our martial arts community see significant opportunities and advantage to putting aside any differences and working together. This new council will benefit all local martial arts groups and boost participation."

This Martial Arts Council will work to promote the martial arts and host events. This concept is new and unique to Thunder Bay. In 2000, Mayor Boshcoff toured numerous Thunder Bay martial arts facilities to gather ideas on making our City recognized as a martial arts centre. Mayor Boshcoff incorporated these ideas into a Report he presented to City Council this past September.

Mitz Bandiera of Progressive Martial Arts attended the December meeting. "This is truly an awakening time for the martial arts, a time where all styles and systems are left at the door and we as martial artists can work together," says Mr. Bandiera.

"The meeting in itself has proven that we are ready to stand up and be recognized for all we have worked for. I am totally committed to this idea and fully support it's efforts. I believe that by working together we can have a positive influence on the community of Thunder Bay."

A second meeting will be held in late January. Ideas for the Martial Arts Council's future and establishing Thunder Bay as the Martial Arts Capital of Canada will be discussed.

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