



## THE INTERNATIONAL TAOIST TAI CHI SOCIETY

### A massive demo, two parades and the Grand Openings of a new Centre **All-day, multi-venue event to mark 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary** **festivities of International Taoist Tai Chi Centre**

*TORONTO, Aug. 10* --- Renowned for packing a wide variety of rich cultural activities into its day-long festivals, the International Taoist Tai Chi Society will be out-doing itself on Saturday, September 12, when it celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its International Centre.

Indeed, over 1,500 members coming from the 26 countries where the Society is active will be in Toronto to take part in a day of celebration which is also open to the public. In addition to activities that will take place at the International Taoist Tai Chi Centre, near Orangeville, the Society is organising public events in downtown Toronto and in Richmond Hill.

#### **North America's longest Chinese dragon joins parade**

The day will begin with what has become a traditional event -- the 23<sup>rd</sup> Taoist Tai Chi Awareness Day. At 8:30 a.m., hundreds of members will gather at Nathan-Phillips Square to demonstrate *Taoist Tai Chi*<sup>TM</sup> internal arts of health, followed by the ever colourful annual parade through the downtown core for the city.

This year, for the first time, the Awareness Day parade will feature a traditional Chinese dragon measuring 330 ft. (100 m.) – the longest in North America – supported by 50 strong and agile pairs of arms, and accompanied by a smaller, 20-legged dragon.

#### **Grand Opening of New Toronto Centre**

Just before noon, buses filled with dragons, floats, marching bands, marchers etc. will be escorted by two dozen motorcycled police officers to Elgin Mills at Yonge St. That is where a second parade will start. It will make its way to 371 Ohio Road, in Richmond Hill, for the Grand Opening of the new Taoist Tai Chi Society of Canada Toronto Centre. Several public officials have confirmed their attendance, whether at the parade or at the site, where ribbon cutting will be followed by a public Bar-B-Q.

Of particular interest to the Chinese community is the fact that a shrine dedicated to the Taoist deity Wong Dai Sing will be enlivened at the Ohio Road Centre.

A one-day, multi-venue celebration in a single city is not unprecedented in the Society's history. It illustrates its commitment to making the benefits of *Taoist Tai Chi*<sup>TM</sup> internal arts of health available in all local communities. The newly-purchased Toronto Centre will help provide the Society's unique service to several northern-Toronto communities, plus be a gathering place for all of the Greater Toronto area members.

#### **A vibrant training centre in Orangeville**

On the next day, the highlight of the Sunday programme will be a tai chi workshop at the International Taoist Tai Chi Centre in Orangeville. This will follow the annual general meeting of delegates from the 26 member-associations of the International Taoist Tai Chi Society.

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The Centre has gone through considerable change since its modest origins when it was purchased in 1984. Then, and for the following decade, activities took place in a renovated barn, with rustic accommodation for several dozen people.

A first wave of renovations, in the mid-90's, saw the renovation of the practice hall and the construction of the Health Recovery wing, intended for participants with severe health issues and restricted mobility conditions. This brought improved accessibility, increased accommodation and better housing conditions.

Major construction took place from 2005 to 2007. The Centre is now comprised of many pavilions, buildings and wings. It has three practice halls, three temples and several living quarters that can comfortably house up to 220 participants.

The International Taoist Tai Chi Centre offers a quiet retreat for those seeking dual cultivation of body and mind. It is also a vibrant training centre for those wishing to preserve good health and quality of life in their respective communities through the voluntary instruction of these arts.

The continued growth and expansion of the Society reflects the ongoing support of its 45,000 members in over 600 locations worldwide.

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