

# Kanata EMC

## En garde! Sword festival headed to Ottawa

Posted Jun 13, 2013 By Michelle Nash

EMC news -The grounds at the Vanier community centre will turn medieval this weekend as men and women come across the land arrive to compete in the community's first

ever sword festival.

The event, Borealis Swordplay Symposium, is a two-day event, with art of arms and fierce sword competitions planned for June 15 and a pomp and regalia on June 16.

Les Maîtres d'Armes has

been teaching historical fencing since 2005, and has been running its program at the Vanier community centre for the past five years.

The organization has participated in many other events over the years, but this will be the first year for the swordplay

symposium.

Jason Smith, a principal instructor and director for the organization, said the event is Les Maîtres d'Armes way to introduce Ottawa to historical martial arts.

"We thought it was high time to bring something to the Eastern Canada, to let people in this part of the country who might not otherwise travel abroad to gain the benefit of some of the leading instructors in the world," Smith said.

The event is divided into the two days, Smith said, so students from all levels can gain instruction on a variety of different fencing styles.

"Yes, it will be competitive, but it is not a competition," Smith said.

"The winner is the person chosen among the participants as having shown the best display of the art, with the best sportsmanship, or dare we say 'chivalric demeanor.'" Participants will be divided into factions to challenge and fight one another in amicable competition.

The community is encouraged to come out and cheer on the swordsmen and women,

while they challenge each other.

The Sunday event will also have a charity barbecue that will help raising money for the Youth Services Bureau.

The organization has helped raise money for the Youth Services Bureau in the past, and felt hosting a barbecue was a great way to included them in their first event.

"We thought we could continue to help the organization we've grown to have a relationship with by inviting them to provide our fighters with valuable sustenance during their day-long adventure," Smith said.

There are 30 active members in the organization who come out to the regularly scheduled training sessions at the centre on Wednesday night from 7 to 10 p.m. There is a free trial class offered each week beginning at 8 p.m. for individuals who

are interested in seeing if swordplay is for them.

"It is great exercise, and addresses the imagination. Who hasn't, as a child, dreamt of being a musketeer or a knight?" Smith said. "The sword is a weapon that captures the imagination, and people are drawn to swordplay for fun, for the love of history, or for the practice of a serious martial system."

Bernard Emmerich said he comes out because regardless of size or sex, people have a chance to hold their own in the ring.

The club practices a number of different historical European Martial Arts including art of Armizare, a holistic art (wrestling, dagger, arming sword, long sword, spear and pole axe).

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Michelle Nash -Metro land Jason Smith and Bernard Emmerich got to show offsome swordplay skills during training at the Richelieu-Vanier Community Centre on June 5. The pair are members of the Les Maîtres d'Armes, a medieval swordplay club.

Visit [armizare.com](http://armizare.com) for more information about the upcoming festival, or to learn more about the organization's training sessions, or swordplay.

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