

The world honours a Saultite with big hands (20 photos)

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Sa Ja Nim Rudy Timmerman has big hands.

Not just the kind of hands that engulf others in a handshake.

But the kind that have touched thousands of lives the world over and left an honourable impression.

This weekend marks Grandmaster Timmerman's sixth decade of active martial arts practice, starting in his home town of The Hague, Holland, at the age of 10.

Nine of his brothers in the Korean arts have come together in the Sault to join in a weekend celebration of Timmerman's accomplishments.

They've also brought several hundred of their students, representing dozens of schools from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Canada.

SooToday.com met up with them at the Riuniti Hall as the opening ceremony finished yesterday and the first of four weekend seminars got underway.

The grandmasters and other masters who've come will be sharing their knowledge and experience with each others' students.

Throughout his martial arts career, Timmerman has travelled the world to share with and to learn from other masters.

In so doing, he's woven a strong web of brothers in the Korean arts.

"You would not believe how much we have in common and we're from completely different ends of the earth," said Kuk Sa Nim Michael De Alba, a grandmaster of Modern Farang Mu Sul from San Francisco who brings more than 40 years of experience to the gathering.

"Aside from the Korean martial arts heritage that we share," [De Alba](#) said, "we have a lot of similar paths. We realized that we were kindred spirits years ago and when we met we just confirmed that."

De Alba described Timmerman as a wonderful person for whom he has complete respect, prompting other grandmasters to nod in agreement or smile.

"In May of 2006, I found myself standing in a hotel lobby in Pusan, South Korea, shaking a hand that holds more history, knowledge and spirit than most I have shaken," wrote [Chief Master Robert J Ott](#) in the first line of a *Tae Kwon Do Times* article he wrote about this weekend's gathering.

In that article, Ott described Timmerman, a ninth-dan black belt, as a perpetual student who keeps a white belt in his gym bag for any opportunity to step out into the crowd and be the student he's always been.

This humility and strength of character, as well as his knowledge of and dedication to his art, have earned Timmerman the respect and honour of visting masters whose combined experience surpasses 1,000 years and whose paths have crossed the globe several times over.

All of these paths have come together in Sault Ste. Marie for this weekend only and Ott says it's an event that will probably never be repeated.

There are still a few spots in the seminars that interested Saultites can sign up for if they are quick.

Seminars began at 8 a.m. today at the Riuniti Hall on the corner of Fourth Line and Great Northern Road and at 10 a.m. on Airport Road.

Topics include *The Science of Joint Locks, Defence Against Knife, Knife Techniques, Ground Attack Kicks, Effective Pressure Points, Kicking Made Easier, Bu Chae (Fan) Sool, Ground Techniques* and *Intro to Korean Bow*.

After dinner at the Riuniti Hall, Ott will deliver the keynote speech, followed by some demonstrations and awards to those who have successfully passed their examinations this weekend.

For more information, visit the [website](#).

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