

Living

Beard Team USA National Beard and Moustache Championships in Bend

Updated Jan 10, 2019; Posted Jun 04, 2010

0
shares

By Special to The Oregonian



[View full size](#)

Alan

Dyck

The national beard and moustache championships can be expected to attract some most colorful (and hairy) characters.

The few, the proud, the bearded are descending on Bend Saturday for the Beard Team USA National Beard and Moustache Championships.

Yes, Beard Team USA, the national beard team.

The idea for the team came to Phil Olsen of Lake Tahoe, Calif., when he stumbled across the

[World Beard and Moustache Championships](#)

in Sweden in 1999.

Beard Team USA National Championships

When:

Saturday

Where:

Les Schwab Amphitheater, Bend

Entry fee for competitors:

\$40 (includes beer)

Spectator tickets:

\$10

Beard Team USA website:

beardteamusa.org

"I just thought this was the most amazing thing I'd ever seen. A really oddball kind of event," says Olsen, 61, a semi-retired lawyer and part-time judge. "But the most notable thing was that the United States was completely under-represented."

Olsen took it upon himself to get his fellow bearded countrymen involved. The result is Beard Team USA -- and it's coming to Bend.

Bearding athletes from across the country will compete in four categories -- moustache, full beard, partial beard and freestyle -- with a combined purse of \$4,000. A fifth \$1,000 prize will be awarded to a competitor selected at random, with a locals-only category also included.

Advertisement

"My beard is itching!" complains Doug LaPlaca, the

CEO and president, who is letting his whiskers grow in honor of the nationals. He expects 1,500 people to travel to Bend for the event.

"We thought that hosting the Beard and Moustache National Championships would be a good way to showcase Bend's more artistic, cultural and fun-loving side," he says.

Self-appointed Beard Team USA captain Olsen is impressed by Bend's outdoor recreation, beauty and community support.

Oh, and the ratio of breweries to residents.

Judges for the event include Miss Oregon 2009 CC Barber, Captain Harry Lewis from The Discovery Channel's "The Deadliest Catch" and Bhai Sarwan Singh of Vancouver, B.C., who holds the Guinness World Record for the longest beard. The event will be emceed by reigning world champion Jack Passion.

Passion, 26, a full-time bearding athlete and author of The Facial Hair Handbook, won the Full Beard world title in England in 2007 and in Alaska in 2009. The World Championships are held every two years, with the next event in Norway in 2011. The 2009 World Championships marked a turning point for Beard Team USA.

Advertisement

"This was a huge victory, because for the first time ever, Germany didn't win," says Olsen. "We established the United States as the new world super power in bearding."

Passion will be sitting out the competition in Bend.

"I need to let some guys filter up through the ranks so that I have somebody to beat again," says Passion, who offers this advice for new bearders:

"Pick a different category than the one I'm in, because I will just crush all who oppose me " he says, then laughs. "Think of it less as competition and more of a facial hair

me," he says, then laughs. "I think of it less as competition and more of a facial hair wearers convention. Go into it for the camaraderie. Being around that is priceless."

First-time Full Beard competitor Peter Aune, 59, of Bend is grateful not to go up against Passion.

"He pretty much runs away with any competition he gets in," says Aune, founder of the

[Central Oregon Moustache and Beard Society](#)

(COMBS). He says other bearders might not have registered if Passion were competing. "Have you seen his beard? It's very incredible."

Aune launched the organization in January when he learned the nationals were coming to Bend. COMBS, the only Oregon chapter of Beard Team USA, has about a dozen local members who attend regular meetings.

"It's fun watching these guys have energy toward something that they love," says Aune's wife, Marcy. "And obviously they love their beards."

She says her husband's bearding pursuits have brought a lot of humor to the house "I talk like I'm pregnant," Aune says of his four-inch facial hair, "like I'm eating for two"--but she admits there is a downside.

"The lips are kind of missing on the kiss thing," she says. "It's like, OK, where are those babies?"

LaPlaca says organizers are hoping to establish a record for the largest crowd of bearded people.

"We're trying to get a picture and submit it to the Guinness Book of World Records," says LaPlaca, who admits he has no idea whether such a category exists. "We're not overly concerned about rules or protocol."

Advertisement

[Jennifer Willis](#)

Note to readers: if you purchase something through one of our affiliate links we may earn a commission.

Around the web

ADVANCE
LOCAL

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#), [Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement](#), and [Your California Privacy Rights](#) (each updated 1/1/20).

© 2020 Advance Local Media LLC. All rights reserved ([About Us](#)).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of Advance Local.

[Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

[▶ Ad Choices](#)