

## Fund raiser scheduled for firefighters of Bend's sister city

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

An informal kick off for the latest release of the Axe Head Red commemorative ale will be held on Thursday, February 15 at the Bend Brewing Company, beginning at 5 p.m.. The event is being held to raise funds for the Condega Bomberos project. The Bend Fire Department and the Bend Fire Fighter's Association (BFFA) formed the BFFA/Condega Bomberos Project to help Bend's sister city, Condega establish a community-wide fire department. For every pint sold during the event, the Bend Condega Bomberos project will receive 25 cents. In 2005 the Bend Brewing Company brewed special commemorative ale, Axe Head Red, to honor the protection of the city by the men and women of the Bend Fire Department in the past one hundred years. The northern-Nicaraguan town of Condega has never had a fire station, a fire engine, or any fire equipment. When a fire breaks out, volunteer firefighters can only gather with their neighbors to point garden hoses at the flames and wait for help from the nearest fire department, located 23 miles away. When Condega became Bend's sister city in 2004, one of the first requests from Condega's mayor was for assistance from Bend to establish a fire department for the town. In 2005, several members of the Bend Fire Fighter's Association (BFFA), with the support of the Bend Fire Department, answered that plea by launching the BFFA/Condega Bomberos Project ( "bomberos" is Spanish for firefighter). At project outset, the Condega's most pressing need was for equipment. By the close of 2005, over \$12,000 had been raised, and an assortment of tools, boots, turnouts (protective firefighting clothing) and wildland firefighting hoses had been collected. In 2006 a fire-fighting vehicle recently taken off-line was purchased from the City of Redmond. Funds raised from Thursday's informal fund raiser will help with operational costs for the newly formed fire department (e.g. diesel fuel is \$8 gallon in Nicaragua and the fire truck gets 6 miles to the gallon). A "fill the boot to fill the tank" donation will also be set up to help fund fuel costs. Eventually, the hope is to provide a full firefighting system to include fire suppression equipment, a fire station, and the development of rural water supplies. In September 2004, the cities of Bend and Condega officially formed a sister city partnership. The purpose of the sister city partnership is to continue to build relationships and promote international friendships across the world. The city of Condega is located in Central America in the country of Nicaragua. Condega is located approximately 115 miles north of the capitol of Managua, and about 40 miles south of the Honduras border. Event Date: Thursday, February 15 Time: 5 p.m. Location: Bend Brewing Company, 1019 NW Brooks Street, Bend, Oregon

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