



For Immediate Release – September 14, 2015

KENTUCKY BOURBON HALL OF FAME WELCOMES FOUR NEW MEMBERS & LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT HONOREE

BARDSTOWN, Ky. – The prestigious Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame today honored five individuals for their service and support of the Commonwealth’s signature industry, including a living Bourbon legend as this year’s recipient of the Parker Beam Lifetime Achievement award.

“This year’s distinguished class has a shared theme – they served behind-the-scenes to promote, protect and elevate our timeless craft,” said Eric Gregory, president of the Kentucky Distillers’ Association. “But make no mistake – they are the backbone of our growth and success.

“Today we rightfully shine the spotlight on them in gratitude and congratulations. Their remarkable achievements have propelled Kentucky Bourbon into a Golden Age that continues to provide new jobs, investment and global recognition for our beloved Commonwealth.”

This year’s inductees are, in alphabetical order:

- Barry Becton, Senior Director of State Government Affairs, Diageo North America
- Joy Perrine, author and veteran award-winning bartender at Equus Restaurant and Jack’s Lounge in Louisville
- John Rhea, former Chief Operating Officer, Four Roses Distillery
- Jimmy Russell, Master Distiller, Wild Turkey® (Lifetime Achievement)
- William M. Street, former President, Brown-Forman Corp.

Russell, now in his 62nd year making whiskey at Wild Turkey, was honored with the Parker Beam Lifetime Achievement Award. He was elected a charter member of the Hall of Fame in 2001 and a Lifetime Honorary Member of the KDA Board in 2014.

“It is truly an honor and a privilege to receive this award because not only is Parker a true Kentucky legend, but one of my closest friends,” Russell said. “We grew up over Bourbon together, and I’ve lost count on the number of evenings we’ve swapped stories over a glass of my whiskey or his whiskey. All I can tell you is there have been a lot of laughs.

“Parker is a champion of our industry and a real fighter, and I admire him greatly. I wish him, the entire Beam family and the KDA my deepest thanks for this recognition.”

During his esteemed tenure, Russell has been responsible for the creation and launch of renowned Bourbons, such as Tradition, Tribute, Rare Breed, American Honey, Kentucky Spirit

and Russell's Reserve, which he co-created with his distilling partner and son, Eddie.

Known among peers as the "Buddha of Bourbon" and a true champion of the industry, Russell has received numerous awards around the world for his dedicated craftsmanship and lifelong support of Kentucky and its famous export.

Gregory and Chris Morris, Chairman of the KDA Board of Directors and Master Distiller at Brown-Forman Corp., presented Russell with a hand-crafted plaque in the shape of Kentucky made entirely from barrel staves.

"Jimmy's willingness to help educate succeeding generations of Master Distillers is legendary," Morris said. "He is our link to many of the traditions of the past that make our industry so special."

The award was named last year for Parker Beam, who joined Heaven Hill in 1960 working under his father, Earl, as a sixth-generation distiller in his storied family. He became Master Distiller in 1975 and has earned numerous awards for distilling, aging and selecting some of the world's most acclaimed Bourbons.

He was named Master Distiller Emeritus in 2013 shortly after being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease. His public advocacy for ALS research, care and awareness has generated millions for his "Promise of Hope" fund.

"Jimmy and I have known each other for over 50 years I have nothing but respect and admiration for Jimmy and his family," Beam said. "I am proud to have him be the first recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award that the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame named for me last year, particularly since we both have literally spent our lifetimes working in this industry."

Founded in 1880, the KDA is the state's voice for Bourbon and spirits issues. Its diverse membership produces 90 percent of the world's Bourbon, from legendary, global brands to emerging micro distilleries that are building the next generation of the timeless craft.

Kentucky Bourbon is one of the Commonwealth's most historic and treasured industries, a booming \$3 billion economic engine that generates more than 15,400 jobs with an annual payroll topping \$700 million and pours \$166 million into state and local coffers each year.

The KDA's world-famous Kentucky Bourbon Trail® and Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour® adventures also set an attendance record last year with nearly 900,000 guests touring an all-time high of 19 participating distilleries.

Created by the KDA in conjunction with the Kentucky Bourbon Festival in 2001, the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame recognizes individuals and organizations that have made a significant and transformational impact on Bourbon's stature, growth and awareness.

It is the highest honor given by the signature industry and is presented annually during the Kentucky Bourbon Festival, which runs through Sunday in Bardstown.

Candidates may be nominated each year by the KDA, its member distilleries and the Kentucky Bourbon Festival from four categories: Industry, Journalism, Roll of Honor and Lifetime Achievement. Nominees are then sent to the KDA Board of Directors for final selection.

The induction ceremony was held on the grounds of My Old Kentucky Home in Bardstown, one of the state's most revered historic sites.

Federal Hill, the Georgian style mansion built around 1795, inspired Stephen Collins Foster to write his immortal song, "My Old Kentucky Home." It is now part of Kentucky's parks system and symbolizes the Bluegrass State's gracious hospitality and genteel culture.

KDA President Gregory presented each inductee with an engraved miniature copper still before an elite crowd of 150 Bourbon barons and dignitaries. Each inductee's name also was added to a Hall of Fame display at the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey History in Bardstown.

"It's with great honor that we welcome these outstanding individuals to our hallowed ranks," Gregory said. "Their names are forever etched into the history of our timeless craft, alongside legendary icons whose roots run deep in Bourbon lore."

-30-

For more information, contact Eric Gregory at (502) 875-9351 or (859) 771-1050

*Visit the Kentucky Bourbon Festival online at www.kybourbonfestival.com.
Learn more about the Kentucky Distillers' Association at www.kybourbon.com.*

BARRY BECTON

SENIOR DIRECTOR, STATE GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, DIAGEO NORTH AMERICA

For over a decade Barry Becton has continuously and enthusiastically traveled to Kentucky and Washington, D.C. from his Virginia office to ensure that Kentucky Bourbon has the right representation with state and federal decision-making, industry influencers and consumers.

Throughout his 16 years with Diageo, Barry has worked in several corporate relations capacities, including leading Diageo's Government and Community Relations agenda in Kentucky for the past nine years. He secured stakeholder support for the construction of a new distillery in Shelby County and renovations to the historic Stitzel-Weller Distillery in Louisville that added The Bulleit Experience to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® tour.

As Chairman of the Kentucky Distillers' Association's Governmental Affairs Advisory Group from 2010-2016, Barry's leadership with the KDA and member companies secured a series of legislative victories that propelled Bourbon to one of the fastest growing sectors in beverage alcohol. From 2009 when Barry and other distillery representatives fought against unfair tax increases by holding a "Bourbon Tea Party" on the Capitol steps, to the passage of SB 11 this year which modernizes Bourbon tourism opportunities in the Commonwealth, his efforts to ingrain the idea of Bourbon as a signature industry with legislators has been invaluable.

Barry is an essential resource to his Diageo colleagues in North America, helping to guide and educate them on the importance of ensuring that Kentucky Bourbon is set up for future growth and success, at all levels within the business.

Prior to joining Diageo in 2000, Barry managed government relations for Health Communications, Inc. and began his career in Washington, D.C. working for former United States Senators David Pryor and Dale Bumpers from Arkansas.

In the early 2000s, Barry served two terms as President of the World Association of the Alcohol Beverage Industries (WAABI), a majority of whose members were made up by distillery employees in Kentucky. Barry also served multiple terms as Chairman of the Industry Relations Committee at the Distilled Spirits Council (DISCUS) and he currently sits on the Board of the Sky Ranch Foundation.

Barry is active in youth sports, coaching both baseball and basketball. He has served as a member of the Alexandria Potomac Little League Board of Directors since 2012. Barry lives in Alexandria, VA with his wife, Mary, and three sons, Connor, Lee, and Brooks.

JOY PERRINE

AWARD-WINNING BARTENDER AND AUTHOR

Given her family's background, it's no surprise that Joy Perrine is a star in the Hospitality Industry. A grand Victorian hotel and three restaurants were all part of the family business.

Bootlegging was another part of the family business in New Jersey, where she grew up. The bootlegging operation was long over before her time, but Joy jumped in and helped out in the family business in many other capacities –washing dishes, peeling shrimp – whatever was needed.

When Cuba fell in 1959, Americans flocked to Puerto Rico and the American Virgin Islands, territories of the US, because they were safe places to vacation. Entrepreneurs also thought they were safe places to start businesses that catered to those tourists. At 20 years old, Joy liked the idea of working in the hospitality industry in the tropical climate so she headed south to St. Croix.

Working in a pizza joint, Joy hit the ground running one night when the bartender walked out mid-shift. She learned quickly and loved the work. Soon she was experimenting with the fresh fruits and juices to create cocktails beyond the standard vacation Pina Coladas, Brandy Alexanders and Rum & Cokes. Her passion for creating cocktails grew as she honed her craft in an industry that was predominantly comprised of men.

Seeking a better environment for her young family, Joy moved to Kentucky in 1978. The wide range of flavor profiles and strengths of Bourbon presented a whole new arena with which to experiment. She was one of the first to infuse Bourbons with fruits and to pair cocktails with foods.

For more than 30 years, she has been promoting the versatility of Bourbon at Equus Restaurant and Jack's Lounge. Joy goes beyond crafting tasty cocktails. She is passionate about educating consumers about the different flavors of Bourbon, the manner in which they can meld with fruits and juices and the way they can complement a wide range of foods.

And, her expertise is not limited to Jack's Lounge. Several top Bourbon producers have drawn on Joy's expertise to assist with product development and flavor analysis.

Currently, she serves on the faculty of Moonshine University, the Ivy League school of the Spirits Industry, alongside such notable industry dignitaries as David Hobbs, Chris Morris, Jimmy Russell and Bill Samuels.

She and food writer Susan Reigler co-wrote The Kentucky Bourbon Cocktail Book, which Albert Schmid called "A gem for cocktail lovers and Bourbon lovers alike."

JOHN RHEA

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, FOUR ROSES DISTILLERY

A 40-year veteran of Four Roses Distillery, John Rhea has been a key leader in elevating Kentucky's signature Bourbon and distilled spirits industry to unprecedented heights, and has played a vital role in the historic resurgence of Four Roses and its legendary brands.

Mr. Rhea, a native of Bullitt County, began his career at Four Roses as a Maintenance Supervisor after graduating from the University of Kentucky with a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering.

His wealth of experience in building and operating distilleries around the world led to his current position as Chief Operating Officer, where his tireless efforts have transformed Four Roses back to its rightful place as one of the world's most premium and sought-after whiskies.

But no matter where his career and travels took him – from Tequila facilities in Mexico to Rum in Jamaica or Grain Spirits in India – Mr. Rhea always was focused on promoting his native spirit, Kentucky Bourbon, in those areas as well.

With the majority of his work performed behind-the-scenes, Mr. Rhea's quiet leadership has been instrumental in transforming the industry through the Kentucky Distillers' Association as Director, Treasurer, Vice-Chairman and Chairman over the last two decades.

Mr. Rhea never sought the spotlight as he constantly advocated and educated consumers, tourists and elected officials at all levels of government about the growing and significant impact of all Kentucky Bourbon distilleries.

He has represented the KDA and the industry honorably at numerous functions, including a trade mission and tasting with then-Gov. Steve Beshear for the President of Taiwan and major events at the request of the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet and the Kentucky Travel Industry Association.

His vision and legislative advocacy also has helped mold the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® experience into a global tourism attraction, as Mr. Rhea often could be found walking the halls of the state Capitol to lobby lawmakers on alcohol reform, responsibility and modernization efforts.

In fact, it was during his tenure as Chairman in 2011 that led the KDA to strengthen its intellectual property and trademark assets that have secured the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® as a unique destination with international fame and recognition.

Through these many efforts, Mr. Rhea has consistently demonstrated class, integrity and unwavering dedication to Kentucky Bourbon that have inspired its current status as a true signature industry and a major economic engine for the Commonwealth.

JAMES C. “JIMMY” RUSSELL

MASTER DISTILLER, WILD TURKEY

Dubbed the “Buddha of Bourbon” and “The Master Distiller’s Master Distiller” by his industry peers, James C. “Jimmy” Russell knows Bourbon like he knows breathing.

For more than 60 astounding years, Russell has been making whiskey at the Wild Turkey Distillery in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, and today, is the longest-tenured, active spirits Master Distiller in the world.

Growing up five miles from the distillery, he followed his father, who taught him the traditions and techniques of Bourbon craftsmanship. From his first position at the distillery sweeping floors, he reached the apex of his career as Master Distiller in the 1960s learning how to make Bourbon the right way – from the inside out and everything in between.

Jimmy’s passion for Bourbon led him to study under such Bourbon luminaries as Bill Hughes, Wild Turkey’s second Master Distiller, and Ernest W. Ripy, Jr., great-grandson of distillery founder James Ripy, Wild Turkey’s third Master Distiller.

A part of an exclusive brotherhood, Jimmy is a member of the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame™ and a whiskey judge for the International Wine and Spirits Competition. He’s involved through the entire distillation and aging process of Wild Turkey Bourbon; his experience and wisdom shining through in every single bottle.

Over the past 60-plus years, Jimmy has been responsible for the launches of a number of new Wild Turkey brands and expressions, such as Tradition, Tribute, 17-year-old Wild Turkey for Japan, Rare Breed, American Spirit, Kentucky Spirit and Russell’s Reserve, which he co-created with his son and distilling partner Eddie Russell.

While waxing poetic about “aging techniques” and “grain selection,” you can often find Jimmy enjoying his beloved Bourbon neat or with a touch of branch water.

Jimmy was granted a Lifetime Honorary Membership to the Kentucky Distillers’ Association’s Board of Directors in 2014, an honor bestowed to only five other individuals within the organization’s storied 134-year history.

When Jimmy is not at the distillery or on the road celebrating Kentucky Bourbon, which is a rare occurrence, he spends time at home with his wife Joretta, whom he met before he started working at Wild Turkey. They have three children – Eddie, Mike and Kathy; six grandchildren; and one great grandchild. A true Kentuckian and avid sports fan, Jimmy is a lifelong supporter of local Anderson County High School athletic programs for girls and boys.

WILLIAM M. STREET

FORMER PRESIDENT, BROWN-FORMAN CORP.

It could be said that Bill Street was born into Kentucky distilling. He was born September 23, 1938, in Louisville, Kentucky, to Dan and Frances Street. At the time, Bill's father was Brown-Forman's general counsel, and would go on to a 35-year career at Brown-Forman retiring as President in 1969 and serving on its board for nearly 40 years.

Bill joined Brown-Forman as a summer sales trainee in 1956. Between 1956 and 1962, Bill held several part-time summer positions with Brown-Forman at the Bluegrass Cooperage and in the areas of sales and finance.

After receiving a bachelor's degree from Princeton University and M.B.A. from the Harvard Graduate School of Business, he joined Brown-Forman full-time as a Florida sales representative in June of 1963. In April 1966, he became assistant advertising manager for Oertels Beer before joining Brown-Forman's import division, the Jos. Garneau Company, in September of 1967. Bill would hold a series of roles with increasing responsibility within the Jos. Garneau Co. and was eventually named chairman in 1975.

Following his time with the Jos. Garneau Co., Bill led Brown-Forman's export division, B-F Spirits, Ltd, and served as group executive for the Brown-Forman Distillers Company before being named vice-chairman of the corporation in 1983. Beginning in 1986, Bill headed up Brown-Forman's beverage business, first as COO and president of the Brown-Forman Beverage Company, and later as president and CEO of Brown-Forman Beverages Worldwide. He was named president of Brown-Forman Corporation in 1999, and retired from the company in 2003.

In addition to these roles, Bill was elected to the Brown-Forman Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of Brown-Forman in 1971. He would serve on the executive committee for 32 years and as a director for 40 years, retiring from service in 2011.

At his retirement in 2003, then chairman and CEO, the late Owsley Brown II, said at a company meeting celebrating Street's service:

"Bill Street is a paragon of leadership for corporate America. He has conducted himself with the utmost integrity as he constantly strived to meet the needs of Brown-Forman's constituents - our shareholders, our management team, our partners, the communities where we work, and, of course, our employees."

Outside of Brown-Forman, Street has been an active member of the community, serving on a number of boards and commissions, including Papa John's International, Metropolitan YMCA of Greater Louisville, Louisville Collegiate School, and The Filson Historical Society. He served as chairman of Greater Louisville, Inc., the Governor's Scholars Program and the Kentucky Racing Authority.

Bill is married to the former Lindy Barber. He has five children and stepchildren.