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JULIAN VAN WINKLE III INDUCTED INTO WHISKY MAGAZINE HALL OF FAME

FRANKFORT, FRANKLIN COUNTY, KY (March 3, 2017) – Whisky Magazine honored Julian Van Winkle III with its highest accolade Tuesday, inducting him into its Hall of Fame. Van Winkle was recognized at the 2017 Whisky Magazine Awards America presentation held in New York on Feb. 28.

“This is a great honor,” Van Winkle said. “World class whiskey is a tradition to be taken seriously and I’m very proud to be a part of. I feel extremely honored and grateful to receive this recognition.”

Whisky Magazine’s Hall of Fame honors those who have made a lasting contribution to whisky. With the renown and highly sought after Van Winkle line of bourbons, Julian’s mark on the industry is one that already spans generations.

As the third generation Van Winkle to produce bourbon whiskey in Kentucky, Julian began working with his father in 1977 at which time Old Rip Van Winkle produced only two labels of its wheated bourbon whiskey, 10-year 90 and 107 proof Old Rip Van Winkle. Since then Julian has added 12-year, 15-year, 20-year and 23-year bourbon labels to the Van Winkle selection. He has also added a 13-year premium rye whiskey to the whiskey portfolio. Julian and his son Preston continue to carry on the family tradition of producing high-quality bourbon, and just recently announced a limited edition, one-time bottling of Old Rip Van Winkle 25 Year Old Bourbon.

Julian will join a number of noteworthy individuals in the Whisky Magazine Hall of Fame, including greats like Elmer T. Lee and many more.

For more information about Whisky Magazine Hall of Fame visit <http://halloffame.whiskymag.com/>.

About Van Winkle Bourbon

The Old Rip Van Winkle Distillery has a four generation history. The Van Winkle family's involvement in the bourbon industry began in the late 1800s with Julian P. "Pappy" Van Winkle, Sr. He was a traveling salesman for the W.L. Weller and Sons wholesale house in Louisville. Pappy and a friend, Alex Farnsley, eventually bought the wholesale house and also partnered with Mr. A. Ph. Stitzel on the purchase of Mr. Stitzel's distillery. The three of them merged the two companies and became the Stitzel-Weller Distillery.

In May of 1935 at the age of 61, Pappy opened the newly completed Stitzel-Weller Distillery in South Louisville. Its prominent brands were W.L. Weller, Old Fitzgerald, Rebel Yell, and Cabin Still. Pappy had a heavy influence on the operations there until his death at the age of 91. His son, Julian, Jr. took over operations until he was forced by stockholders to sell the distillery in 1972. The rights to all of their brands were sold to Norton Simon, Inc. Later, United Distillers, who eventually ended up with the Stitzel-Weller Distillery, sold off all of the original labels around 1999.

After selling the distillery, Julian Jr. resurrected a pre-Prohibition label, the only one to which the Van Winkles kept the rights, called Old Rip Van Winkle. He used whiskey stocks from the old distillery to supply his brand. Julian Jr.'s son, Julian, III took over in 1981 when Julian, Jr. passed away. Julian III has continued with the Van Winkle tradition of producing high-quality wheated bourbon. His son, Preston, joined the company in 2001 and the Van Winkles look to continue that tradition for generations to come.

In 2002 the Van Winkles entered into a joint venture with Buffalo Trace Distillery in Franklin County, Frankfort, Ky. All of the Van Winkle's whiskey production now takes place at Buffalo Trace Distillery under the same strict guidelines the family has always followed. For more information on the Van Winkle family of bourbon please visit www.oldripvanwinkle.com.