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Dixie Beer Returns to New Orleans: Born in 1907. Reborn in 2017 *Tom and Gayle Benson to Bring Iconic Brewery Back to Its Birthplace*

NEW ORLEANS (July 27, 2017) – One of New Orleans’ most iconic brands – Dixie Beer – will be returning home thanks to Tom and Gayle Benson, who announced today the majority purchase of Dixie Brewing Company, LLC. Joseph and Kendra Bruno will continue to contribute their invaluable knowledge, experience and passion for Dixie Beer as minority owners and members of the Board of Managers.

“We look forward to bringing Dixie Beer back to where it was born. It’s everything a New Orleans beer should be: It is iconic and it is truly New Orleans,” said Tom Benson, Chairman, Dixie Brewing Company, LLC. “Gayle and I could not be more excited. Dixie Beer was lost to time, storms and even economic changes, but it is part of the social fabric of our city, and needs to be back home.”

Joseph and Kendra owned and operated Dixie Beer since 1985, and despite a number of challenges, were able to preserve the sole remaining traditional New Orleans brewery. “Gayle and I would like to offer our gratitude as New Orleanians to Joseph and Kendra Bruno for the determination, grit and sacrifice they have displayed in keeping Dixie Beer alive,” said Benson. “We are thrilled that they will remain an important part of the Dixie team, and look forward to working with them.”

The company actively is seeking a site for a bricks-and-mortar brewery in Orleans Parish, with a goal of helping revitalize an area of the city that still hasn’t completely recovered from Hurricane Katrina. Building a brewery in New Orleans and continuing the creation of jobs and economic development are top priorities for Dixie Brewing Company.

“I have always believed in our city and our history,” said Benson. “As I have built businesses here in New Orleans, I have always cared about growing our economy and raising the awareness of what we are doing here in New Orleans. Dixie Beer is generational. It is part of all of our families in some way and having it back home is very important.”

While the announcement is right in time for Dixie Beer’s 110th anniversary, Benson’s vision for the brewery is much greater than just a nostalgic homecoming of a historic brand. The new ownership signals a new direction: back to the original 1907 recipe, and back to the founding philosophy of crafting top-quality beers using top-quality ingredients.

“You could say that Dixie was the original craft beer of New Orleans,” said Benson. At its founding in 1907, Dixie was brewed as a rich lager, made from lightly roasted two-row barley, rice and Cascade hops. In recent years, the recipe was adjusted, but Dixie Beer will return to its original recipe, which he said is of higher quality and better tasting.

Although until recently Dixie Beer could still be found on retail shelves, it has been brewed and bottled in Wisconsin since Hurricane Katrina destroyed the brewery on Tulane Avenue in Mid-City in 2005. This past June, Dixie moved brewing to Blues City Brewery in Memphis, Tennessee, right up the Mississippi River from its New Orleans birthplace.

The first production of Dixie Beer will begin appearing at bars and restaurants as well as retail shelves beginning July 26, along with a brand new Dixie Light (only 91.3 calories) and craft beer Dixie Blackened Voodoo Lager. Until the New Orleans brewery is up and running, the beer will be brewed in Memphis under the direct stewardship of Brewmaster Kevin Stuart.

For decades, Dixie Beer was known as the beer of the people of New Orleans, and it enjoyed a market share of more than 30 percent. The Bensons intend to rebuild the brand, adding new products that appeal to a wide spectrum of today’s beer drinkers. Additionally, Dixie Brewing Company, LLC, is committed to working with others to support and grow the local and regional craft brewing industry by creating apprenticeships, educational programs and increased visibility for the craft beer brewing industry in New Orleans.

“My husband, Joseph, and I have been proud to be caretakers of the Dixie brand since 1985. We have fought for decades to make sure Dixie Beer survived and thrived in New

Orleans, and can say it has truly been a labor of love,” said Kendra Bruno. “Over the years we have had countless unsolicited offers from many reputable people and businesses to buy Dixie Beer, but never felt it was the right time or the right fit. When we met with Tom and Gayle Benson, that changed. We know how committed they are to New Orleans and how much they appreciate the importance of Dixie Beer to generations of New Orleanians. Most importantly, we know they will invest the resources and love necessary to bring the brewery home, make great beer and give the community another New Orleans business to be proud of . . . to be part of. We so look forward to being part of Dixie’s rebirth.”

Dixie, new Dixie Light and Dixie Blackened Voodoo Lager initially will be available in kegs and 12-ounce longnecks. Dixie and Dixie Light also will be available in 12-ounce cans. Additionally, there will be a variety pack of all three brews in 12-pack bottles where Dixie Beer lovers can sample all three styles.

Consumers will shortly be able to find it at stores, bars and restaurants around the New Orleans metropolitan area and the Gulf South region. Ken Caldcleugh, a highly respected and knowledgeable member of the beer industry, has been named General Manager. Crescent Crown is Dixie Beer’s distributor in New Orleans, and if you can’t find Dixie fast enough, call them.

About Dixie Brewing Company, LLC

Dixie Brewing Company, LLC, distributes Dixie Beer, Dixie Light and Dixie Blackened Voodoo Lager in the Gulf South region. Production currently resides in Memphis while a New Orleans brewing location is secured and developed. Dixie was first introduced in 1907 and became known as the neighborhood beer of New Orleans. For more information, please visit www.dixiebeer.com and follow us (@DixieBrewCo) on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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