

Folly and Death Brewing Company

COVID-19 and Aluminum Can Production in the United States

Introduction

Folly and Death Brewing Company is a local craft brewery in Mobile, Alabama, the birthplace of Mardi Gras. Roughly one million people travel to Mobile every year to celebrate Fat Tuesday. Carnival season is something that is greatly cherished in Mobile by locals, visitors and the 39 secret societies that ride in floats during parades.

Craft Breweries in Mobile

Craft beer in the United States began in the 1960s. Port City Brewery closed in 2009 because of the economic recession, creating a void in the city of Mobile that desperately needed to be filled. Fairhope Brewing Co. opened in 2013, and took the Mobile Bay by storm. Growing from its initial mainstream lineup to an array of specialty brews led Fairhope Brewing Co. into retail distribution. Their beers can now be found at all local and chain grocery stores. Serda Brewing, Haint Blue, Iron Hand and Old Majestic are among other local breweries in the Mobile area.

The Issue – Aluminum Can Production and COVID-19 Pandemic

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, beer and soda have mostly been consumed in people's homes rather than through a tap in a restaurant. The material for aluminum cans, however, is not the issue. Can manufacturers have been overwhelmed with the need to mass produce as customers began stock piling necessities, such as toilet paper, disinfectants and beer and soda cans.

History of Mardi Gras

While New Orleans tries to take all the credit for Mardi Gras, the grand Carnival celebration originated in Mobile, Alabama in 1703. Carnival season begins on the twelfth night of Christmas, January 6, and runs until Fat Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. The date of Mardi Gras changes every year because it corresponds with the date of Easter.

- *1703* – Mardi Gras is observed for the first time at Twenty-Seven Mile Bluff, the first settlement of Mobile, Alabama.
- *1862-1865* – Carnival season is cancelled because of the American Civil War.
- *1866* – Joe Cain revives Mardi Gras and parades around town wearing a costume of an Indian chief.
- *1867* – Order of Myths, the oldest continuous parading secret society, is established.
- *1872* – First Royal Court of Mardi Gras is established by Emperor Felix I. The Mobile Carnival Association is established.
- *1889* – First Empress of Mardi Gras reigns as queen and serves as a consort for Emperor Felix.
- *1917-1918* – Carnival season is cancelled because of World War I.
- *1920* – Juvenile Court is formed for children approximately five years old.

- 1942-1945 – Carnival season is cancelled because of World War II.
- 1952 – Camellia Ball presents debutantes for the first time.
- 1980 – Order of Osiris, the first gay society, is established.

Key Players

- Ethan Bryars, co-founder and CEO of Folly and Death Brewing Company
- Kathryn Huntley, co-founder and creative director of Folly and Death Brewing Company
- Sandy Stimpson, mayor of Mobile, Alabama
- Order of Myths, the secret Mardi Gras society
- Mobile Carnival Association (MCA)
- Queen Seline Vaughn Morrissette and King Felix III, Sumner Greer Adams, Jr., the King and Queen of the 2020 Mardi Gras Court.
- David Racino, co-founder and CEO of American Canning

Possible Solutions – Folly and Death Stations Along Parade Routes

It has become popular, mostly among Generation Z, to have reusable cups and straws in an attempt to reduce waste. Set up like a food truck, Folly and Death Brewing Company will have trucks parked in multiple locations along the various parade routes. Customers may approach any Folly and Death truck and have their reusable cups filled or refilled with their favorite limited-edition beers. Folly and Death Brewing Company understands that not everyone walks around with a reusable cup, and recycled plastic cups will be given to those without their own cup.

Summary

Mardi Gras is an important piece of Mobile’s history, and it is a time that all Mobilians look forward to. There are, however, many hoops that Folly and Death Brewing Company will have to jump through as they prepare for the unprecedented and post-pandemic Carnival season.

It is unclear if canning manufacturers will be able to meet the high demands of their clients, such as Folly and Death Brewing Company. Neither the CDC nor the City of Mobile have released information regarding coronavirus guidelines for the upcoming Mardi Gras season, so it is unknown if Folly and Death Brewing Company will be able to use customers’ reusable cups at their trucks.

Also in question is the Mardi Gras season itself; will it even happen? As of right now, Folly and Death Brewing Company will continue to plan according to the reusable cup solution. No information has been released about a COVID-19 contingency plan for Mardi Gras in Mobile.

Sources

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Media Outlet

Folly and Death Brewing Company has a strong follower base on social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok and Facebook. It is in their best interest, however, to send this backgrounder to al.com, an online news website that purchased the local newspaper. Articles and videos posted on al.com are frequently shared on Facebook and therefore will reach a wider and more diverse audience.