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### **SAMA GALA SETS ATTENDANCE RECORD**

Loretto – A record crowd helped the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art “Celebrate the Arts” this month at the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Gala. The event, held July 21 on the campus of Saint Francis University in Loretto, welcomed 418 guests, setting a new Gala attendance record. Serving as Gala chairs were Jim Cayce, Nancy Sheetz and Michael Strueber.

Vibrant and fluorescent colors and highly original decorations set the ambience for the event. Guests took the “Artful – Make a Statement” dress code to heart and many came dressed in lavish and colorful attire. Choreographed dancers, multiple bands, games of chance and gourmet cuisine also added to the electric atmosphere. The silent auction featured a number of items, including highly collectable decoupage, hand-painted linoleum rugs and other traditional collectibles. A live auction featured nearly twenty items, including artwork, sculptures, scholarships, a private tour of Fallingwater, a live horse, and much more.

“The 34<sup>th</sup> annual Gala, ‘Celebrate the Arts,’ was a huge success,” said SAMA Executive Director, Gary Moyer. “We had established a goal of 400 attendees and a profit of \$90,000. The 418 attendees represented a new attendance record for the Gala. Preliminary figures indicate that we also are close to realizing our goal at the bottom line. In today’s economy, the realization of these goals represents a significant accomplishment and our Co-Chairs, Jim Cayce, Nancy Sheetz, and Michael Strueber, are to be commended for all that they did to make this year’s Gala a success. We are already looking at improvements to the live auction, food stations, sound system, and other changes to make our 35<sup>th</sup> annual Gala, scheduled for July 20, 2013, even better.”

Funds raised from the Gala enable SAMA’s four museums – Altoona, Johnstown, Ligonier Valley and Loretto – to remain open to the public free of charge. The Gala also helps underwrite the Museum’s world-class exhibitions and innovative Arts-in-Education program, which brings art into the classrooms of more than 100 schools. Gala proceeds also fund SAMA’s Museum/Healthcare Partnership Program, which benefits area residents suffering from mental and physical disabilities.