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For more information, contact:

Kristin Miller, SAMA-Ligonier Valley Coordinator  
(724) 238-6015

Travis Mearns, Public Relations Coordinator  
(724) 238-6015

**SAMA'S "ROARING '20s" GARDEN PARTY REVISITS THE GILDED AGE; OFFERS EXHIBITIONS OF ANTIQUE AUTOMOBILES AND HOOD ORNAMENTS**

Ligonier – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art at Ligonier Valley is taking its guests back to the Gilded Age with its sixteenth annual Garden Party. Part of the Museum's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, "Roaring '20s" will celebrate the glitz and glamour of the 1920s and '30s with an evening of fine art, gourmet cuisine, live music, auctions, and games of chance. The Garden Party will be held Saturday, June 3 on the Museum's lawn. Connie Pilz is event chair, with Peggy Shepler serving as co-chair.

Guests at the Garden Party will be treated to three very special exhibitions this year. The featured exhibition this summer, *Dennis Sheehan: Atmospheres an American Tonalist*, will be on view in the gallery and the artist will be present to greet visitors and discuss his work. Also inside the Museum will be an exhibition of world-class mascots/hood ornaments. The antique mascots, which come from a private collection and date to the '20s and '30s, feature a variety of styles and designs. Mascots were the rage in the U.S. and Europe from the mid-teens to the 1950s as a way to express originality amidst the fast-paced development of the automobile. The exhibition will mark the first time the collection has ever been shown publically.

On the lawn, all eyes will be on an exhibition of Full Classic® automobiles. High-end marques built during the 1925-to-1948 Classic Era will be displayed, including automobiles by Rolls Royce, Packard, Studebaker, Cord, Bentley and Cadillac. These vehicles are masterpieces of engineering and triumphs of aesthetic design and craftsmanship.

Under the tent, guests will be treated to cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, as well as a gourmet dinner by Vallozzi's. Live period music will be performed by the Rick Purcell Band, and a dance contest will highlight dances of the time. Games of chance will be offered, as will Chinese and art auctions and a 50/50 raffle. The Garden Party also will include two special presentations as the Museum's Auxiliary fêtes Pilz as its 2017 Distinguished Honoree and SAMA honors founders and donors who were instrumental in the establishment of the Ligonier Valley Museum.

The live auction will be highlighted by original paintings by Chas Fagan and Rita Haldeman. Other featured items include a pig roast for up to 50 people from Hoffer's Ligonier

Valley Packing, and a private tour, wine tasting and hayride at Christian W. Klay Winery in Chalk Hill.

“I am so delighted to participate in the festivities of this year’s Garden Party,” said Site Coordinator, Kristin Miller. “I look forward to seeing our guests experience our beautiful gardens as they are filled with the symbols of that glorious era, including fancy cars, flappers and the sounds of ragtime and jazz. Our 1920s-themed dance contest will be like stepping back in time as our guests perform the steps of the day, such as the Lindy Hop, the Fox Trot, and the most famous of all, the Charleston. And throughout the evening, the Rick Purcell Band will be performing the amazing music of this era. Let us capture your hearts on June 3 when the ‘joint will be jumpin’.”

The Garden Party will commence at 4 p.m. on June 3. Tickets are \$125 per person. The event is open to the public, though reservations are required by May 22. Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available. For reservations or additional information, please call the Museum at (724) 238-6015 or visit [www.sama-art.org](http://www.sama-art.org).

Since its opening in 1976, the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art has been devoted to its mission of collecting, preserving and exhibiting 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century American art to the rural communities of southwestern and central Pennsylvania. Since that time, the Museum’s permanent collection has grown to number more than 4,400 works of art. With four sites located in Altoona, Johnstown, Ligonier and Loretto, SAMA is able to reach tens of thousands every year with its world-class exhibitions and award-winning education programs. Each of SAMA’s four sites is open to the public free of charge.