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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SAMA, BEDFORD COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY PARTNER FOR
2019 CRYSTAL SOIRÉE**

Bedford – The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAMA) at Bedford will celebrate its first fundraiser in 2019. The Museum is partnering with the Bedford County Humane Society (BCHS) for its annual winter affair, *Crystal Soirée*. This year’s event, “Sparkle & Shine,” is a black tie-optional event that will feature first-class dining, silent and live auctions, and a New York-style cabaret show featuring internationally acclaimed musician and composer Michael Kooman. *Crystal Soirée* will be held on Saturday, January 26 at the luxurious Omni Bedford Springs Resort.

As partners in this exciting event, SAMA and the BCHS are pulling out all the stops to make *Crystal Soirée* a truly memorable occasion. The event will be a hallmark as one of the area’s most important charity events as funds raised through the program will provide critical funding for both organizations.

SAMA-Bedford opened in May in the historic Anderson House. The Museum offers a comprehensive visitor experience featuring eight galleries, interactive multimedia displays, audio tours, gift shop, children’s creativity studio, and a community garden. In its first several months the Museum has hosted a variety of events, including kids’ art classes, brown bag lunch and lectures, concert performances, poetry readings and an Oktoberfest celebration, but *Crystal Soirée* will be the first fundraiser for the Bedford Museum.

“It is an incredible accomplishment that Debbie Grazier, Site Coordinator, and her staff at SAMA-Bedford are in a position to co-host an event of this magnitude,” said Vanessa Houser, SAMA Executive Director. “It is humbling to see the outpouring of support for our newest museum to allow it to participate in such a fundraiser within its first year of operation.”

The Museum has a long history of community partnerships. In recent years, SAMA has worked with local sports teams to offer special student art exhibitions, cooperated with local galleries and museums on community events, hosted exhibitions of local arts groups, and partnered with and raised money for healthcare organizations and advocacy groups in the fight against breast cancer.

The BCHS is a non-profit, no-kill animal shelter dedicated to the prevention of cruelty to animals of all descriptions capable of suffering. Since its opening in 1989, the shelter has

rescued, rehabilitated and placed thousands of dogs and cats into loving homes. Nearly all of its rescued dogs and cats come from Bedford and Fulton counties and various animal control facilities in which the animals are usually listed as strays and oftentimes scheduled to be euthanized.

Celebrating its 30th anniversary next year, the BCHS maintains a shelter for rescued, abandoned and abused animals and advocates for the humane care and treatment of all animals needing protection. The organization, which recently completed its Dr. William R. Newman Adoption Center, also promotes spay-neuter programs in order to help alleviate the overpopulation of unwanted pets.

The BCHS has partnered with numerous community organizations throughout the years for its *Crystal Soirée* fundraiser, but this year chose SAMA to partner with on the event.

“I am very excited about our partnership with the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art,” said H. Dean Lemley, a member of the BCHS Board of Directors for more than twelve years. “As a board member of both non-for-profits, and with a love for both animals and art, I have a personal and clear understanding of the needs of these two organizations. Both non-for-profits have new buildings and with growth come expenses.

“January 26 will be a night to Sparkle & Shine. *Crystal Soirée* at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort ballroom has always been a big party night, and our 2019 event will bring the same excitement our guests have come to expect. We invite everyone to come celebrate with these two outstanding organizations and help lift us into the future.”

Crystal Soirée will be held from 5:30 to 11 p.m. on Saturday, January 26 at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort. Tickets are \$150 per person and are available by calling SAMA at (814) 589-3020 or on the Museum’s website, www.sama-art.org. Sponsorship and advertising opportunities are available. Special room rates for Omni Bedford Springs Resort also are available by calling the Museum. For more information, please visit www.crystalsoiree.com.