



## **BUILD-A-BEAR WORKSHOP® Opens at the Galleria at Crystal Run In Middletown on September 12th!**

September 9, 2003

ST. LOUIS, MO (September 9, 2003) - Build-A-Bear Workshop®, Where Best Friends Are Made®, is opening a store at the Galleria at Crystal Run on Friday, September 12th. After opening the premier store in St. Louis, MO with resounding success in 1997 and then in cities throughout the United States over the last six years, Build-A-Bear Workshop is bringing its unique entertainment retail concept to Middletown, NY.

Build-A-Bear Workshop is based on the premise that nearly everyone, regardless of age, has a special fondness for stuffed animals. At Build-A-Bear Workshop, visitors, or Guest Bear Builders<sup>sm</sup>, create their own stuffed animals as they "choose, stuff, stitch, fluff, name and dress" their way through a series of bear-making stations. A variety of inventive bear merchandise is also available, including hundreds of coordinating outfits and accessories for all beary special occasions.

Chief Executive Bear Maxine Clark is looking forward to opening another store in New York. She notes, "Our plan is always to open in the premier malls across the country, and we will continue this approach as we open at the Galleria at Crystal Run. We have had many Guests who have visited our other New York locations ask us when we will be opening in their community. Now, we will be able to reach even more of our friends in this area and we are thrilled to be here."

Build-A-Bear Workshop aims to continue its aggressive expansion plan nationally to such new markets as Destin, FL Columbia SC, and Akron, OH,-as well as internationally. The company has been planning its global strategy for the past several years, recently opening three stores in Canada and expanding in the next year to the United Kingdom, Japan, and Australia as well as other countries symbolizing a natural extension of its international business growth.

Build-A-Bear Workshop® is an interactive, entertainment mall-based retailer that invites Guests of all ages to create their own customized stuffed animals. The company continues to redefine the concept of mall-based entertainment retail and in doing so, has been recognized by the retail industry with numerous awards including: National Retail Federation's International 2001 Retail Innovator of the Year and ZD Net Interactive's 2001 Best Places to Work. Build-A-Bear Workshop currently operates 141 stores nationwide with a very successful e-commerce business and will have over 150 stores in 36 states by the end of 2003, including four locations across Canada. Build-A-Bear Workshop is the innovator and leader of the make-your-own-stuffed animal concept for mall-based retailing. The premier store opened in Saint Louis Galleria in October 1997. For more information, call (888) 560-BEAR or visit the company's award-winning web site at [www.buildabear.com](http://www.buildabear.com).