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## **San Diego Community to Clean-Up Starlight Bowl!**

*All Ages Join SAVE STARLIGHT to Pull Some Weeds and Create a Video!*

**Updated Event Date** - Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup> 9am – noon

**\* June 22, 2016 – For Immediate Release \***

**SAN DIEGO:** A new 501(c)3 non-profit community initiative—Save Starlight—kicks off a campaign to preserve, revive, and revitalize the Starlight Bowl, an abandoned open-air amphitheater located in historic Balboa Park. The mission is to revive the bowl as a viable community venue for performances and gatherings. The first event Save Starlight will host is a community weed-pulling party and volunteer day on August 13<sup>th</sup> from 9am - noon. The collective task will be to remove the weeds currently inhabiting the 3,261-seat amphitheater, while producing a video for Save Starlight's revitalization fund-raising campaign.

Friends from across San Diego will join together for this kick-off event in the campaign to restore the Bowl. Save Starlight will provide a light breakfast and musical accompaniment will enliven the bowl for volunteers. All ages are welcome. To sign up to volunteer and participate in the video <http://goo.gl/forms/hgOphLdl4VhIOICj2> or to find out more about the campaign, visit <http://savestarligh.org>.

The Save Starlight effort is spear-headed by long-time San Diego arts advocate, Steve Stopper. Stopper runs Ocean West Studios, and heads the School for Creative Careers, a nonprofit providing young people hands-on experience with theatre technology. He is the former Sound Designer and Engineer for Starlight – working in the space for over ten years.

Stopper shared “We have been thrilled at the positive response from the city and a broad coalition of community organizations eager to help collaborate in our efforts to revitalize this historical gem into a viable San Diego performance venue. Our steering committee is structured with experts in the fields of theatre technology, cultural history, non-profit activism, urban revitalization, historic preservation, and business. We share a common goal of engaging the community in the renovation of this historic site, and seeking a viable business model moving forward to utilize the Bowl as a community asset. Everyone is welcome to join the campaign at the level that best suits them. We look to the community for participation in our upcoming clean-up event and video creation, on-going organization involvement, volunteers, and revitalization funding. The response thus far has been phenomenal.”

## **Background:**

Originally called the Ford Bowl, the Starlight Theater was commissioned by the Ford Motor Company for the 1935-36 California Pacific International Exposition. The name was changed to Starlight Bowl in the 1970s. In its early days the Bowl was home to symphony orchestra performances broadcast via radio across the country and other special event programming. It is best known as the home of San Diego Civic Light Opera (Starlight Musical Theatre), producers of summer musicals from the late 1950s until 2012. That organization folded in 2012 and since then the 3,261-seat venue has languished in disrepair without a vision or viable operating plan.

The Starlight Bowl is located in the palisades area of the park, adjacent to the Air & Space Museum—in the flight path for San Diego's Lindbergh Field airport. Starlight Musical Theatre developed a creative technique to “freeze” the performance mid-scene or song—a crude but ingenious solution to deal with the noise that turned into a tradition for the audience. As San Diego grew, so did airport traffic, exacerbating issues for the venue's traditional musical theater programming.

Enter Save Starlight, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, grass-roots initiative working to restore the Bowl as a functional performance space that can meet the needs and interests of the diverse communities and audiences that make up San Diego today. Save Starlight seeks to establish Starlight Bowl as a versatile venue in the heart of the city for open-air concerts, cinema, theatre, special events, festivals, and more—hosting a new generation of inclusive and varied performances that reflect San Diego's creative communities and culture. Save Starlight is committed to an operations strategy that is accessible, safe, innovative, and sustainable.

The Save Starlight effort will explore various options to mitigate plane noise—from acoustic engineering, noise cancelling headphones, more resilient programming, and additional strategies to confront—rather than simply accommodate—airplane noise.

## **Three Step Campaign:**

Save Starlight has divided the project of revitalizing the Bowl into three incremental steps. The first step in the campaign—launching at the clean-up August 13<sup>th</sup> — is to assemble a broad coalition and community support as well as raise necessary resources. The focus will be to galvanize community interest, prepare a detailed realistic restoration plan and sustainable operating strategy, and begin required fundraising efforts. The second stage will be renovation of the Bowl to a state where it performances can begin. The third stage will be implementing a smart and sustainable plan for ongoing operations. Updates to follow.

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For more information on community involvement contact [info@savestarlight.org](mailto:info@savestarlight.org), or the Save Starlight office: [619-252-1744](tel:619-252-1744). Press can reach Susan Clausen at [press@savestarlight.org](mailto:press@savestarlight.org).

Webpage: <http://savestarlight.org>

Facebook: [facebook.com/savestarlight](https://www.facebook.com/savestarlight)

Clean-up Event Sign-up: <http://goo.gl/forms/hgOphLdl4VhIOICj2>