



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NON-PROFIT GROUPS INVITED TO ATTEND
STARLIGHT BROADWAY SHOWS FOR FREE**

Qualifying organizations must apply by April 1 for Community Ticket Program

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Amid the headlines of our troubled economic times, it's comforting to find something that is still free. Just as it has since its founding in 1951, Starlight Theatre will again make available 364 free tickets to every night of every Broadway performance to qualifying area organizations. Interested community and non-profit groups must complete and submit a Starlight Community Ticket Program application by mail by April 1.

Starlight gives priority consideration to organizations that serve underprivileged and at-risk youth, the medically dependent or disabled, and low-income senior citizens in Missouri and Kansas. With five Broadway shows and 31 performance nights scheduled for the 2009 Starlight season, more than 11,000 free tickets are available for donation this summer to qualifying organizations.

The Starlight Community Ticket Program is available to 501(c)(3) charitable organizations operating in the bi-state area. Applications for the 2009 Broadway season are due by April 1.

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Details about the program and applications can be downloaded at www.kcstarlight.com under Community Programs or requested from Kelli Jenkins, Starlight's director of community relations, at kelli.jenkins@kcstarlight.com or 816.997.1127.

In 2008, 140 organizations participated in the program, and 11,334 free tickets were distributed for Starlight's Broadway shows. Those figures represented a 22-percent increase over the previous summer.

"When I was interviewing for my position at Starlight Theatre last spring, I was thrilled to learn about the history and the reach of our Community Ticket Program," said Denton Yockey, Starlight president and executive producer. "This theatre is recognized as one of Kansas City's most beloved cultural treasures, and it's only fitting that we provide as many community members as possible an opportunity to experience both the magic of live musical theatre and a beautiful Starlight night! We're eager to welcome both new organizations and returning groups this season."

The 2009 Broadway season lineup at Starlight Theatre will include *Legally Blonde The Musical* (June 30-July 5), *Anything Goes* (July 13-19), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (July 28-Aug. 2), *Chicago* (Aug. 11-16) and *Mamma Mia!* (Sept. 8-13). The first two shows begin at 8:30 p.m., and the final three begin at 8 p.m.

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Starlight Theatre

Presenting Broadway entertainment since 1951, the non-profit Starlight Theatre Association is Kansas City's oldest and largest performing arts organization. The Association operates, programs and maintains the largest stage in the United States, as well as the 16-acre Starlight Theatre complex. While assuming all annual operating costs for the complex, the Association also raises funds for capital improvements and a variety of programs, including national Broadway musical performances, concerts, community outreach and education. Since 2000, the Association has contributed more than \$25 million of privately funded improvements to the Kansas City, Mo.-owned Starlight Theatre. Each Broadway season, Starlight donates more than 11,000 tickets to its performances to regional non-profit organizations serving the disadvantaged.

In 2008, Starlight Theatre was selected as the "Favorite Performing Arts Venue or Organization" in the Kansas City Convention & Visitors Association's Visitors' Choice Awards program. Starlight also received a Gold Award for "Best Performing Arts Venue" and Bronze Award for "Best Theater" in *Ingram's* 2008 Best of Business Kansas City Awards. The theatre seats approximately 8,000 and is located in Swope Park.