



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**  
**Thursday, Sept. 15, 2011**

---

Contact: Erin Dean, chair, Tricentennial Committee, 843-524-0116

## **Beaufort Tricentennial Parade, Grand Marshal Gary Sinise set for Saturday morning celebration**

With actor Gary Sinise already in town as part of the Lt. Dan Weekend 2 to raise money and awareness for wounded warriors, final preparations are underway for Beaufort's Tricentennial Parade Saturday with Sinise as grand marshal.

The parade will feature 40+ floats that highlight periods of Beaufort's 300 years of history. The parade starts at 9:30, earlier than usual to accommodate Sinise's travel schedule. The parade follows the usual route through downtown with best viewing along Carteret and Bay streets. The event is free.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to celebrate Beaufort's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday the way any good small town does, with a parade," Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling said. "We've got an outstanding line-up of floats and we guarantee you'll have a good time and probably learn something at the same time."

Some of the floats include:

- the Friends of Hunting Island showcasing the lighthouse
- Several schools and school children
- Sea Eagle Market to display the importance of the fishing industry
- The Beaufort Water Festival
- Churches
- Heritage organizations includg the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Colonial Dames XVII Century
- AMIkids Beaufort
- And many others.

Beaufort was founded in 1711 by the English, although its beginnings date back to Spanish explorers in 1514. Beaufort was named for Englishman Henry Somerset, Duke of Beaufort (1684-1714), one of the Lords Proprietors of Carolina. It was on Jan. 17, 1711, that Beaufort's formal charter was created.

The Parris Island Marine Corps Band will lead the parade with the Beaufort Fire Department's color guard. A New York Fire Department is bringing an antique fire truck to carry several wounded veterans in the parade, anchored by Sinise. His service as grand marshal coincides with the Lt. Dan Weekend events and a Friday night performance by his Lt. Dan Band to raise money for injured military veterans.

Sinise first visited Beaufort in his role as "Lieutenant Dan" in the Hollywood film Forrest Gump with Tom Hanks. Between shooting his popular TV series CSI: New York, he tours the country with the band to raise money for injured veterans. Sinise also is known for his role in the movie Apollo 13 alongside co-star Hanks.

As arrangements continue for different ways to mark the historic 300<sup>th</sup> birthday, organizers of the Beaufort 300 project are in the final stretch to raise funds for a new historical marker. For a \$300 investment in Beaufort's future for individuals or \$500 for businesses and non-profits, donors' names will be featured on a permanent historical monument in the Waterfront Park commemorating the Tricentennial. Corporate and non-profit sponsorships also are available.

Also this fall, Beaufort County schools are working on a variety of projects to study, recognize and celebrate Beaufort's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Between now and the end of 2011, the Beaufort Tricentennial Committee will be working with organizations to continue to highlight the past three centuries. The recently-wrapped 56<sup>th</sup> Water Festival, for instance, showcased Beaufort's history throughout the 10-day event.

Meanwhile, City leaders are laying a path for an even better fourth century through a revitalized city planning process that's already brought new residential construction and adaptive re-use of the former Beaufort City Hall. Lowcountry Produce will be opening a food market with a targeted opening in October.

For more information and to sign-up for Beaufort 300, visit [www.cityofbeaufort.org](http://www.cityofbeaufort.org) and look in the upper left corner. You can also join Beaufort Tricentennial on Facebook. For more information on Gary Sinise, the Lt. Dan Band and the Gary Sinise Foundation go to [www.garysinisefoundation.org](http://www.garysinisefoundation.org).

**END**