



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Historical-themed floats needed for Beaufort Tricentennial parade, deadline Sept. 9

Organizers of Beaufort's Tricentennial Parade Sept. 17 are seeking floats that portray a part of Beaufort's 300 years of history, with the application deadline Sept. 9.

Erin Dean, chair of the Beaufort Tricentennial Committee, said the event still needs more participants to join grand marshal actor Gary Sinise. **Parade float applications are available at Beaufort City Hall, the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce and online at www.cityofbeaufort.org.**

"We have some good floats already lined up, but there's room for a lot more and we have 300 years of history to portray," Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling said. "We want this to be a fun parade that also showcases what's made Beaufort so special for so long."

Floats already lined up include the Lady's Island Middle School Cheerleaders and the "Spirit of Beaufort," the Sea Eagle Market and commercial fishing's impact, the Beaufort Water Festival, the Sons of the American Revolution and the Colonial Dames, as well as the Friends of Hunting Island.

Other possible float themes include the area's involvement in the Civil Rights movement, architecture, the military presence, the role of religion and churches, historic preservation, the environment and industry and business including indigo, rice and waterfront commerce, Dean said.

The Parris Island Marine Corps Band will lead the parade with a color guard and band. A New York Fire Department is bringing an antique firetruck to carry several wounded veterans in the

parade, anchored by Gary Sinise's. His service as grand marshal coincides with the Lt. Dan Weekend events and a 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.

Parade participants are encouraged to use professional float companies for their entries, Dean said. The entry fee is \$25 for groups and free for registered non-profit organizations.

As arrangements continue for different ways to mark the historic 300th 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, 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 300th birthday. Those projects, kicking off when school resumes in mid-August, will be rolled out later this fall, said Margaret Rushton, the liaison between the school district and Beaufort Tricentennial.

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 56th 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.

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.

For more information and to sign-up for Beaufort 300, visit 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.

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