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Sinise's band to play charity concert in Crystal Lake Saturday

Author(s): TOM MUSICK **Date:** September 13, 2005 **Section:** News

tmusick@nwherald.com For Gary Sinise, it's all about support.

The actor earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor with his portrayal of Lt. Dan Taylor in "Forrest Gump." And if a category existed for Best Supporting **Band**, he and his bandmates would be among the favorites.

"I love going out and playing these fundraisers," Sinise said recently from the set of "CSI: New York" in Los Angeles. "You're having a great time playing and helping somebody at the same time."

The Lt. Dan **Band** will bring its passion and purpose **to** Crystal Lake on Saturday for a benefit concert at the Raue Center for the Arts. The show will raise money for the McHenry County Public Action **to** Deliver Shelter, which helps homeless men and women rebuild their lives.

Those who see the cover **band** will be treated **to** a stage crowded with talented musicians, said Sinise, who has played bass guitar since his teenage days in Highland Park. Sinise started the **band** with Chicago composer Kimo Williams several years ago. It now consists of 10 members and other guest performers who **play** a mix of pop, rock, blues, country, and classical songs.

"Anything from Hendrix **to** Beyonc & eacute;," said Sinise, whose favorite songs **to** perform include "Sweet Home Chicago," Stevie Wonder's "Another Star" and "Days Go By" by Keith Urban. "We started out just having jam sessions. [Kimo] would call up guys and we would just **play** and have a good time."

They liked what they heard.

"It went from something we did on an occasional night off work **to** where we're actually playing three or four times a month. We're doing some pretty good stuff now."

The thousands of troops whom the Lt. Dan **Band** has performed for would agree. The group has played dozens of USO shows at military bases in America and overseas.

"We all know what happened **to** Vietnam veterans when they came home from war," Sinise said.

"We've got troops at war now going off in harm's way and we want **to** make sure that what happened **to** Vietnam veterans never happens again. Imagine what kind of country we'd be if nobody volunteered **to** serve in the armed forces."

Sinise's efforts have been noticed at all levels of the military. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited him on the set of "CSI: New York" **to** thank him for his work with troops and with Operation Iraqi Children, which Sinise co-founded as a way **to** deliver school supplies **to** young Iraqis.

"It was interesting," said Sinise, who first met Rumsfeld while visiting wounded soldiers at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. "We talked about the incredible people we have in the services and how strong they are and their families are."

Sinise also is proud of his own family. He and his wife, Moira Harris, have three children who double as his rock 'n' roll advisers.

"They did tell me what we shouldn't **play**," said Sinise, 50, who bought a Fall Out Boy CD after seeing the **band** perform on MTV. He wanted **to** learn some of the group's songs because the Lt. Dan **Band plays** for many young troops.

He was intercepted by his teenage son, McCanna.

"Mac said, 'Dad, what are you doing?'" said Sinise, who explained his plan **to** his petrified son.

"He said, 'Dad, no, no. You stick **to** that older stuff.' "

IF YOU GO

What: The Lt. Dan **Band** featuring Gary Sinise

When: 7 p.m. Saturday

Where: Raue Center for the Arts in Crystal Lake

Info: Tickets cost \$35, \$45, and \$60 and are available at (815) 356-9212 or by visiting the Raue Center box office at 26 N. Williams St.

On the net

Learn more about Gary **Sinise's** group at www.ltdanband.com.

Learn more about **Sinise's** charity at www.operationiraqichildren.org.

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