

# Music industry sings military's praises for second

*Samantha L. Quigley, American Forces Press Service*

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 17, 2008 – Just in time for Thanksgiving, 14 musical acts are showing just how thankful they are for what the military does for everyone back home.

Led by John Ondrasik of Five For Fighting, the musicians lent their hit talents to "For the Troops II," a CD featuring 14 hit singles covering the spectrum of musical genres.

The songs are some of the biggest hits yet for the participating artists, but the music is secondary to the CD's message, the performers said.

"At the end of the day, it's really not even about the songs," Ondrasik said. "It's about the gesture of thanks and support and appreciation. I salute all these artists who did that."

Ondrasik started the project last year with the help of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, and the Recording Industry Association of America. That original CD, "For the Troops," was downloaded more than 350,000 times and another 200,000 servicemembers and retirees worldwide received hard copies of the disc.

The sequel was somewhat easier to pull off because they already had channels open to the recording companies, Ondrasik said. On the other hand, he said, he exhausted "some friendship cards" and had to look for different talent.

"This time I wanted a whole new line up of artists, and with the exception of Josh Groban, who's on here again just because the military wives love Josh, everybody's new," Ondrasik added. "So, I didn't have those relationships. We just started reaching out to anybody and everybody."

That method netted the participation of groups like 3 Doors Down, Good Charlotte, Daughtry, and Maroon 5. Individual musicians who lent their crooning to the project include Gretchen Wilson, Jude, Joe Perry, Keith Urban, Alan Jackson and Trace Adkins. The late Isaac Hayes also gave a song to the project before he passed away.

"We have a Roy Orbison [song], which is really cool," Ondrasik said. "Roy's wife, Barbara, gave us a song.

"Roy Orbison adds a certain stature to this CD," he added. "We've got a legend of legends on here."

As long as he receives positive feedback from the troops, Ondrasik said, he's more than willing to keep the project going in the future, though there may be a twist to "For the Troops III," he hinted. Regardless of what's on this CD or the next, it all boils down to one thing for Ondrasik.

"We can't lose sight of what's going on," he said. "We can't lose sight of who protects us, and I think, now more than ever, we need to keep the troops in our hearts and our minds."

A complete list of song titles is available on [www.cdforthetroops.com](http://www.cdforthetroops.com). The tunes will be available for those with valid military identification, including veterans, to download beginning Thanksgiving Day and will remain available through mid-March, Ondrasik said. The entire CD, as well as individual songs, can be downloaded at no charge.

If problems are encountered in the downloading process, Ondrasik suggested contacting Operation Homefront or contact CD For the Troops through the Web site.

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