

# Serena Hills students record CD single to raise funds

By Matt Kelley  
THE STAR

The gymnasium at Serena Hills Elementary School in Chicago Heights was turned into a recording studio last week.

And the Flossmoor District 161 school's 360 students — in kindergarten through fifth grade — raised their voices and became rock stars for the day.

The crowd of wide-eyed students sang along with local rock band Wolcott as the band performed its song, "All Aboard For Love," at the school on Friday.

The song, which is about loving each other and cooperating, was recorded for a CD single.

School officials plan to sell the CD to parents and community members to raise money for the Red Cross Sept. 11 Disaster Relief Fund.

Lead singer Ryan DeYoung said he and his bandmates were nervous to play before such a unique audience.

But they overcame their fears and the students had a great time.

"We're excited to be doing this," DeYoung said. "We're going to try doing it at other schools."

Wolcott has been playing as a band since March. The group has performed at several venues in Chicago and the South Suburbs.

A huge cheer met the band as they played their first guitar riffs. Serena Hills music teacher Jim Mollin said students knew the words by heart

after a dress rehearsal Thursday.

"Everybody stand up. Grab your brother's hand," the students sang as the song began. "Grab your sister's too."

The chorus of the song — "All aboard for love" — was then belted out by 360 young voices.

And the first take was so good that it's going straight to CD release.

Wolcott performed a couple other songs for the happy audience.

Although DeYoung said he wrote the song before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., band members and school officials agreed that it's a perfect fit for such a fundraiser.

Mollin said he got the idea for Wolcott to play for the students. It was easy to find a band; Mollin's son, Ben, is the band's bass player.

Serena Hills Principal Lynn Westerlund said she was delighted to see the students participate in such a positive message for the community.

"They did a beautiful job," she said. "I'm so proud. It's nice they had an opportunity to do this as a whole school."

After the concert, Wolcott members signed autographs in the school's classrooms.

The CD singles of "All Aboard For Love," recorded live with 360 Serena Hills students, will soon be available for \$4 a copy.

People interested in purchasing the CD can contact Trish Kurth at (708) 756-0716.



Wolcott band drummer Tom Miller (above) signals the end of the song they recorded with students from Serena Hills School in Chicago Heights.

Students from Serena Hills School (right) sing during a recording with the group Wolcott. The CD single will be sold to raise funds for the Red Cross.