

Singing around the campfire

Rockville Centre native finishes album

By REBECCA MELNITSKY

rmelnitsky@herald.com

It's time to gather round the campfire and sing some songs for a good cause.

Rockville Centre native Rob DelGaudio has completed his album of summer camp songs. The proceeds from all sales will help bring underprivileged and disabled kids to summer camp — an opportunity they may not have otherwise.

DelGaudio, a musician and music teacher at Wampus Elementary School in Armonk, N.Y., said he had great childhood memories of spending summers at Luzerne Music Center in the Adirondacks. "A couple years ago I started writing a song and sounded like it could be a campfire song," he said. "I thought that was neat... Next thing I knew, I had 10 songs to be an album."

The songs are about s'mores, haunted woods and friendship, with what DelGaudio called "a musical theatre twist," sing-a-long banjos, and Beach Boys harmonies. "I wanted it to have a very natural sound," he said. "So when you listen to it, it sounds like it could have been recorded at a campfire... It has a very earthy organic feel."

Proceeds from the album will go to Summer Camp Opportunities Promote Education (SCOPE) and the National Inclusion Project. SCOPE provides summer camp scholarships for children from low-income communities,

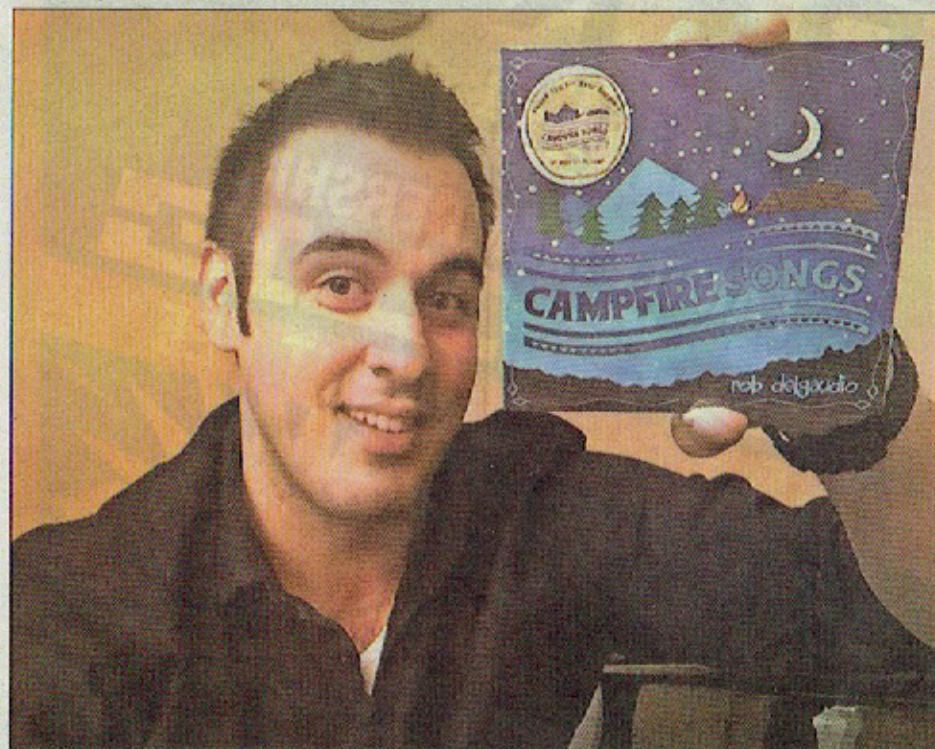
and the National Inclusion Project helps bring children with disabilities to summer camp.

"[Camp] is not something everyone gets to do like school," DelGaudio said. "Only if the family could afford it and if things are available in the community... Rather than me putting out this album for my own sake, I wanted to link up with charities and see if the proceeds could benefit."

DelGaudio raised \$10,470 on the fundraising website Indiegogo to record the album — although he still had to pay out of his own pocket to finish the project. The songs were recorded at Dubway Studios in New York City over a year, with the help of many other musicians, including American Idol semi-finalist Natalie Weiss. The Westchester Youth Choir also came to the studio to provide backup vocals.

"There will be a concert," said DelGaudio. "I haven't scheduled it yet. There will be a concert, most likely in June." He added that as a full-time music teacher, he would not have the time for a concert until school ends. He said he had to fit recording the album into nights and weekends. When he's not teaching or playing music, he likes to spend time with his family and hike.

There will also be a summer camp tour, with the first scheduled stop at Camp Hawkeye in New Hampshire. "We actually went there last summer and played the songs,"



Courtesy Rob DelGaudio

ROCKVILLE CENTRE NATIVE ROB DELGAUDIO recorded an album to help send underprivileged children to camp.

DelGaudio said. "They were very disappointed that we didn't have actual CDs, but we will have that this time."

"Campfire Songs" will be available for download on March 1 on iTunes and Amazon. Physical copies can be bought at camp-

firesongs.org.

"It's kind of like the first of two phases," DelGaudio said of finishing the recording. "Now it's really time to put the album out there and hopefully it will do some good in the world."