

# Denver says farewell to local rock stars

by [Staff Writer](#)

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by [Elizabeth Carlton](#)

Denver's rowdy Southern rock group, The James-Younger Gang, packed their bags and said goodbye last month. The group moved to Illinois, where they plan to further their musical careers.

East Lincoln High School graduates Dustin Newcombe, Nathan Walker, Alex Coffey and Jory Whitmore formed the band three years ago with aspirations of one day quitting their "day jobs" to become full-time rock stars.

"It's not easy to find a group of people who want to be successful and have that drive like I do," said bassist and vocalist Coffey. "Growing up, I was always told to go to school, go to college and get a 'real' job."

But their passion puts food on the table and pays the bills even in today's tight economy, proving that their dream wasn't just a far-fetched fantasy.

"I told Dustin from day one, 'When we can get this thing to support us in the most basic sense, I'll be ready to go,'" guitarist and vocalist Whitmore said. "So we worked hard, built up our local following, and busted our tails to become tighter, more solid musicians."

Their efforts garnered quite a bit of attention. In 2010, The James-Younger Gang was awarded Best Country Band of the Year at the Charlotte Music Awards.

This year the band embarked on the Midnight Train Tour which

included the NASCAR All-Star Race, the Coca-Cola 600 and several other shows across the nation. But there was something about Illinois that caught the band's attention and they quickly made plans to move into a house just outside of Chicago.

"I think we all knew when we came through Illinois the first night that there was something special here," drummer Walker said. "We had already discussed early on in the tour that we were looking for a place where the market was ripe to set up camp and work the industry from the inside out."

With more than 9.8 million people in the Chicago metropolitan area, the band expects to expand its fanbase.

"We hope there are no hard feelings," lead singer and guitarist Newcombe said. "We love where we're from and we'll always be the boys from 'Denver of the East.' We just had to make this decision for professional reasons. Bands are treated very well up here because the venues take it upon themselves to make sure that people are in the door to watch you play, and that just snowballs into good things for everyone because people come back to see you play again and again."

Details about future updates on the band will be announced on their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/thejamesyoungergang](http://www.facebook.com/thejamesyoungergang).

## About the author



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