Two Colorado boys ended a fantastic journey Sunday night, Feb. 10 when The Okee Dokee Brothers won a Grammy for best children's album at the award show in Los Angeles, Calif.

The bluegrass duo, Joe Mailander and Justin Lansing, are childhood friends from Denver who moved to the Twin Cities in Minnesota in 2007. 28-year-old Mailander is the son of Bob and Rita Mailander of Denver (formerly of Holyoke) and the grandson of Marie Mailander of Holyoke.

Joe Mailander, at left, and Justin Lansing are childhood friends from Colorado who are now Grammy winners after an unexpected nomination for their bluegrass, nature-inspired children's music.

Clad in plaid bow ties and vintage-style suspenders Sunday night, The Okee Dokee Brothers accepted the shiny Grammy award for their children's album "Can You Canoe?" which was inspired by a 30-day canoe trip down the Mississippi River in the summer of 2011.

According to the StarTribune in Minneapolis, Minn., Mailander pulled what was probably a first at the Grammys, thanking "the Mississippi River for inspiring the music."

These two indie music artists have fulfilled their dream of making children's music and now have a Grammy to put an exclamation mark on their journey, something they "never saw coming."

The Okee Dokee Brothers' "Can You Canoe?" album wins a Grammy for best children's album.

Friends since age 3, Mailander and Lansing have been making kid-oriented music since 2005, and their "Can You Canoe?" album has sold about 10,000 copies since its release last May.

While they did have a couple sold-out gigs in December, these full-time musicians usually play in schools and libraries, promoting audience participation.

With the message of encouraging families to enjoy the outdoors, Mailander and Lansing have plans for another adventure-type album, this time on the Appalachian Trail.

Holyoke Enterprise February 14, 2013