

2006
ROWVA School Helps Fight the Bite
Fifth-graders donate to malaria prevention
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Linda Bell



Class members are, from left, in front Kierra Morgan, Justin Curtis, Ranae Damer, Madison Sorenson, Megan Ferry, Margaret Wetzel, Ashley Whitman, Brent Nelson, Noah Murdock; and in back, teacher Laurie Sykes, Garhart Smith, Dean Lane, Lauren Sperry, Rabecka Williamson, Kody Frye, Colby Bloomgren and Brady Johnston.

ALTONA - Some fifth-grade students from ROWVA West Elementary in Altona are now members of a SWAT TEAM, thanks to fundraising efforts in December. Laurie Sykes' fifth-grade class read in *Time for Kids*, a *Time* magazine geared to young readers, that one million African people die each year after being bitten by mosquitoes infected with the malaria parasite. The students were impressed that many African lives could be saved if they had mosquito nets over them while they slept.

As the holiday season approached, the class decided to decorate a container in which to collect donations to buy mosquito nets. The 16 students in the class donated \$70 by Dec. 18.

The donation was sent to the Love, Hallie Foundation, a nonprofit organization started by the family of the late Hallie Geier, a *Time for Kids* reader who died at age 11 in an accident. The foundation started a "Veto the Squito" campaign to raise money to buy mosquito nets for African families.

The class recently received a response to its donation, a letter from Sofia Landon Geier, chairwoman, and Ted Geier, president of the Love, Hallie Foundation.

"Our daughter, Hallie, believed each of us could make a difference in the world. Each \$10 donated is being channeled through the organization Malaria No More to provide an insecticide-treated life-saving bed net to a family in sub-Saharan Africa," the letter said.

The foundation sent a certificate designating the class as members of SWAT TEAM, Students Working As Teammates To Engage Against Malaria. Each student and Sykes also received a red wristband bearing the SWAT TEAM logo.