



# TOWNSHIP OF ORLAND

**For Immediate Release**  
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**For More Information**  
AlexS@OrlandTownship.org

## **Orland Township Announces 2021 Senior American Idol Winner!**

*Edward Swanson took home the trophy on Thursday, Oct. 21.*

**ORLAND PARK, IL** - Thirteen talented seniors showcased their vocal skills before a live audience as they competed for the title of 2021 Orland Township Senior American Idol.

The event, sponsored by Evergreen Senior Living and Bickford Senior Living, took place on Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at Georgios Banquets in Orland Hills. Over 500 guests flocked into the dazzlingly-decorated ballroom for dinner and a night of friendly competition between this year's contestants.

After three rounds of singing their favorite tunes, Edward Swanson, took home the trophy and title of 2021 Orland Township Senior American Idol. Swanson, 80, was raised on the South Side of Chicago. His love for music began in high school with voice lessons, and the passion followed him into the Army; where he joined the 7th Army Chorus, performing throughout Europe. After returning to the United States, he began singing in clubs on Rush Street in Chicago, where he met his wife. Since starting his family, Ed assumed his singing days were behind him, until he saw the "Senior American Idol" ad and thought "Here's my second chance!"

Ed started off the night with "Misty" by Johnny Mathis, continuing in the second round with "That Old Black Magic" by Frank Sinatra. In the final round, Ed impressed the audience and judges with "Unforgettable"; which ended up helping him win first place.

Musician Blake Alexander and award-winning choreographer and instructor Maria Villari of American Dance Center participated as the celebrity judge panel, along with former Senior American Idol winner Laura Alberts, who took home the trophy in 2016. Comedian, author, and Tinley Park Trustee Bill Brady served as emcee for the event.

"We're lucky to have so many talented seniors who are willing to come out, show off their talents, and compete to benefit the Orland Township Scholarship Foundation," said Supervisor Paul O'Grady. "We take pride in offering opportunities like this to our

**Paul A. O'Grady**  
Supervisor

**Cindy M. Murray**  
Clerk

**Patrick Feldner**  
**Maria Sanfilippo**  
**John Lynch**  
**Michael Maratea**  
Trustees

**Rich E. Kelly**  
Assessor

**Antonio Rubino**  
Highway Commissioner

### *Office Locations*

**Administrative Office**  
**Assessor's Office**  
**Youth & Family**  
**Counseling Services**  
14807 S. Ravinia Ave.  
Orland Park, IL 60462

**Main Fax Number**  
(708) 403-4260

**Administrative Office &**  
**Assessor's Office**  
Telephone Number  
(708) 403-4222

**Youth and Family**  
**Counseling Services Office**  
Telephone Number  
(708) 403-4001

**Highway Department Office**  
16125 S. Wolf Rd.  
Orland Park, IL 60467  
Phone: (708) 403-5148  
Fax: (708) 403-5165

[www.orlandtownship.org](http://www.orlandtownship.org)

seniors, and we're glad to have found a way to help benefit local youth in the process. I want to thank everyone who came out and supported their favorite singer, and of course, our Scholarship Foundation."

For more information on programs, services, and events being held at Orland Township, visit the website, [orlandtownship.org](http://orlandtownship.org), or call (708) 403-4222. Be sure to like the [Orland Township Facebook page](#) for more updates.

# # #



*Orland Township Supervisor Paul O'Grady joined the 2021 Senior American Idol winner on stage to congratulate him.*

*(L to R: Supervisor O'Grady, Senior Services Coordinator Marie Ryan, Senior Idol Edward Swanson, and his wife, Kathy Swanson)*



*Audience members dancing during Swanson's final performance.*