

## Press Clippings 4/5/2018

---Daily Herald--- 4/5/18

### **Elgin-area kids received 300,000 books through Dolly Parton program**

BY MIKE DANAHEY

United Way of Elgin's local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library mailed out its 300,000th book to a local youngster learning how to read.

United Way of Elgin Director of Marketing Elissa Kojzarek said the milestone reached last month dates from 2009, when the organization first got involved with Parton's literacy initiative. United Way's effort sends between 36,000 - 39,000 books a year, she said, and has sent books to more than 10,500 children.

Kojzarek explained that the local version of the program is open to any child, from birth until of age of five, who lives in Elgin, South Elgin, Hampshire, Pingree Grove, or Burlington. There is no cost to participating families.

Parents and guardians can sign up to take part online at [www.uwelgin.org/dpil](http://www.uwelgin.org/dpil), at the United Way of Elgin office or the Gail Borden Public Library. People can also make monetary donations through the website.

"A donation of \$30 will provide a child a book a month for a year," Kojzarek said.

Kojzarek said participants get one age-appropriate book a month until the month when they reach the age of five. The books are sent through Parton's Dollywood Foundation.

"The first book sent is 'The Little Engine that Could,' because Dolly Parton has said that was her favorite book as a child. The last book is always 'Here Comes Kindergarten,'" Kojzarek said.

Kojzarek said she keeps letters on a work bulletin board from parents who are impressed with the program.

"Some have told me about how their child runs to the mailbox every month, excited to see when a book arrives," Kojzarek said.

United Way of Elgin board of directors member Karen Fox, a former educator in **School District U46**, said the effort is one of the local United Way's most-valued programs. She's heard from teachers that the books help get children interested in reading before they start school.

In February, Parton's Imagination Library marked sending out its 100,000,000th book since launching in 1995 by donating a copy of her "A Coat of Many Colors" to the Library of Congress. At that time, Patron also announced she would host a monthly "Story Time" that is being live-streamed on the Library of Congress' Facebook and YouTube pages the last Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. CST.

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## **Elgin Symphony Orchestra offers \$10 tickets to youth concerts April 10-11**

SUBMITTED BY ELGIN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Elgin Symphony Orchestra is offering general admission tickets to the Ainsworth Concerts for Youth concerts at 11:15 a.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, April 10-11, at the Hemmens Cultural Center, 45 Symphony Way in Elgin. Tickets are \$10; taxes and fees apply.

Advance purchase is required by 3 p.m. Monday, April 9. For information, see [ElginSymphony.org](http://ElginSymphony.org).

The concerts, led by resident conductor Stephen Squires, feature 15-year-old cellist Ifetayo Ali Landing, the junior winner of the 2017 Sphinx Organization Competition and a Chicago native.

The 45-minute program, "Music Emojis: Feelings, Connections, Life," explores how music expresses emotion.

ESO Ainsworth Concerts for Youth are designed to introduce children in second to eighth grade to the fundamentals of music and to generate an interest in learning how to play an instrument.

The 2018 concerts include works by traditional and contemporary composers like George F. Handel, Gustav Mahler, Danny Elfman, Jennifer Higdon and John Williams. It is sponsored by Sterling Ainsworth, James and Ruth Ann Snodgrass and the Elgin Symphony League.

Seven hundred and fifty students from **Elgin Area School District U-46** are able to attend due to a generous grant from the Bear Family Restaurants and the **U-46** Foundation.

Guest artist Ifetayo Ali-Landing began her musical studies on violin as soon as she was able to stand. At age 3, she decided that she preferred the mellow sounds of the cello and begged her mother to switch. At age 4, she was playing the cello. Ifetayo was selected as one of the winners of the 2016 DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Performers competition and performed as soloist with the Festival's Oistrakh Symphony Orchestra. Over the years, she has placed or received honorable mentions for the Society of American Musicians competition, DePaul Concerto Festival for Young Musicians competition, and the Music Festival in Honor of Confucius competition.

The Sphinx Competition is held every year in Detroit, Michigan. The competition is open to all junior high, high school, and college-age black and Latino string players residing in the U.S. The competition offers young black and Latino classical string players a chance to compete under the guidance of an internationally renowned panel of judges and to perform with established professional musicians in a competition setting. Its primary goals are to encourage, develop and recognize classical music talent in the black and Latino communities. For more information, visit [www.sphinxmusic.org](http://www.sphinxmusic.org).

Stephen Squires is a musician with a career that blends his passions for conducting, teaching, and performing. Fully committed to conducting the music of living composers,

he has premiered more than 80 new works. Squires received his musical training at the Preparatory School of the Eastman School of Music and the Crane School of Music, in his home state of New York. He earned his master's degree in instrumental conducting/trumpet performance at California State University, Northridge. Further conducting studies were with Helmuth Rilling, Maurice Abravanel, Daniel Lewis, Tsung Yeh, and at the Aspen Music Festival. He is professor of conducting in the Music Conservatory of the Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University. Prior to this appointment, he served on the artist faculty of the Northern Illinois School of Music for 19 years, where he received the prestigious "Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award."

Squires' current professional appointments include resident conductor of the Elgin Symphony Orchestra, principal guest conductor of the Fox Valley Orchestra, music director of the Mendelssohn Chamber Orchestra (Rockford), music director of the Millar Brass (Evanston), and music director of the Illinois Brass Band (Arlington Heights). He is the former music director of the Illinois Chamber Symphony.

Now in its 67th season, the ESO offers programming unmatched for an entertaining, informative and relaxing cultural experience. The ESO has won Illinois Professional Orchestra of the Year an unprecedented four times -- in 1988, 1999, 2005 and 2016 -- and works to create an enjoyable entertainment experience that goes beyond the magnificent music performed by some of the best musicians in the Midwest.

## SPORTS SECTION

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### **Boys Volleyball: Bartlett sweeps South Elgin for 9<sup>th</sup> straight win**

BY JOHN LEMON



**Bartlett's Toiyon Walton sees his shot get past South Elgin's Jacob Ozga in a boys volleyball match in South Elgin.** *John Starks | Staff Photographer*

The season might not have started exactly like the Bartlett boys volleyball team wanted, but it's full steam ahead now for the Hawks.

Toiyon Walton paced a balanced attack with 7 kills Wednesday night, leading Bartlett to its ninth straight win, 25-23, 25-17 at South Elgin.

After an 0-4 start to the season, Bartlett (9-4, 1-0 in the Upstate Eight Conference) is as hot as anyone.

"Last year we were improving, mostly a team full of sophomores. We're doing pretty good this year," Walton said. "I have a good feeling. We built that chemistry last year and most of us played club together."

Bartlett opened the year losing to Schaumburg, Palatine, Mundelein and West Chicago. Wednesday's win improved the Hawks' record to 8-2 against sectional opponents.

Coach Bob Schwantz said one of the main reasons for the success is their attitude.

"We're believing in each other," Schwantz said. "We're understanding people make mistakes and moving onto the next point where teams in the past dwell on it for four or five more points. I don't really have one leader out there, they are all playing the leader role and that's what we want."

Bartlett won the U-46 tournament over the weekend, then took down Glenbard North in 3 sets Monday.

"That win against Glenbard North Monday was big," Schwantz said. "Now they are playing like they can beat anybody. These guys are playing with a lot of confidence."

Garrett Jurina added 2 kills and 2 blocks against the Storm (4-4, 0-1).

"I always have confidence in our team," Jurina said. "Last year as a sophomore on varsity there were a lot of nerves and a lot of growth. Now with a year under our belt I think we're a lot more prepared for every team on the other side of the net. We're hoping for big things in the playoffs too."

Bartlett was in control throughout against the Storm.

South Elgin pulled within 12-8 in the opening set when King Thomas hustled deep in the back row to keep a ball alive, then Daniel Skrzypchak went even further back to get his arms on the next shot from well off the court and bump it all the way over the net. Bartlett proceeded to hit long, giving the Storm the point.

South Elgin junior Vince Miskiewicz won a 50-50 ball at the net to cut Bartlett's lead to 14-13, and the Storm tied the set twice at 20-20 on Jacob Ozga's block and again at 21-21.

A kill by Walton put Bartlett back up, and his block on the next point made it 23-21. Walton closed out the set by putting away a ball in the middle.

"When your team can fight back that's something I'm glad to see," South Elgin coach Adam Plach said. "We have to get a little more out of our serve. We're missing some of our zones. We're giving guys too easy of a ball to play and teams can run offense. Bartlett is a very well-rounded team and that's why we can't give them such simple serves because they have hitters on the pins, the middles, and they take some good swings."

Tied briefly early in the second set 6-6, Bartlett surged with a 4-1 run to take the lead for good. Leading 19-16, the Hawks ended the match with a 6-1 spurt, getting their 24th point on Jacob Bush's ace and No. 25 when the Storm hit long.

Miskiewicz led South Elgin with 6 kills, Thomas had 4, Christian Ayar set 10 assists, Skrzypchak had 5 digs and Ozga totaled 3 blocks.

"We're a young team that's struggling to find an identity," Plach said. "What I'd like to see out of my team a bit more is some fire. Guys move from spot to spot very lackadaisically."

In addition to Walton and Jurina, that balanced Bartlett attack Wednesday included Carter Burzlaff (11 assists), Jonathan Ruge (9 assists), Bush (4 kills, 1 ace) and Sohum Desai (9 digs).

"All our front row guys can put the ball down," Jurina said. "Both setters are very able. All our back row guys can get a good pass every play. Serving could be better but we're working on that. We're just really gelled as a team, we're having a lot of fun."