



From Your Executive Director

We need you to join us
at the Capitol April 20

BY THE TIME you get this magazine, we will be well into the second year of the 96th Illinois General Assembly. Many are saying that not much will get done due to the fact it's an election year and the state's ongoing budget deficit.

As an elected township official, you are an important part of township government. The TOI staff and our lobbyist, Tim Bramlet, are working hard to ensure your interests are well represented. The legislative process still needs you as a lobbyist. You might be thinking—lobbyist, me? Before you talk to your legislators, think about these things:

- 1) **Know your legislators.** Really try to know him or her. Invite them to township functions that they can participate in and meet township residents (who are also their constituents).
- 2) **Listen.** Listen to his or her concerns instead of only talking about your issues. If possible, offer to help with his/her concerns.
- 3) **Develop a friendship.** Develop a friendship with your legislator and his/her staff. Be the township official on a first-name basis with your legislator.
- 4) **Know your issue.** Make sure you know all the



TOPICS DAY 2009 – (front) Champaign Township Trustee William Higgins, Champaign Township Highway Commissioner Keith Padgett, City of Champaign Township Supervisor Pam Borowski. Back: Sen. Mike Frerichs, Champaign Township Supervisor John Schmidt, Rantoul Township Supervisor James Rusk, Ludlow Township Trustee Jim Quinlan (now supervisor), and Ludlow Township Supervisor George Burnison (no longer in office).



FROM TOPICS DAY 2009 – State Rep. Don Moffitt (left) with Indiantown Township (Bureau Co.) Highway Commissioner Bill Sears

facts on your issue before talking to your legislators.

- 5) **Be brief.** When talking to your legislators, be brief, to the point and sincere. A legislator is very busy, so try not to take up too much of his/her time.

- 6) **Be positive.** Not every issue will go our way. Keep a positive attitude even if something does not go our way. Plan to win and be positive.

With these points in mind, I want to encourage as many of you as possible to attend our 28th Annual Township Topics Day in Springfield April 20. This is the day when township officials from every part of the state gather in Springfield to meet with their own legislators to discuss matters that concern all townships. TOI's Legislative Committee, chaired by TOI 1st Vice President and Rockford Township Supervisor Mickey Goral, has met and discussed and determined our issues for 2010. These issues will be discussed on Topics Day; the event is effective and helps educate our members about being more involved in the legislative process.

As an elected township official, you are an important part of the Springfield grassroots government scene. We need to speak up and out for townships.

I hope to see you in Springfield on April 20!

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