



# from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

## *I'm Thankful*

**W**HEN YOU RECEIVE the November issue of *Township Perspective*, we at the association will be knee deep in preparations for TOI's first ever Virtual Annual Educational Conference. Our 113th Annual Conference. I'm excited to see how this very first virtual event for the association works. While I'm sad that I won't get to see old friends in person this year, I hope as many of you as possible will participate.

November this year is super busy. The Election on November 3 is the first big event of the month. Then November, again, brings holidays to us. First, on November 11th we observe Veterans Day, which was originally called Armistice Day, to commemorate the signing of the Armistice ending WWI. As we observe Veterans Day, let us again pay honor and respect to our former and current Servicemen and Women. Many are even now fighting for our freedoms in far off countries. Regardless of our beliefs or political persuasions, we should be very thankful for this great Nation and the many freedoms we enjoy. I am so thankful for those who have sacrificed so I can enjoy the freedoms I do.

Of course, as I mentioned at the start of this article, TOI's Virtual Annual Educational Conference will be November 16-23 and I'm so thankful that we are able to bring this event to you, even if it is in somewhat of a condensed format. While nothing will ever replace an "in-person" event, this is the next best thing so that our members can still receive educational opportunities.

Thanksgiving at the end of November on the 27th, is one of my favorite times of the year. I have many memories of Thanksgiving past. I remember going to my grandmother's house as a child and sitting at the big dining room table with food galore. The aroma would be wonderful, and if I close my eyes, I can seem to still smell it! I'm certainly thankful for those wonderful memories. Are we today thankful for everything we have? We should ask ourselves daily and recite what we are thankful for.

When the Pilgrims arrived on Cape Cod on November 11, 1620, they had come to the new world to seek a place to worship in freedom. They suffered and dealt with a lot during their first winter, including the death of half of them. Despite their many problems, the Pil-

grims established the first Thanksgiving and they were THANKFUL.

This past year, while not yet over, has given us all a lot to be thankful for. Our world this past year has been turned upside down because of the Coronavirus but we are still standing. As you pause to enjoy Thanksgiving, I hope you will take a few minutes to think of all those things that you are thankful for and blessed with. I want to share with you a poem my late father shared with me a few years ago that sums it all up. I enjoyed it very much, and I hope you do too.

## *The Thankful Heart*

*For all the God in mercy sends,  
For health and children, home and friends;  
For comfort in the time of need,  
For every kindly word or deed,  
For happy thoughts and holy talk,  
For guidance in our daily walk—  
In everything give thanks!*

*For beauty in this world of ours,  
For Verdant grass and lovely flowers,  
For songs of birds, for hum of bees,  
For the refreshing summer breeze,  
For hill and plain, for the stream and wood,  
For the ocean's mightily flood—  
In everything give thanks!*

*For the sweet sleep which comes with night,  
For the returning morning light,  
For the bright sun that shines on high,  
For the stars glittering in the sky,  
For these and everything we see  
O lord, our hearts we lift to Thee:  
In everything give thanks!*

