



# from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

## *Township spirit*



A FEW YEARS AGO, I read a news story about a major fire in a big city on the East Coast. The story detailed how a major apartment dwelling had caught fire and the city fire department came to put out the fire and save the lives of many of the building's residents. When one of the firefighters was asked what happened, he simply responded that they had a job to do and didn't think about anything else. He explained that he had not had much time to think about the fire because right after everything was taken care of, another call came in and they were off again to do their job. People serving in positions, public service positions, don't have a lot of time to analyze what has happened when they deal with situations such as this.

Township officials are very similar in that most of the time, they don't have a lot of time to analyze something. They see a particular need in their township, and they respond to it. This of course is really nothing new for township officials. They've been doing it for years.

I remember 28 years ago when the Mississippi River flooded many areas of Western, Illinois. I remember visiting Adams County and being taken by a couple of township officials, by boat, through the flood-ravaged areas of several townships in that county. The township

officials showed me where various homes, businesses, etc., used to be and how they had teamed up with the Red Cross to meet the problems being faced by the residents head on and how they were going to resolve the current problems at hand.

This true *township spirit* has been shown time and time again by township officials who have shown their dedication by simply doing what had to be done. During the years ahead, I'm sure we will face hardships. It might be national disasters such as flooding along the Mississippi River in Adams County or a national Pandemic that alters the lives of everyday citizens. Whatever it may be, I am confident that

there are township officials ready to meet the problem head on and resolve whatever problem may arise.

This *township spirit* is one that will help carry us through whatever the future may hold for us. The Consolidated Election on April 6th will definitely be bringing some changes in the ranks of township officials all over the state. When those new township officials start the new term of office on May 17th (January 1 for assessors and tax collectors), my hope is that those new folks will quickly catch this *township spirit* that has been the solid foundation of our past.