



# from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

**W**HEN YOU RECEIVE the November issue of *Township Perspective*, we will either be preparing for or already be involved in TOI's Annual Educational Conference in Springfield. This is always a busy time of the year it seems, yet I always look forward to seeing old friends and meeting new ones at the Annual Educational Conference.

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.

Thanksgiving, at the end of November, is one of my favorite times of the year. I have many memories of Thanksgiving past. I remember going to my grandmother's 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. 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 Pilgrims established the first Thanksgiving and they were *thankful*.

This past year, while not yet over, has given me a lot to be *thankful* for. As your 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 I enjoyed very much, and I hope you do, too:

## *The Thankful Heart*

*For all that 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 mighty 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!*



I wish you each a very Happy Thanksgiving!