



from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

THESE ARE INTERESTING TIMES to say the least! Last month I probably would have written about the importance of staying in touch with your legislators during the legislative session. This month I would have likely written about a particular issue we were dealing with in the waning days of the legislative session. However, that wasn't meant to be. The COVID-19 virus has literally turned everything in this world upside down.

One thing that has been made abundantly clear to me in the last couple of months is that you cannot operate or function today without a computer in a technology-driven world. This reality hit home for me (and I'm sure many others) at the beginning of the year when the implementation of the Federal Drug & Alcohol Testing Clearinghouse came into effect. The only way to comply and register was *by computer*.

Well, when the Coronavirus situation hit and we were given a Stay-At-Home Order, the TOI staff rolled up their sleeves and embraced technology in the best way we knew how. This meant utilizing the internet, our computers, iPads, and cell phones. Everyone handled this while doing the best they could to make "normal"

out of the "abnormal." As a staff, we have even taken to holding a weekly Zoom Meeting so we can all talk at the same time and actually see each other! It has worked, but of course nothing replaces actually being in someone's presence. This is the next best thing!

The first few weeks during this situation, it seemed a bit overwhelming to me. However, things seemed to have settled down a bit and I know everyone is looking forward to getting back to a more normal routine.

As we continue to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic rest assured that TOI is still here for you. We have done our best to keep you, our members, updated with the latest on COVID-19. We will continue to update you with posts on our website, Facebook page, and through email blasts to everyone when appropriate. Let's hope the return to "normal" isn't too far away. In the meantime, thank you all for the many wonderful things you have been doing during this difficult time.



TOI STAFF MEETS VIA ZOOM. Clockwise: Associate Magazine Editor Kayla Jeffers, Executive Director Bryan E. Smith, Office Manger Pam Butler, and Associate Director/Education Coordinator Jerry Crabtree.

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