



From Your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

Embracing opportunities to remember and celebrate our nation's history



SUMMER IS IN FULL SWING and the air conditioner is already getting a big workout for the season. While Memorial Day, the day we pause to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice so we can enjoy our freedom, is generally considered the unofficial start of summer, the temperature this year wasn't that warm on Memorial Day. However, as I write this article, on June 14, the 90 degree mark has been met and summer really feels like it has arrived.

This morning, I put my American flag out in honor of Flag Day. June 14 is just another day for some people, but I was pleased to see many other flags being proudly displayed, as well as recognition by area veterans' groups. Flag Day is the anniversary of the adoption of the "stars and stripes" as our national banner. It is not a national holiday, but many "celebrate" it by proudly displaying our nation's flag.

In just a few weeks (probably already passed by the time you receive and read this magazine), we will be in early July and celebrating Independence Day on July 4. While many Americans will celebrate the holiday with picnics, parades and fireworks, we need to pause and remember the birth of our country. July 4 is the "birthday" of our country, as the Continental Congress

approved the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia on this day in 1776. Their actions on that day severed the 13 colonies' ties to the British Crown, and—as they say—the rest is history.

As a nation, we have a lot to be proud of. There have been many challenges through the years and I know there will be more in the future. It is part of your job, as a township official representing the government closest to the people, to help our future generations to understand how important our form of government is in keeping our state and nation strong. It is my opinion that the best functioning of democracy in this country is the informed voter. By sharing what you and your townships do with not only the general public, but also the children, who will someday be our future leaders, you can make our nation's history come alive.

Take the time this summer, as you enjoy some "downtime", to celebrate and make history come alive!