



From Your Executive Director

Together, we will meet the challenges ahead

BY THE TIME you read this article, dues statements for the 2010-2011 TOI membership year will have been mailed and arrived to all 1,432 townships in Illinois. The billed amount for dues is based on the township's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) as obtained from each county clerk's office, and on population figures provided by the U.S. Bureau of Census.

As most of you know, there are a number of benefits to joining the Township Officials of Illinois, but probably the most important is that you become part of a large, statewide organization that speaks on your behalf. By speaking with one voice for township government, we are better able to change things for the better for everyone.

The Township Officials of Illinois serves as an information clearinghouse to member townships and road districts. TOI serves as an advisory organization NOT a law enforcement agency. We have no power to "force" any township official to do anything.

When established in 1907, TOI's principal function was lobbying on behalf of member townships. Today, 103 years later, TOI's function is threefold: the EDUCATION of township officials; LOBBYING on behalf of Illinois townships and road districts; and PROMOTION of township government.

TOI assists its members through letters, emails, phone calls and office consultations. TOI also produces several educational publications of which a complete listing can be found on our web site at www.toi.org. The *Township Perspective* magazine is published 11 times a year and mailed to all member officials, Illinois state legislators and Constitutional officers, the Illinois Congressional delegation, and many state and federal agencies. *Township Perspective* is our BIGGEST tool for getting information into the hands of our members.

TOI also holds formal education and training seminars for its members. The 2010 Education program is half over and because of a new partnership with the various divisions of TOI, record breaking attendance has been the result. Plans are already being made for the 2011 program with the idea of still bringing them

"closer to home." The three-day Annual Educational Conference is held in November and includes the opportunities to network and attend a variety of educational sessions. November 7-9 will be this year's Conference at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in downtown Springfield. You won't want to miss the opportunity to come together with township officials from all over the state to better educate yourself and help us celebrate "Township Government - SIMPLY THE BEST".



Annual Educational Conference 2010

The TOI lobbying effort is led by our Legislative Consultant Tim Bramlet, who works to promote pro-township legislation. The TOI Legislative Committee is comprised of members of the TOI Board of Directors and they help generate grassroots support for or in opposition to specific legislation, as well as informing the membership on legislation affecting township government. TOI also holds an annual Topics Day to promote townships' involvement in the legislative process.

TOI aims to promote the efficient and effective operation of township government at the local level. All promotional and educational materials emphasize the fact that township government is the form of government closest to the people and a vital community link.

TOI also sponsors a risk management program, TOIRMA (Township Officials of Illinois Risk Management Association), which is available only to TOI member townships. TOIRMA provides liability coverage, property coverages, worker's compensation and even provides the supervisor's bond to member townships that join the program.

Your membership in TOI also brings with it membership in our national organization, the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT).



NATaT is managed by The Ferguson Group, a lobbying organization in Washington, D.C. NATaT does a great job of making sure the "township

voice" is being heard in Washington, D.C. The 2010 NATaT Conference will be held September 15-17 in Washington. I hope you will make plans to attend and participate. Our involvement with NATaT is very important because things that take place on a daily basis in Washington, D.C. have an effect on townships here in Illinois.

TOI also helps administer a random drug and alcohol testing program to member townships to comply with federal laws and regulations. Contact the TOI Office if your township is not a part of the program and is interested in compliance with federal regulations.

TOI also has a presence on the World Wide Web. Our web site is found at www.toi.org. I encourage you to visit TOI's web site and access the tremendous



amount of information there, including division pages for all of TOI's divisions, plus useful township forms you can download and print for your use at no charge.

On-line transactions are also available to purchase any of TOI's publications. You can also connect with TOI on Facebook and become a fan of the Township Officials of Illinois.

TOI is stronger now than ever. This past year, we have had a new all-time record membership and only three townships in the entire state are not members. I am very proud to have been associated with TOI and all of our members for the past 24 years. TOI will continue to be there, as we have for the last 103 years, helping and supporting our members. We are deeply committed to that.

TOI's strength is determined by our membership, and to keep our form of government strong, we need the active participation of every township. This year, when you and your fellow township officials are discussing your township's dues, think of it as a wise investment for your township and officials to be well informed and educated in these tough times.

Thank you for your active involvement and support of TOI. Together, as partners, TOI and townships will meet the challenges ahead.




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