



from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

THERE IS NO TURNING BACK NOW. 2017 is here and we've moved into a brand new year.

2017 is going to be a very busy one for township officials. The township election process is well underway with caucuses and petition filings all over. The candidates will face off in the February Primary (for those who do Primaries) and then everyone will be on the ballot for the April 4 election. Some officials will be retiring voluntarily, while others will be involuntarily retired by the voters on April 4. Regardless of what happens, township government will go on and the new term of office will begin for all Supervisors, Clerks, Highway Commissioners, and Trustees on May 15 (January 1, 2018 for all Assessors and Collectors).

The election process, unfortunately, brings out the best in some people and the worst in others. I think we all experienced this in huge doses with the recently concluded Presidential election. It seems to me that this has increasingly gotten worse over time. The continuous media coverage we have these days with Facebook and other social media doesn't help much. However, in the end, on April 4, the people of every township in Illinois have the right to elect who they want to lead the township for the next four years. It is my hope that community-minded candidates who care about preserving township government will be successful.

The General Assembly will be coming back to

Springfield in early January and several new legislators will be sworn in. If last year was any indication, we must be prepared for any surprises that may come our way via legislation. You would have to be living in

seclusion to not know that township government comes under attack by those who feel townships and local government aren't necessary. I can say with certainty that there will be more efforts aimed at eliminating or consolidating (by force) townships and other local governments. As

township officials, we must be on guard against those who say townships and local governments aren't necessary. There is nothing more sacred to the preservation of democracy in this state than township and local government.

Township government has much to offer the people of Illinois. As we wind down this four-year term and head into the township election, be sure and wave your Township Government flag proudly. In fact, do it every day!



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