



From Your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

Township roads make the journey easier



I RECENTLY HAD A MEETING in my office with a gentleman from Northwestern Illinois. The day before the meeting, the northwestern part of the state received several inches of snow. I honestly expected to receive a call canceling the meeting, but much to my surprise, I didn't, and my visitor arrived on time. When I asked about the snow, he explained that he lives on a township road and that his township road commissioner had been out since early in the morning, working to see that the roads were clear.

After our meeting, I got to thinking about the tremendous job that all road commissioners have during the harsh winter months. Working through the most adverse, and sometimes dangerous, conditions, township road commissioners keep our township roads clear, allowing us to travel to work, school buses to get our children to school and allowing the mail carriers to deliver the mail. With township roads comprising more than 53% of the state's total road miles, it becomes even clearer that they truly maintain the "lifelines" of Illinois.

Thinking of the harsh winter and the great job township road commissioners do, it also got me to thinking about the articles that pop up from time to time in newspapers across the state.

There seems to be a substantial amount of print given to the same old "anti" township rhetoric of "get rid of townships and your taxes will be lowered." What

they again DON'T say is how the services currently provided by townships will be provided if townships are eliminated and if the services are continued, how will they be paid for? Once again, I never heard "their" plan for showing actual tax savings.

Obviously we all know that when the snow flies, township road commissioners all over the state spring into action. Just like I found out when my visitor from Northwest Illinois was able to travel his township road easily while he found state roads packed with snow!

Time and time again, just like this situation, townships show they are "taking care" of the job at hand. In conversations with others, I have been told there is no real outcry to get rid of townships. It is just the lack of understanding on the part of the "anti's" of the true facts.

Township government is the foundation of our democracy and it's worth keeping. I challenge each of you to continue working together and doing the great job you do and keep fighting for "our" form of government.

Mileage Rate Increases

As of Jan. 1, 2015, the mileage reimbursement rate for officials is 57.5 cents per mile. The Internal Revenue Service issues the optional standard mileage rate used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes.