



from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

THIS FALL HAS BEEN EXTREMELY HARD AS WE have lost several people that in my mind were true township “icons.” Patrick Murphy, Belvidere Township Supervisor and TOI Board member; Paul Green, Director, School of Policy Studies at Roosevelt University and former Monee Township Supervisor; and Shirley Green, former Rich Township Assessor and the first woman President of TOI. Pam Butler, TOI’s Office Manager, summed it up best when we were talking about it when she said, “We’ve lost true pillars of township government.” What a true statement! Each of these individuals had a tremendous impact on township government in their own way.

When I first became a township official in 1985, I started attending educational programs sponsored by the association and very quickly was introduced to Dr. Paul Green. I was immediately impressed with his quick wit and great knowledge of the Illinois political system. Besides that, he always made his presentations “fun” and with a message.

Dr. Green’s story was an interesting one. He started teaching in the early 1970s at Governor State University. He became interested in local government and in 1977 ran for the office of township supervisor in Monee Township, Will County. After a recount, which took three months, he won by three votes!

After taking office, Dr. Green attended his first TOI Conference and felt the educational content could be improved. So he contacted then TOI President George Miller with his concerns and they agreed to work together to improve the situation. From that, in 1981, began 21 years of spring training seminars, co-sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Community Affairs, Governor’s State University Institute for Public Policy and Administration, and TOI.

When I joined the staff of TOI in 1987, I quickly befriended Dr. Green as we made the annual circuit of the spring training seminars. One thing I especially

enjoyed was the night before each seminar, Dr. Green would take us out to eat at one of his favorite places. Not only did we get to visit, and get to know each other on a more personal level, I got to hear all of his amazing political stories and hear all about his family and what they were doing. Those meals were never lacking for entertainment. Dr. Green introduced me to Cunetto’s House of Pasta in St. Louis, right across the river from Collinsville, where most of the spring seminars in the southern part of the state were held. To this day, that restaurant is my all-time favorite and I still try to make it there at least once a year.



DR. PAUL GREEN

Dr. Green continued working with us on the spring seminars until 2002, when he decided to call it quits. He said at that time, that by his best estimate, more than 16,000 officials had attended the spring training workshops over those 21 years. How neat is that!

When I read news of Dr. Green’s death on September 10th from cardiac arrest as a result of an aortic aneurysm, I was shocked. I had only recently seen him hosting an event online and he looked extremely well. We had also had him in 2015 as a keynote speaker for two of our Education District meetings and he did a fantastic job as usual, showing his strong support for township government. He stressed that townships will continue to be successful as long as their officials are knowledgeable and effective in the delivery of services. There could not be a truer statement.

Farewell, Paul Green, and thank you for your huge contribution to ensuring township government was kept strong through well-educated township officials. My next visit to Cunetto’s will be a little sad because I know I will remember our many visits there, but I will smile, too, and remember the good times!