



# from your Executive Director

By Bryan E. Smith

TOI Executive Director

## *Pickaway Township X 2*

ON THE EVENING OF JUNE 4, 2018, I had the honor of going to the Pickaway Township (Shelby County) Board meeting. Pickaway Township is a VERY rural township with a population of only 179. The purpose of my visit was to present one of the TOI's seven \$1,500 scholarships to Ethan Macklin.

Elsewhere in the magazine you will see pictures and essays of all seven winners of this year. However, my visit to the Pickaway Township was almost like stepping back in time. Just two years ago, in 2016, I first visited Pickaway Township to present to another scholarship winner, Gretchen Macklin, Ethan's older sister. I found both Ethan and Gretchen to be impressive, polite young people who really understand what township government is all about. But one reason they have such a good understanding of township government is because their mother is the township clerk and their uncle is road commissioner. Their father also helps with the township cemeteries. It is interesting to note that two years ago when I presented Gretchen her scholarship her mother Lara was supervisor. But with the township election in 2017, Lara became clerk and former clerk Chelsea Beery became supervisor.

Another interesting fact is that both Ethan and Gretchen were the recipients of scholarships named in honor of the two other TOI CEO's. In 2016 Gretchen Macklin received the Troy A. Kost Scholarship and in 2018 Ethan received the George H. Miller Scholarship. Troy was TOI's CEO from 1944-1979 and George was TOI's CEO from 1979-1996. It was extra special for me to be able to present these scholarships because I was fortunate enough to work with both of them. I know that both of them would have been proud of the recipients from Pickaway Township.

Elsewhere you will read Ethan's essay and I trust it will be very clear that he does understand township government, just as his sister Gretchen does. He plans to attend the U of I for an agricultural engineering degree with a focus on civil engineering. He said that with either he might end up working for a township someday! I certainly hope that's the case.

After making the formal presentation and pictures, I answered a few questions from the elected officials about things happening in Springfield and the effect



**ETHAN MACKLIN** and **GRETCHEN MACKLIN** with their TOI Scholarship plaques.

on townships. It made me feel good to know that these township officials are "keeping current" and aware of what is happening.

As I left so the board could conduct its monthly meeting, I couldn't help but think of how nice it was to again be able to visit Pickaway Township to make a scholarship presentation. The township officials are very proud of both Ethan and Gretchen and rightfully so. I know Mom and Dad are too! I don't think that Ethan and Gretchen have any younger siblings but in 2019 you never know, I might have to make a third visit to Pickaway Township to present again! Congratulations to all of our winners this year!