

## Associate Director / Education Coordinator Article

Just returning from a trip to our nation's capital to attend the NATaT conference, in conjunction with the patriotic weekend of commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of September 11, generates feelings of patriotism found in us all. The numerous reflective commentaries on the news as well as radio has made all of us remember where we were on that dreadful day when our country stood still. Most importantly, it generates an appreciation for our government at all levels.

I often comment that this is the day that reassured America that it was not simply **"The Government"** but **"Our Government"** this event adds to the government historical timeline of who, what, when and where. This day changed our lives and renewed faith in our beloved country. We have many historical moments that we remember that helped shape many aspects of our government. Many comments regard the ever important understanding of local government when such tragedy occurs and its first responder approach. Disaster preparedness can take on many interpretations for local government – for us, township government. The 2011 education district program provided an opening session on the importance of being prepared for storms as we live in the heartland of America. We must be prepared for all forms of disaster, not just those that Mother Nature may or may not toss our way. I encourage townships to discuss the issues regarding preparedness and what would be done to communicate with the electors in the unlikely event of a disaster hitting, regardless of its characteristics. One of my favorite passages re-read this weekend is by President George Bush:

**"Time is passing. Yet, for the United States of America, there will be no forgetting September the 11th. We will remember every rescuer who died in honor. We will remember every family that lives in grief. We will remember the fire and ash, the last phone calls, the funerals of the children."**  
**- President George W. Bush, November 11, 2001**

I would like to share with all of you something I recently learned attending a county association meeting in DeWitt County. I was unaware of the significance of the folds in the American Flag – specifically at a funeral. This is something we should all recognize.

### **WHY THE AMERICAN FLAG IS FOLDED 13 TIMES**

Have you ever noticed on TV or at military funerals that the honor guards pay meticulous attention to correctly folding the American flag 13 times?

The **first** fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The **second** fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life.

The **third** fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The **fourth** fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The **fifth** fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The **sixth** fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The **seventh** fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The **eighth** fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The **ninth** fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The **tenth** fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The **eleventh** fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The **twelfth** fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust". After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today. There are some traditions and ways of doing things which have deep meaning.

*Source: <http://www.truthorfiction.com/rumors/ff/foldsoftheflag.htm>*

## **NATaT Update**

The NATaT event was the last four-day full conference. As you have heard, there will be an alternative event in 2012- just a minimized event that will carry the same unified message to Capitol Hill – township government is the government closest to the people! We will work at communicating the legislative message of the combined group of states that operate under the township form of government. This year, we had a great Illinois delegation.

The only snag was the transportation issue from the hotel to the Senate Visitor Center. Due to the President addressing Congress, all bus traffic was rerouted and not permitted in certain sections of Pennsylvania Avenue. This just happens to be the route that the Illinois delegation needed in order to get to our scheduled breakfast. For those of you that this caused an inconvenience, I sincerely apologize. This occurred due to circumstances beyond our control.

However, once arriving at the Illinois delegation breakfast, the event started to fall into place. This year, we had a great attendance with comments from Senator Durbin, Congressmen Hultgren and Jesse

Jackson Jr. and former township official Congressman Shimkus. This was followed by a successful day on the hill lobbying the NATaT legislative agenda.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATE**

This edition of *Perspective* includes the 2011 Annual Conference program outline. Additionally, we included last month, as well, a schedule planner. Take advantage of pre-planning the educational sessions you would like to attend. The line-up provides a session for everyone. We encourage those who cannot attend the full conference to take advantage of the single-day registration. Both Monday and Tuesday single registrations are available. Additional information is available on-line at [www.toi.org](http://www.toi.org).

### **SAVE THE DATE FOR EDUCATION!**

March 2, 2012	Education District 3 Crowne Plaza, Springfield
March 8, 2012	Education District 1 Keller Convention Center, Effingham
May 4, 2012	Education District 6 Hotel Pere Marquette, Peoria
June 1, 2012	Education District 4 Marriott Conference Center, Normal
June 29, 2012	Education District 5 Hilton Lisle/Naperville, Lisle
July 12, 2012	Education District 7 Giovanni's, Rockford
August 23, 2012	Education District 2 Hilton Garden Inn, O'Fallon

As we continue plans for the 2012 District Education Program, if you have programs or suggestions to improve our event, please forward them to me at [jerry@toi.org](mailto:jerry@toi.org). We are planning the agenda and will release it in the January 2012 *Perspective*.

### **2011 Annual Educational Conference Notes...**

The Conference Committee and TOI staff have organized several events to make your trip to Springfield beneficial to your role as an elected township official or township staff member. Additionally, we have scheduled some great networking opportunities for you to have fun with elected officials and members from across Illinois. So far the event includes:

**Sunday Night Karaoke:** Back by popular demand! When you arrive, make sure you schedule time to attend this Sunday evening event. In lieu of hospitality suites, some of the TOI Divisions have

contributed donations to make the event beneficial for all. Come observe your TOI members' vocal talents.

**Monday Night Game Night:** Details with the divisions on what games will be provided continue to be finalized as we approach November. This year, Game Night has some additions that are really going to make it a great evening.

Township Twister (no disclaimer required)

Black Jack (Sponsored by Township Assessors Division)

Township BINGO (Sponsored by the Township Clerks Division)

Ship, Captain, Crew (Over & Under) (Sponsored by the Township Supervisors Division)

Speed Stacker (Sponsored by ITASCSC Senior Division)

Plinko (Sponsored by TOI)

Ring Toss (Sponsored by the Township Trustees Division)

Vintage Candy Wheel of Chance (Sponsored by TOI)

Wii Bowling Tournaments! (Wii game system will be raffled as a prize to one lucky winner) (Sponsored by TOIRMA)

Silent Auction Bidding (concludes at 9PM)

50/50 game

Trivia Night (Trivia runs from 7:30pm-9:30pm) 5 games of 10 questions – separate registration of \$10 required.

**Monday Night Trivia Night:** Details on this game are included in this edition of *Perspective*. This is a new addition to the Game Night activities. We have 10 tables with 10 seats at each table. Tickets are \$10 each and players will play five rounds of 10 questions. There will be a First, Second, and Third prize awarded to the top three score winners. Contact your township officials today that are planning to attend the event and organize your team on one entry form. Help us make this first Trivia Game a success!

### **Question of the Month:**

**Question:** Several contacts this month were regarding the issue of an elected official's "pecuniary interest" in a contract with the township. Specifically, what if a highway commissioner has a contract with the road district regarding equipment rental or answering the question – Can a township official work for the township or road district (having a pecuniary interest in a contract)?

The Township Code (60 ILCS 1/86/45 states “...*no township officer or employee shall be interested directly or indirectly in his or her own name in the name of any other person, association, trust, or corporation, in any contract for work, materials, profits of work or materials, or services to be furnished or performed for the township ...*” This language is also provided in the Highway Code (605 ILCS 5/6-411.1).

State law provides that there are applicable standards that would provide a township the opportunity to have such an interest in a contract for materials, merchandise, property, services or labor. The official may not have more than a 7.5 percent share in ownership in the contracting entity; they must publically disclose the nature and extent of their interest before or during deliberations; must abstain from voting on the awarding of such contract; and if the contract exceeds \$1,000, it must be bid and let to the lowest bidder.

The Office of the Illinois Attorney General has also issued opinions stating that since a township trustee has certain duties related to the township road district, such as budgeting and auditing of warrants, this activity is not permitted. SO a township trustee may not be hired, even part-time for the road district.

On this issue, the question expands to include the question – Is a Highway Commissioner permitted to have a lease contract with the township road district?

Answer: Only under certain statutory outlined circumstances. In townships having a population of less than 15,000, and with the approval of the township board, a highway commissioner may have such a pecuniary lease or contract if the aggregate total of those contracts is less than \$2,000 in the same fiscal year. **Example:** A commissioner leasing a personally owned building to a township to shelter equipment.