

## THOMAS A. TOPALIS



**Current:** Emeritus Member

**Previous CSIFT Positions:** Section Chair 1981-82 (Chair-Elect & Program Chair 1980-81 and Past Chair 1982-83).

**Member of the following Committees:** Awards, Career Guidance, Holiday Party, Long Range Planning, Minuteman, and Suppliers Night.

When Tom was the Chairman of the CSIFT in 1981, he appointed Jeffrey Kramer as Chairman for Suppliers' Night. Until then, Suppliers' Night was held at various hotels in the Chicago area. They found the Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, IL, and brought in over 500 exhibitors. This year we celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> year of Suppliers' Night.

Tom is now 78 years old and continues to be a member of IFT. He joined IFT and the CSIFT as a Professional member in 1967, the same year he joined the Quaker Oats Company. Tom has a Bachelor and Master's Degree in Chemistry from Roosevelt University in Chicago. He also took Food Science and Technology courses at IIT (Illinois Institute of Technology) in cooperation with the University of Illinois, taught by Drs. Elwood Caldwell and Milton Baldoff (1965-67).

As a **Food Research Scientist**, Tom has provided technical assistance to Quaker Oats manufacturing facilities during start-ups of new products and has created Ready to Eat cereals and Hot cereals, some of which are in the market today (1967-80).

As a **Group Manager for Quality Assurance/Co-Packers and Small Businesses**, Tom was responsible for developing new products and implementing guidelines and procedures in GMP's (Good Manufacturing Practices) / Sanitation and Quality Systems to Pritikin Foods and Performance Foods, both subsidiaries of the Quaker Oats Company.

He has provided HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) workshops to co-packers/contract manufacturers as well as training and seminars in Food Safety/GMP's to Co-Packers and Quaker Oats manufacturing personnel.

Among many other accomplishments, Tom saved the company millions of dollars in 1987-90 by using x-ray equipment to identify and sort contaminated products with foreign materials such as metal, glass, stones, bones, etc. Quaker Oats was one of the first companies using such a device.

Since his retirement in 1993, Tom spends his time by doing what he loves most-traveling, playing golf, and singing with his guitar.