

California Weed Science Society Honorary Member – 2011

W. Thomas Lanini

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Tom grew up in California. He graduated from Vallejo High School in 1967 and then went through a four year apprenticeship and worked as an electrician. In 1974 he started at CSU Sacramento in Wildlife Biology and earned a B.S. degree (1977). At UC Davis he completed his M.S. (1981) and Ph.D (1983) degrees in Weed Science. His first job in agriculture was on his grandparents' farm, hauling hay out of fields into barns. He also picked peaches in Suisun valley for 10 cents per lug - hard work!! During undergraduate summers, Tom worked for the forest service, building trails and fighting fires, hoping to land a position with the park or forest service.

Instead in 1983 he became an assistant weed science professor at Penn State University, working in agronomic crops. In 1986, he accepted his current position at UC Davis as Extension Weed Ecologist, where he works in vegetable crops, looking for chemical and cultural ways to improve weed control.

Tom has a long history with CWSS. His first CWSS Conference was in Monterey in 1980, as a student in the graduate student oral competition. In Tom's own words "This was the first talk I had ever given at a professional meeting and I was nervous. I placed third and was feeling pretty good about myself. I bought a copy of my talk on a cassette which were offered at the time. As I started driving back to Davis, I put the cassette tape in to listen to my talk. After listening to the first few minutes, I realized that this was the worst talk I had ever heard - I pulled the tape out and threw it out on the freeway!" Since 1986, Tom has attended all but perhaps two CWSS Conferences, when he was on sabbatical leaves. He has served as a Board Director and on the steering, student competition, and numerous program committees. Tom's speaking skills have certainly improved since his graduate school days and it is not unusual for Tom to educate and entertain us on a couple of topics at each Conference.

The Board of Directors would like to award Tom as an Honorary Member for his consistent participation in the CWSS, for his willingness to volunteer and present whenever a speaker is unable to attend, for his perpetual service on the student competition committee, and for his dedication to research and education in Weed Science in the areas of organic weed control, herbicide symptomology, and herbicide performance in vegetable crops.