DAVID EDWIN THOMAS was born in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1935. In 1957, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics from the University of Redlands. David entered active duty in the US Navy in 1957. He was Executive Officer of the USS Bolster, and left the service in 1960. Thomas was recognized for his dynamic leadership and perseverance in implementing and promoting numerous membership, educational, and awards programs. His peers noted his enthusiasm for a bigger and better CSI, and for his futuristic ideas.

Before beginning his Institute career in 1983, as Northwest Region Director, he was active in chapter and region activities. Thomas was instrumental in several key issues including member classification and the movement to allow industry/associate members to hold the office of Institute President. While serving on the Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Classification, David authored a recommendation for a bylaws change and revision of the membership classifications to three categories. This recommendation was ultimately approved by membership vote.

As Institute vice president, he was responsible for the Awards and Convention Program Committees. When faced with the problem of lack of nominations, the awards committee developed a program to increase the involvement of directors, regions, and chapters in the Institute Awards Program. As chair of the convention program committee, he developed a committee activity summary that included the 1988 Fortieth Anniversary Convention, and early preparation for the 1989 New Orleans Convention.

David was a principal in Zesbaugh-Thomas, Inc., founded Thomas Architectural Products, Inc., and served as western marketing manager for both ConSpec Systems and Copper Sales, Inc. He lived in Mill Creek, Washington. Thomas passed away on 21 March 2004 in Snohomish, Washington.