

Part I

Overview of the Davis Community Awards



The very beautiful [gold] cup pictured above is the gift of L. N. Irwin, one of our progressive citizens who has long had a habit of doing nice things in one way or another. He presented the cup in honor of Mayor C. A. Covell, who over a period of many years has devoted much of his time and efforts in behalf of the community, his church and the schools.

It was his desire that this cup be given as a perpetual award for outstanding civic service to a resident of the community of Davis. The time of award is to be decided by the Trophy Committee which is to be appointed annually by the Directors of the Davis Chamber of Commerce.

The following rules are suggested as a future aid to the committee in making its selection for the award:

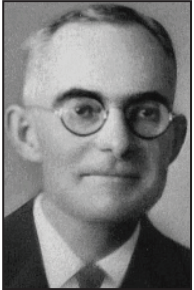
1. Leadership in civic activities.
2. Unselfish service to the community.
3. Dependability in carrying out assignments of his own, as well as those of other people.
4. Scope of activities.

The above cup was awarded to Mrs. Flora Y. McDonald for the year 1945.

*From The Davis Enterprise, July 13, 1945
Article located in the scrapbook assembled by Flora McDonald
Yolo County Stephens Library, Davis, California*

The picture of the cup above was 7½" x 3", located beside the article.

Phase I. The Beginning of the Community Awards: 1944–64



L. N. Irwin,'23
Provided by family

The C. A. Covell Award: 1944

In 1944, Lynn N. Irwin, an area farmer who was very involved in Davis, presented a new, two-foot high gold trophy at a Chamber of Commerce meeting—to be given each year to the person doing the most for this California community.



Gold trophy

As Irwin belonged to the Chamber, it was only appropriate that this kind of award would be arranged under the umbrella of the well-

organized Chamber, which included the leaders of the community.

Irwin suggested that the recipient of the award be

- 1) a leader in civic activities;
- 2) have shown unselfish service to the community;
- 3) be reliable in following through on commitments; and
- 4) be involved in a variety of activities.

The Chamber then appointed the highly-respected UCD professor James Wilson to select the first recipient.

Wilson made the presentation Monday, February 1, 1944, at the Chamber's annual meeting. After stating the purpose of the cup and listing many contributions to the community the person he selected had made, he said it was easy to determine the winner—Cal Covell, the mayor of Davis since 1931.

With the trophy went the additional honor of having the award named after him: **the C.A. Covell Trophy for Community Service**, and the recipient is known as the Citizen of the Year. This award has been presented almost every year since. [See p. 15 on Covell, p. 55 for the entire *Enterprise* report of the event.]

The Early Selection Committees

After Covell was selected by Wilson, recipients the next four years were selected by the Chamber's board of directors. Starting in 1950, a committee of six or more previous winners became the Selection Committee. These are the first 20 winners:

1944	C. A. Covell	1954	Leonard F. Smith
1945	Flora McDonald	1955	Edgar H. Markham
1946	C. A. Maghetti	1956	Helen M. Heitman
1947	Ben D. Moses	1957	Edward B. Roessler
1948	Richard Barlow	1958	Joe J. Truffini
1949	Helen Perry	1959	Percy E. Symens
1950	Gray Rowe	1960	Vern Ihring
1951	L. N. Irwin	1961	Harry Whitcombe
1952	B. A. Madson	1962	J. Price Gittinger
1953	Vernard B. Hickey	1963	Kathryn T. Chiles

Each year the Chamber appointed a member to chair the committee and to set the process in motion. Since the awards were presented the evening of the July 4 festivities in the City [Central] Park, the process began in March or April, with the committee convening in June. No one knew the results until they were announced during the picnic supper.

By the time the process changed, as many as 20 winners were eligible to be on the committee.

This lasted until 1964, when the committee chair reported, "Last year the recipients felt they had done this long enough and that a new type of committee should be used." The Chamber then decided to select individuals from the wider community, in which a more widely diverse group would select the next Citizen of the Year.

Phase II. The Community Becomes More Involved: 1964–74

Transition to a community committee: 1964

In 1964, to make the transition, the Chamber of Commerce appointed Don Derbyshire to chair a Selection Committee. Derbyshire worked with Chamber Manager Derald Gibson to choose 16 "representative Davisites" from which the Chamber could select the final committee. The list consisted of one businesswoman, four businessmen, two representatives from women's clubs, one men's service club representative, one from UC Davis, two from the schools, one from City Hall, one from the newspaper, two previous committee members, and one League of Women Voters member. [Details p. 24.]

At the next Chamber meeting, Derbyshire and Gibson asked the Chamber to vote for six of these people to be the Selection Committee. The six who received the most votes were Don Anderson (businessman), Bob Pearl (service clubs), Ed Spafford (UCD), Joe Carey (schools), Gertrude La Grone (City Hall), and Sandy Motley (LWV).

This process was generally followed until 1974.

The A. G. Brinley Award: 1969

Twenty-five years after the Citizen of the Year was created, the nominating committee for the 1969 Covell Award felt the need for an additional award to recognize outstanding service involving a particular *project* that benefited the city or—as was later added—for contributions in a *major area* over an extended period of time. [See p. 28.]

John W. Brinley—the previous year's (1968) Citizen of the Year and a member of this year's Selection Committee—established the new award in honor of his father, A. G. "Sam" Brinley. It became known as the **A. G. Brinley Award for Special Merit**. The first A.G. Brinley Award was presented January 23, 1970, to Joann Leach Larkey, who had just completed the book, *Davisville '68—the History and Heritage of the City of Davis*. [The award is discussed pp. 27–30.]

This new award was then presented at the same time as the Covell. Nominators usually have directed their letters toward one or the other, but some suggest either award is appropriate.

The committee chairs during these years

During the early years, after Wilson selected Covell, the Chamber continued the practice of appointing a member to be the chairman—in charge of overseeing the details associated with the selection process. There was also guidance and assistance from the Chamber manager—Derald Gibson starting in 1958. These are the chairmen of which there is a record:

1945—C. L. Roadhouse	1964—Don Derbyshire
1955—Ben Madson	1965—Dick Larkey
1959, 62, 64—Ed Markham	1966, 67—Don Derbyshire

For the next six years, the previous winner became the chair:

1968—Ernie Hartz	1971—Will Lotter
1969—John Brinley	1972—Kathleen Green
1970—Chris Blanchard	1973—Warren Westgate

1974: A Selection Process Hiccup

When Robert Oliver and Kathleen Murphy, the 1973 Covell and Brinley recipients, were selected in late June 1974, the Chamber was already over six months behind in the selection process. Rather than continue to be so far behind, the Chamber decided that when the selection was made in 1975, it would be *for* the year 1975. Therefore, no awards were given for 1974.

This took place (in 1975) when Roger Gambatase was appointed the chair. (Robert Oliver, the previous Covell recipient, would ordinarily have had that position, but he had received the honor posthumously.) Gambatase got the process back on track and wrote a clear report of what took place, with recommendations for the future. [*Details on p. 32.*] ¹

The remaining committee chairs have been as follows:

1975–76	Roger Gambatase: a year of transition
1976–00	Margaret Hoyt
2001–03	Margaret Hoyt, with Deborah Dunham
2003–04	Deborah Dunham and Ruth Asmundson
2004–12	Judy Wydick, w/Ruth Asmundson, Deborah Dunham, John Meyer and Chuck Roe

Paying for the dinners of the award recipients

Part of the reward for becoming the Citizen of the Year was clearly that the Chamber would pay for the dinner of the recipient and his/her spouse—and occasionally others. And when the Brinley Award was established, John Brinley offered to pay for the Brinley table: the recipient, spouse, and six others.

This would later change as the Chamber became separated from the process [*see p. 5, Phase III*]. Many members understandably did not feel the Chamber should have to pay for the dinners. In 2007, John Brinley, Jr., agreed to pay for four dinners for the Covell recipient and four for the Brinley recipient, gracefully solving the problem for each year thereafter.

How the recipients learned of the award

From the very beginning, the award recipients did not learn that they had been selected until the formal presentation before the audience. Only the Selection Committee and perhaps someone close to the recipient—charged with making sure the recipient attended the festivities—knew who had been chosen. The newspaper reports following the event

¹ He also stated that “since the inception of the awards, the Davis Area Chamber of Commerce has provided administrative support for the selection process”—the first time it is stated clearly in the records.

almost all tell about the surprise expressed by each recipient.

This did not change until the 1972 awards (for Warren Westgate and Sam DeMasi) were presented outdoors at the large Community Park. Perhaps one or both weren’t planning to attend, and the Chamber needed to assure their presence. Or they knew the huge crowd would not listen to a long presentation. For whatever reason, the recipients were told (and cautioned to keep it secret until the announcement came out in the newspapers), and the formal presentation was kept very short.

For the next two occasions, it was certainly more appropriate to notify the recipients early. 1973 winner Robert Oliver had passed away the previous March, and 1975 recipient Jim Wilson was quite ill.

Ultimately in the years following, the chairmen of the event notified the recipients as much as a month before the official presentation. It was not only easier for everyone, but the recipients could make arrangements for friends and distant relatives to be present at the awards ceremony.

Location of the awards presentation

After the initial presentation of the award to Cal Covell, the presentations from 1945 through 1955 were made at City Park (Central Park, the only city park) at the annual 4th of July festivities so “all of Davis” could be involved.

City Park: 1945–55. The City Park was the sunken garden area north of the elementary school between 4th and 5th Streets, and B & C Streets. The festivities were family oriented, and the presentation was held after people had had their picnic dinners and before the fireworks. (Nominations were taken in late spring, and the decision was made in June—just in time for the July 4 presentation.)

UC athletic field: 1956–67. In the 1950s the city grew as the college made the transition to a full-fledged university, so the celebration was relocated to the UC athletic field from 1956 through 1967. But the crowds continued to grow.

El Macero Country Club: 1968–71. Apparently the 4th of July festivities became so large that the Chamber decided to present the 1968 award at the more intimate El Macero Country Club at the 1969 Chamber Dinner in January.

Once the change was made, the nominations were requested in November, the decision was made in December, and the awards were given out in late January at the lovely dinner. This continued for three more years into 1972.

Community Park: 1972, 73. Will Lotter’s committee decided that the Dinner setting was too limited, and that the Chamber needed to return the 1972 awards to the July 4 festivities where the whole community could participate.

But by then, the festivities (including the fireworks) had moved to the very large Community Park off 14th Street, so the 1972 and 1973 awards were presented before over 10,000 spectators—most of whom were oblivious to what was happening on stage.

City Hall Chambers: 1975, The 1975 ceremony was held earlier—on July 2 in the City Hall Chambers, as Covell recipient Jim Wilson was too ill to attend. The winners were then simply announced just before the 4th of July fireworks.

Central Park October Artfest: 1976. Anyone could attend, but the informality did not add to the event.

Chamber Dinner: 1977 on. When the Dinner was held at the El Macero Country Club, UCD Faculty Club, Veterans' Memorial, UCD's ARC and Freeborn Hall.

The July 4th festivities in the 1940s

Helen Perry's daughter Elaine remembers when her mother received the award in 1949 "when Davis was small, less than 4,000 people [3,557 then, according to the *Enterprise*].

"Late morning there was a parade, and we decorated our bicycles or made floats on wagons, or maybe dressed up and walked—from the elementary school playground, 4th and C

streets, over to 4th and F, then back on 3rd to the school (or maybe it went the other way, but that was the route). There were prizes in various categories. In the afternoon there was a swim meet at the University Pool. Finally, in the evening we would take our picnic baskets and blankets to the sunken garden part of the city park" [north of the Elementary School"—roughly half the size of what what is now called Central Park]. "We sat on the lawn, and after dinner there would be a program with the Citizen of the Year award, then the fireworks." [In 1947 the *Enterprise* speaks of "a short pyrotechnic display," followed by a choice of a dance or softball].

Phase III. Margaret Hoyt Is the Chair: 1976–2002

For 32 years the Chamber had managed the Covell Award and, later, the Brinley Award. Then in mid-1976, one of Roger Gambatese's accomplishments (though not in his report) was to ask retiring Chamber President Margaret "Peggy" Hoyt to take charge of the process. She agreed, and this set in motion a long period of stability for the awards. Having one person responsible provided consistency to the process.

She began by making the awards independent of the Chamber, including covering all expenses herself—except for two dinners for the Covell winner, which the Chamber continued to fund. And by virtue of being the conscientious, consistent chair over a long period, she developed it into a well-oiled process.

She brought together a different Selection Committee each year, using the established guidelines, choosing people from city staff, the Chamber, the schools, seniors, mental health, the arts, civic clubs, the clergy, UC Davis and the winners from the

previous year. Working by herself, with the aid of her secretary, Hoyt continued to develop the process that has endured.

Keeping the awards balanced

She ultimately included new information in her letter to the Selection Committee to prevent the same *kinds* of people from getting the awards. She suggested to the committee some factors that might weigh in favor of a particular nominee a particular year:

- Varying the fields in which volunteers specialize. It is important to spread the awards among social services, the arts, schools, and other areas of volunteer activity.
- A nominee's age.
- An activity that came to a head this year or will blossom next year.
- Balancing the sexes: it may be time to have someone of the other sex.

She also supported not including political figures, who get their plaudits elsewhere. [See p. 9, #13; also p. 28.]

Peggy Hoyt, Longtime Community Awards Chair

Peggy Hoyt became the chair of the Davis Community Awards in 1976, a position she developed for over 25 years. She was an attorney by profession; she was an interesting person all around.

Margaret "Peggy" Hoyt was born in Berkeley, the daughter of a physician and nurse. Her father had been encouraged to attend medical school by one of the area's first women physicians, and he in turn felt that women should have professional training—at a time that women usually didn't. He therefore encouraged his daughter's career in the law.

Hoyt attended UC Berkeley, graduating Phi Beta Kappa. When she entered UCB's Boalt Hall Law School in 1949, she was one of only three women in the class. She was president of her class all three years and president of the law school student body a year and a half. She also served as secretary for the California State Student Bar Association.

After graduating in 1952, she began practicing law in Mt. Shasta. Because she was in business for herself, Hoyt had to practice all types of law. During the eight years she was there, she served on the Mt. Shasta Planning Commission and the Recreation Board. In 1964 she moved to Davis, where she narrowed her practice to family and probate law.

While in Shasta, she was the only woman attorney in the state north of Sacramento. In 1972, she was still the only woman lawyer in private practice in Yolo County, though Mary Jane Luna was appointed the public defender about that time.

In Davis, she was the first female president of both the Davis and Yolo County Chambers of Commerce.

Hoyt also was artistic and athletic. As a child, she studied ballet, and she also was an ice skater. In high school she won the Pacific Coast Women's Figure Skating Championship. With her twin brothers (one year older) and another girl, she also won the Fours' Figure Skating Championship.

She studied hula and performed the dance on ice. She even studied flamenco with Rita Hayworth's uncle, Jose Cansino, in San Francisco.

In 1961 Hoyt became interested in ballroom dancing and took lessons in the Bay Area. In 1963 she won the National Ballroom Dance Championship with her partner, Eigil Torp, who previously had been Norwegian Ballroom Dance Champion for three years. In recent years, she took up ballroom dancing again, and she continued until early 2012.

Hoyt also enjoyed skiing, sewing (she made most of her own clothes for many years) and travel. Managing the Davis Community Awards was simply another area in which she excelled.



Sacramento Magazine, Elena M. Macaluso, September 1997
Enterprise article featuring Margaret E. Hoyt, 1972-73

Keeping the meeting short

Perhaps Hoyt's most popular contribution was to shorten the meeting where the awardees are selected. She quickly developed a system for selecting the winners that is fair and amazingly quick: the meeting takes only one-and-a-half hours.

Returning to the Chamber Dinner—1977

In 1976, so that more of the public could attend the award ceremony, new Chairwoman Hoyt arranged to have it held back in Central Park during the Davis Art Center Festival. The crowd was certainly respectful, but the informality of the outdoors left a great deal to be desired—even without the excitement of the impending fireworks.

For the 1977 award, she asked the Chamber if they could again allow the presentation to be at their annual dinner, and they graciously agreed. (Incidentally, anyone can attend who is willing to pay for the dinner.) Therefore, in January 1978 the awards presentation returned to the Chamber Dinner, a

lovely affair where it has continued since. The ambiance and attentive audience have continued to be perfect for the presentation. It is likely to remain there for the foreseeable future.

Putting the guidelines in writing

In August 2001, encouraged for some time by Judy Wydick, Hoyt wrote out the guidelines she had developed so that subsequent chairmen would understand the process.

The transition to a new chair

In 2001, deciding that it was time for new leadership, Hoyt agreed to train Deborah Dunham for the position, then Ruth Asmundson, over the next two years. After this transition period, she retired from the job, though she continued to be available.

Davis citizens select Davis citizens

Peggy Hoyt made the leadership for the selection process self-sustaining. The people selected truly care. It *should* endure!



The Chamber Board of Directors when Hoyt was president in 1975–76 just before she began managing the awards. From the left: Roger Haney (Executive Dir. of the Chamber), Joe Ramay (*Davis Daily Democrat*), Jim Hilliard (State Farm Ins.), Vic Lim (Harrison, Lim & Schrader, Optometrists), Dan Louis (Louis University Florist), Lee King (Brinley Real Estate), Margaret Hoyt (Attorney), Al Stehli (Insur. Agency of Davis), Sandy Motley (City Council), Unknown, Al French (Central CA Federal Savings & Loan, later Heart Federal), Foy McNaughton (*Davis Enterprise*).

Phase IV. A Steering Committee Takes the Helm: 2003–2013

In 2003, Deborah Dunham and Ruth Asmundson shared the leadership of what had become a huge job, so a steering committee was formed that fall to share the responsibilities. Those added were John Meyer (former longtime Davis City Manager, later a UC Davis vice-chancellor) and active community volunteers Chuck Roe and Judy Wydick.

In 2004 Wydick became chair of the Steering Committee.

Things continued as before, though Wydick began having planning meetings with the Steering Committee in early February to review and evaluate what had been done, to discuss any new issues, and to determine the next Selection Committee.

Meeting while the process was fresh—and well before the next cycle—got everything organized early. And having input from several people was helpful and effective.

How the Steering Committee Functioned

For roughly 26 years one person had been responsible for the community awards. By 2004 the job was transferred to five individuals: Asmundson, Dunham, Meyer, Roe, and Wydick, with Hoyt advising. The Steering Committee first met as a group in February 2004. This shows how it generally worked, starting with that meeting where they

- determined the date of the Selection meeting (first Monday in November, 7 pm);
- determined when nominations should be closed (late Oct);
- decided on a location for the Selection meeting: at the office of Dunham's husband Chuck Cunningham;
- discussed possible people to serve on the Selection Committee;
- narrowed guidelines for the nomination letters: designated no more than *two* typewritten pages ('05) and required *lists* of all activities, not descriptive paragraphs ('11).

The five members took on various jobs

• CONTACTING SELECTION COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

After deciding whom to ask, everyone offered to contact the people they knew (specifying the date of the Selection Meeting and requiring they keep their participation confidential), after which they sent Wydick the names and contact information of those who agreed. Wydick reconfirmed, noting she would send a letter with the details in early September.

- **PLAQUES:** Roe offered to determine the condition of the plaques, and he ended up replacing both the Covell and Brinley plaques. Thereafter he always arranged with Adrian Blanco (of De Luna Jewelers) to inscribe them;
- **NOTIFYING PRESIDENTS OF SERVICE CLUBS.** Hoyt offered to contact the presidents of the service clubs to request nominations. Ultimately Meyer obtained a list of names and addresses from the City's Anne Brunette and sent out letters to them urging participation.
- **HANDLING THE SELECTION PROCESS.** Meyer also offered to do this (at which he turned out to be a master).
- **CERTIFICATES FOR WINNERS.** Dunham contacted calligrapher Marilyn Judson to do the certificates and transported them to the Dinner.
- **MEETING WITH DEBBIE DAVIS AT THE ENTERPRISE.** Wydick and Editor Davis settled on having notices in the paper roughly Sept 15, 30, Oct 15, then 3–4 days before the deadline, with the full list of past winners mentioned only the first time in the newspaper. With the routine set, no meeting was necessary in subsequent years.

Beginning in early September, Wydick

- **SENT INFORMATION TO THE ENTERPRISE;**
- **SENT LETTERS TO THE SELECTION COMMITTEE** with meeting details (time, location, directions there). She suggested they encourage nominations and insisted their participation and nominees' names be kept confidential. (At first she continued the suggestion of bringing new nominations to the meeting if they make 10 copies to pass out, but this was later dropped.)
- **HELPED NOMINATORS IMPROVE LETTERS.** As the nominations began coming in, she contacted each nomi-

nator to confirm having received it; began ('09) helping nominators improve letters when appropriate; asked for more information when merited; began ('11) reiterating that they convert to *lists* of activities. [See page 8, #1.]

Note: Most letters arrive the last two weeks—if not the last day, which leaves little, if any, time for improving the letters!

In October/November

- Wydick prepared a cover letter for the Selection Committee, with directions to read nomination papers carefully.
- Wydick emailed cover letter and all nomination letters to Meyer.
- Meyer made about 15 copies of these materials for the Steering and Selection Committees, placed them each in looseleaf notebooks, and hand- [*bike-*] delivered them to all individuals about a week before the meeting.
- Wydick emailed a reminder to each Selection Committee participant about three days before the meeting.

The night of the meeting

INTRODUCTIONS: Wydick introduced the Steering Committee, then had each Selection Committee participant introduce him/herself and tell what area each represented.

SELECTION PROCESS: Meyer took over and

- gave a brief history of the Awards;
- brought up each nominee's name, one by one, for people to make their comments;
- put them in categories: Covell, Brinley, or Either;
- asked everyone to vote on his/her top *three* nominees in either the Covell or Brinley award, then eliminated those who got the fewest votes;
- If anyone was clearly shown to be a winner, this was discussed, then determined. If not, the top vote-getters in that group were voted on (*first choice only*) to determine the winner;
- For the remaining award, people again voted using the above method until the winner was determined;
- Meyer then collected the binders and erased the chalk board.

CLOSING: Wydick

- determined what (usually two) people would notify the recipients: a member of the Steering Committee and one (perhaps two) from the Selection Committee;
- reminded everyone not to discuss anything that took place;
- asked for suggestions for next year's Selection Committee;
- requested people email any suggestions for improving process.

Once recipients were contacted:

- Wydick contacted the recipients for the way each wanted his/her name written on the certificate and plaque;
- Roe contacted Blanco with the names of the winners to engrave the plates and place them on the large plaque;
- Dunham contacted Marilyn Judson to give her the names of the winners for the certificates, which she created and framed;
- Wydick sent thank-you letters to Judson and Luna/Blanco, emails thanking the selection committee, and emails to nominators encouraging them to resubmit their nominees the next year.

Issues That Have Arisen: 2004–13

After making it through the first year, the Steering Committee began to examine the process. A number of issues came up, and having several people to discuss them was very helpful.

NOMINATIONS

1. Evolving directions for the nomination letters.

Over time, the Steering Committee has determined ways to make the nomination letters clearer and easier for the Selection Committee to read and compare. Though some nominees are widely known, a well-written letter prevents the committee from having to strain to sort out the nominee's accomplishments.

- Letters must be no more than *two* typewritten pages (2005).
- Generally state the main points, following these guidelines:

Covell: The nominee should have been involved in several major groups, so after the name of each organization, provide a *bulleted* list of *activities*, including offices/dates when possible, and a contact person. (2011). Bulleting the points enables the Selection Committee to easily see them. Do not bury them, or the names of the organizations, in paragraphs.

Brinley: If the emphasis is on one *area* (e.g., the arts, or an organization), *bullet* the activities. If the emphasis is on a major *project*, chronologically list how the person achieved each major step. Each nomination letter is different, but the *activities and accomplishments* are what are important.

- Restrict paragraphs to an introductory, explanatory paragraph and a closing summing-up or heart-felt paragraph. This way nominators can express feelings about the nominee, yet keep the facts about accomplishments separate.
- Only one letter is needed for a nominee. (2005) If more than one is received, the chair will contact the writers to come up with one that can be co-signed.
- Including *quotes* from other supporters may strengthen the letter—placed either with an activity or at the last of the letter.

When the chair receives a nomination without such lists, s/he will encourage the nominator to resubmit, eliminating long paragraphs and *listing* the activities. (This does *not* mean separating each paragraph into a list of sentences!) Lists make it easier for the Selection Committee to see each person's involvement and to compare nominees. [Examples pp. 58-62]

2. Importance of submitting nomination letters early.

- Submitting early allows time to get suggestions on how to strengthen the letter and improve chances for the nominee.
- If there are questions about the process, contact the Steering Committee chair, who will gladly assist with the *layout* of the nomination. Well-presented letters are helpful for everyone.
- To learn if anyone else is planning to nominate a particular person, contact the Steering Committee chair. (2010) Since only one letter is needed, nominators might work together.

3. Getting more nominations for deserving citizens.

The chair should get right to the point in the September newspaper article: Do you know someone qualified for a top community award, i.e., Citizen of the Year or the Brinley Award for Special Merit? Don't presume someone else will nominate him/her simply because the person is so well known. If everyone presumes, the person does not get nominated.

SELECTION COMMITTEES

4. City's growth affecting the selection process.

Hoyt noted the City is growing and suggested that each nominator make a two-minute presentation and answer questions.

Decision: The committee felt that doing this for each nominee would unnecessarily extend the selection meeting. Rather, the Steering Committee decided to broaden the Selection Committee and decided the chair should evaluate the nomination letters and request more information if necessary. (2005)

5. Reevaluating the makeup of Selection Committee.

The Steering Committee first updated the representative groups, noting that with Davis's growth, emphases have changed, so that areas of representation should be changed.

Categories retained: reps from the City, service clubs, schools, and arts (now arts/music) and the Brinley and Covell winners.

Categories cut: the Chamber, UC Davis, seniors, and clergy.

Replaced with: environment/nature, sports/recreation, social services/health. The nine categories are now these:

Arts/Music	Environment/nature	Service Clubs
City	Social Services/Health	Brinley Winner
Schools	Sports/Recreation	Covell Winner

6. Making City's Anne Brunette ex officio, with vote.

The Steering Committee asked her to be on the Selection Committee each year, as she knows so many people and is so effective. If she cannot attend, she can suggest an alternate.

7. Learning more about "unknown" nominees.

The combination Steering/Selection Committee is so large that nominees in mainstream activities are generally well known. Nominees for the Covell Award by definition are community leaders, so they should be known by many.

A nominee for the Brinley Award, however, because of working on a project or specific area, may not be known widely beyond that circle of volunteers.

If, after the nomination letters are delivered, it is determined that no one knows a Brinley nominee, the chair can ask the person's nominator to speak at the meeting.

If the above doesn't happen, and the committee feels strongly that a nominee has great potential and needs more support on the committee, include either the nominator or a supporter on the next year's Selection Committee. (2011)

8. Avoiding a tie.

With each Selection Committee member representing one of nine categories, there shouldn't be a tie. If an award is given to two people, however, or someone cannot attend, it was decided that Asmundson (then on the Davis City Council and a former Covell recipient) would be the tie-breaker. (2008)

Later it was decided that if two people win an award, they should be allowed one or two votes (depending on how many attend the meeting) to create an uneven number of votes. (The couple should be alerted ahead of time to the factor determining whether they get one or two votes.)

If an unexpected even number appear at the meeting, the Steering Committee should have designated a tie-breaker (e.g., Asmundson) from their committee to break the tie.

9. Publicizing names of the Selection Committee.

Some felt names should be kept secret; others felt it was good *afterwards* for the community to know. [*In some early years, the committee was made known beforehand.*]

Decision: Ask participants at the end of the meeting for permission to make their names public. Their names are printed in the brochure and can be given to the newspaper.

STEERING COMMITTEE

10. Expenses incurred by the Steering Committee.

This committee decided to absorb the costs—Meyer the binders/printing, Dunham the framed certificates, Wydick postage and brochures, Roe the new plaques hung at City Hall (which turned out to cost far more than anticipated, and are superb).

Decision: Everyone should submit expenses, which will be shared at the end of the year. (2012)

11. Younger members needed on Steering Committee.

Younger people actively involved in the community, who are more likely to know other active people, should be brought onto the Steering Committee. At the same time, it is important to retain the wisdom and experience of current members.

Decision: In August 2012, Janet Berry, Anthony Costello, and Rochelle Swanson were invited to join the committee. Wydick will leave soon. **Suggestion:** Have a member rotate off every few years to continue to bring in actively-involved Steering Committee members.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES

12. Only the Selection Committee members vote.

Though both committees meet together when the awardees are selected, Steering Committee members contribute to conversations about the nominees, but they do not vote.

13. Not giving elected officials one of these awards.

Through 1968, many winners—in addition to other community activities—had been elected to office. In 1971, Selection Chairman Will Lotter’s committee recommended that no Covell recipient should be (or have been) an appointed or elected city or county public official—“because they receive their plaudits elsewhere,” pointed out Hoyt—but that the Brinley recipient *could* be a public official [*see p. 28*].

The Steering Committee clarified that if an elected person nominated for the Brinley manages an outstanding contribution unconnected to his or her elected position, each Steering or Selection Committee can decide if a Brinley should be given—but not while the elected person is currently in office.

14. Sponsorship of the Covell recipient’s dinners.

The Brinley family had always donated a table of eight to the Brinley Award winner; the Chamber always paid for at least two tickets for the Covell winner. No longer involved in the process, the Chamber was reluctant to continue paying for two Covell dinners, and the Steering Committee did not want the Covell recipient to have to pay for dinner while the Brinley recipient did not. [*Further, some recipients may not be able to afford the tickets.*] Roe asked John Brinley if he would instead sponsor four tickets for each winner, and he agreed. Each year Roe confirms with Brinley that he will again sponsor in this manner and advises the Chamber to reserve eight tickets.

15. Importance of all participants being from Davis.

Recipients and members of the Selection *and* Steering Committees *must* live in Davis (home zip code 95616 or 95618, or within the Davis School District boundaries).

16. Request for a special award for previous winner.

A husband requested this because his wife had continued to contribute extensively after having received the Covell Award.

Decision: No. All Citizens of the Year continue to be involved, and the Steering Committee doesn’t want to go there!

17. Recognizing work done *outside* Davis.

Historically, people have been selected whose good works extend beyond Davis throughout Yolo County, but Davis has usually benefited in some way. Since many people do not limit themselves only to Davis, that is within the guidelines. Volunteering in Sacramento illustrates the breadth of the person’s activities, but does not count toward an award.

18. Recognizing work done *internationally*.

From John Meyer: “If we wanted to add an award for Davis citizens doing volunteer work in other countries, I could support that. It might just be a breath of life for the whole program. With travel and communications opening up a multitude of options, a lot of Davis citizens are doing spectacular work in and for other countries.

“I see no reason why “Community” can’t be given a broader definition. “Community” could also mean local community members doing work in the global community, which would mean work done by community volunteers either locally or somewhere else. To keep with tradition, however, I think we are talking about a new award.”

“If we are going to do this, I think it should not be in reaction to a nomination we have received, but rather be a thoughtful, strategic decision for the benefit of the program. It should require establishing criteria, announcing the creation of the award, and seeking nominations for it to give it legitimacy.”

Wydick: Should this be done, we could work with I-House. They might want to present such an award, or have input into creating one to come from the community. Part of their input might well be to underwrite the cost of two dinners.

WORKING WITH THE CHAMBER

19. Keeping the Community Awards ceremony brief.

The Davis Chamber of Commerce allows the community awards to be presented at their annual dinner. We are therefore obligated to see that our presentation takes no more time than necessary—currently less than 20 minutes. *We must* continue to tighten the amount of time we use or risk their withdrawing their standing invitation to present awards at their dinner.

20. Knowing what to expect ahead of time.

The Community Awards come early in the program so the Chamber can get on with their own business. It is important to know exactly when the awards are to be presented (during or after the dinner), what they are putting in their program about the awards (if the awards chair is not writing it), and if anything regarding the awards is being done differently from the previous year.

PROTOCOL AT THE DINNER

21. Politicians presenting resolutions.

Hoyt pointed out that politicians should not present resolutions at the Dinner, as doing so takes up too much valuable time. Because they often want to provide resolutions anyway, the Committee decided to have the Chamber place them on easels (or on a display table) in a prominent place so people can see them before the dinner. At the end of the presentation, the presenter will say, "Please take time to look at the resolutions provided by . . ." At the end of the evening, the resolutions go to the recipients. (2006)

22. Recognition of previous winners—and plaques.

Meyer suggested that at the dinner, past recipients of the awards attending should be asked to stand and be recognized.

Roe pointed out that the chair should refer to the two plaques permanently displayed at the entrance to City Hall, which emphasizes the permanence of the honor. And the permanent plaques should *not* be brought to the dinner. They need to remain "untouched" to stay in pristine condition.

23. Extra presentations to the winners.

The committee feels strongly that presenting *only* framed certificates to the winners is sufficient. No plaques. (2007)

WRITTEN MATERIALS

24. Producing a brochure for the Community Awards.

After Hoyt reiterated the importance of not taking more time from the Chamber agenda than necessary, the committee decided that placing information about the recipients in a brochure would dramatically cut the presentation time. Wydick produced a four-page 5½" x 8" brochure in 2006, the first page describing the history of the awards, the two inside pages telling about each of the winners, and the back page listing all who had received the awards.

This was put at each place at the dinner for three years (with the Chamber brochure), after which the Chamber's executive director decided to include our Awards information in *their* brochure.

25. One-page flyer for soliciting nominations.

City employee Anne Brunette (on the Selection Committee) requested a one-page flyer that includes information needed for writing a nomination letter and a list of previous winners. She took a stack to hand out. Meyer also mailed out one of these flyers to each local organization when Brunette had address labels of local organizations.



Overview of Trends through the Years: 1944–2012

Telling the recipient of the award

1944–1971: The award was a surprise to the recipients, who never knew about it until the night of the presentation. (Exception: in 1969, before the first Brinley award was presented, the recipients were told ahead of time.)

1972 on: The chair of the awards and a member of the Selection Committee meet with the recipient(s) to reveal that they have been chosen. Recipients are not to tell anyone until the announcement comes out in the paper. The formal presentation comes later.

The location of the award ceremony

1944: Davis Chamber of Commerce's annual meeting.

1945–55: City Park (Central Park) on July 4, after the picnic dinner and before the fireworks. Davis was still quite small, and many families were present.

1956–67: UC athletic field. The city was growing quickly as the campus became a full-fledged university.

1968–71: Chamber's annual dinner in January the next year.

1972 & 1973: Community Park July 4 before the fireworks.

1975: City Council Chambers July 2.

1976: Central Park during the October Art Center show.

1977–2012: Chamber Dinner the following January.

Who has presented the awards

1944: Chamber of Commerce representative James Wilson

1945, 1946: the Chamber president

1947–63: the previous winner

1964–67: the Chamber president (most of the time)

1968–75: the Davis mayor

1976: the Chamber president

1977–2001: Selection Committee chair Peggy Hoyt

2002, 2003: Co-Chairs Peggy Hoyt and Deborah Dunham

2004–2012: Steering Committee chair Judy Wydick

When the awards were presented

1944: Chamber annual meeting February '44, originally for 1943, then changed to 1944 because the next award wouldn't be until 1945 (see p. 15)

1945–67: July 4 the same year as the honor is bestowed

1968–71: January the year following the honor

1972, 73: July the year following the honor

1975, 76: July, then October, the same year

1977–2012: January the year following the year for which the honor is bestowed

Milestones

- 1944:** The Covell Citizen of the Year Trophy is first presented.
- 1969:** The A. C. Brinley Award of Merit is first presented.
- 1976:** Hoyt becomes the “permanent” chair (for 26 years). She separates the process from the Chamber and provides continuity for the awards.
- 1980:** Dick Luna begins inscribing the awards. (Adrian Blanco begins doing this in 1999.)
- 1980:** Betsy Truffini, the wife of 1958 Covell recipient Joe Truffini, receives the same award 22 years later.
- 1984:** Framed certificates are now provided for the winners, designed and produced by Marilyn Judson.
- 1984:** Peggy Hoyt replaces the full Covell trophy and the original Brinley plaque with new plaques.
- 1987:** Nancy Whitcombe Roe, daughter of 1961 Covell recipient Harry Whitcombe, receives the same award.
- 1990:** The first of three special awards is given: to Linda Frost (Hoyt in 2003, the Vanderhoefs in 2008).
- 2002:** Paul Hart is the first (and so far *only*—2012) person to win both awards (1993 Brinley, 2002 Covell).
- 2004:** A Steering Committee begins handling the awards.
- 2004:** Chuck Roe replaces the Covell and Brinley wall plaques.
- 2006:** First year to have information on the awards in a brochure.

The Possibility of Being Selected for an Award

It is always possible. Everyone who is nominated for the C. A. Covell or the A.G. Brinley has made worthy contributions, some outstanding. Yet a great many people whose accomplishments are clearly noted and—who are held in high regard by many—are never selected.

This is partly because Davis has many outstanding citizens who are very active in the community. Aside from a person’s achievements and contributions, however, being selected is often greatly a matter of chance.

Occasionally a person is selected the first time s/he is nominated, but that isn’t usually the case. Usually a person’s name comes before committees two, three, four or even more times, and then all of a sudden that person is selected! Two factors are very important:

• **First, qualified people must be nominated**

Most importantly, a person has to be nominated, and for some outstanding volunteers, this simply does not happen. Nominating a person takes time and thought, and no doubt very busy people just don’t take the time—or assume someone else will do it. But without that nomination, the process cannot go forward.

• **Second, nominators must follow the directions**

Letters that have been well organized by nominators who have followed directions carefully [*see p. 8, #1*] get better results than those that don’t provide sufficient information or that make the Selection Committee strain to figure out the important information.

The better *outlined* the points, *listing* the activities, main strengths or steps, the easier it will be for the Selection Committee to see what each candidate has accomplished.

Other factors that determine a winner

Soon after Margaret Hoyt became the chair, she told the Selection Committee several factors that might weigh in favor of a particular nominee a particular year:

- An activity that blossomed this year or will next year.
- A nominee’s age.
- Having someone of the *other* sex—it may be time!
- Varying the fields in which volunteers specialize. It is important to spread the awards among social services, the arts, schools, and other areas of volunteer activity.

Also, both the mix of nominees and Selection Committee members are different each year.

Therefore, the following elements can make a difference for any particular individual in any one year:

- The number and variety of very worthy nominees;
- The number of those with outstanding qualifications;
- Someone clearly “on the way up” may be set aside for later consideration;
- Someone may have peaked too early to interest this committee, given other nominees who are currently very active;
- A nominee may have accomplished a major feat at this time, overshadowing others just as noteworthy;
- A nominator may have given up trying too soon;
- The particular makeup of the Selection Committee:
 - someone may have a stronger personality and show an infectious enthusiasm for a nominee. Or,
 - no one on this committee knows a particular nominee. (This is quite possible if the person is a hidden gem, “hidden” being the key word.)

The fact is—no one can ever predict any year when any of the nominees will be selected.

What *is* certain, however, is that the Selection Committee will work hard to pick the best nominee from the information they are given.

Others may have more information

Checking with others who may know more about what that person has accomplished helps. Have them check the letter to make sure it will accomplish what you want. Several who provide input may co-sign the letter.

Don’t give up trying

Given the number of reasons why a well-qualified person is not selected, it is extremely important to continue nominating that person (updating and improving the letter each year) so that the nominee is not missed.

When nominating someone, read the directions carefully (p. 8, #1), take time to write a careful letter, update it each year, and don’t lose heart.

