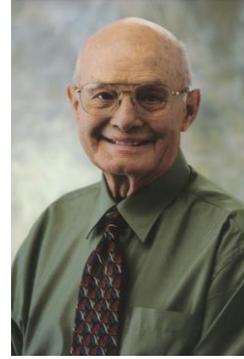


Curt Dana
Mesa City Sports
Hall of Fame
2018



By Jason P. Skoda

Curt Dana crossed paths with just about every Mesa City Hall of Fame inductee since it all began in 1992. He took pride in it.

Correction.

It may have even been a bit of an obsessed over it. Anyone who watched Dana, before his death in 2016, receive the list of the new inductees and get to work on contacting them knows exactly how important it was to him to make sure he found them in order to deliver them the good news.

In fact, he batted 1.000 over the years.

Never once did an inductee miss out on being elected under his careful watch. And that, in part, is one of the reasons Dana will now join all of the individuals he chased down for the Hall as one of the eight 2018 inductees on Nov. 19 when they are honored at Red Mountain High at 7 p.m.

“He never missed a single person, and he made sure of it by starting in January,” his daughter, Marla Dana, said. “He never knew how long it was going to take back when he had to use snail mail and make long distance calls. He did everything he could.

“The closest he ever came to not being able to find the person or at least a family member to represent them came from someone he personally knew so it was driving him crazy. I can’t remember exactly who it was but it got to be a week before and he hadn’t located him. He was out of the country. All of sudden he got a phone call back and the guy said he had heard my Dad was looking for him.

“Turns out he was in Canada and was planning a visit Mesa in the coming week and it came together and he stopped worrying about it.”

Dana’s imprint on the Mesa City Hall of Fame is indelible and his inclusion in this year’s class is a good fit.

“He was very passionate about it,” Mesa District Athletic Director Steve Hogen said. “He loved honoring the many great athletes who attended Mesa schools.”

Dana was the Chairman of the Hall and helped take a grassroots project to the big event it has become today. He helped find sponsors like the HoHoKams and Salt River Project to help out with the plaques and food.

Dana, a 1946 Mesa graduate, had a great appreciation of being around athletes and was happy to celebrate all of the great teams, and individuals who came through Mesa over the years.

“He was a pretty average athlete himself, but he appreciated excellence in others,” his daughter said. “He played with Whizzer White and felt like it was important to recognize those who deserved to be in the Hall of Fame.

“He enjoyed giving the news and always said the person he was most grateful and excited was Vance Wilson from Red Mountain (baseball). He got great joy out of it.”

The question is would Dana, who owned and managed Dana Cattle Company, which had a renowned pellet mix, be happy about the fact that he is being honored and put into the Hall of Fame.

“He knew he didn’t think he belong as an athlete,” Marla said of her father, who played football and baseball for the Jackrabbits. “But there are other criteria to make it in as a coach or a supporter of Mesa sports. He probably wouldn’t be comfortable with it and embarrassed, but inside he’d be proud to be included in something he helped start so long ago.”