



Kenneth Emery Schwartz

February 23, 1925 - October 19, 2019

****Service is on Saturday November 30, 2019 at Jack House in SLO TIME-TBD****

Former Mayor and Father of Mission Plaza Kenneth Schwartz Passes Away
Kenneth Schwartz, FAIA and Professor Emeritus, passed away in the city he loved, San Luis Obispo, at the age of 94 on October 19, 2019. Mr. Schwartz was a resident of San Luis Obispo for nearly 70 years, and had dedicated his life to education and public service, always striving to bring harmony, peace and beauty to the city.

After an honorable discharge from the Army Air Corps, he graduated in 1952 from USC. He went on to serve as a faculty member, associate dean and interim dean for over 36 years in Cal Poly's College of Architecture and Environmental Design. He was also selected a Fellow in the American Institute of Architects.

Mr. Schwartz's service to San Luis Obispo began as a member of the city's Planning Commission, which he chaired for 6 of his 8 years. Working with Cal Poly students to develop a plan, Mr. Schwartz convinced the city's voters to close Monterey Street directly in front of the

mission and develop the current well-used Mission Plaza. This project began 10 more years of service to the city as its mayor. In addition to his leadership in the development of Mission Plaza, Mr. Schwartz was proud of his contributions to the city's General Plan, Downtown Concept Plan, sign regulations, street tree planting, Capital Improvement Plan, acquisition of the Jack House and long-term water management plans. He was honored as The Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year in 1992. In addition, Mr. Schwartz served on the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission and the San Luis Obispo City Council. Mr. Schwartz retired from 50 years of public service, but continued his contributions as a private citizen. His management of the Mary Jane Duvall Trust helped fund art installations in the plaza and the SLO Art Museum. Ken was also involved in supporting the Camp Fire Girls and the Boy Scouts. Mr. Schwartz was predeceased by his high school sweetheart, Martha Schwartz, in 2004. Mrs. Schwartz was a valued community volunteer, and the annual volunteer of the year award is named after her. In addition to his public service, Ken was dedicated to his family. He was a loving and generous husband to Martha, father to daughter Lorraine Riggio Schwartz and son Jan Schwartz and wife Harriet, grandfather to five grandsons and 1 granddaughter, and great-grandfather to seven great-grand children. Mr. Schwartz loved gathering his large family to his award-winning home, which he designed and built.

Mr. Schwartz's family will announce its plans for a memorial service in the near future. The family asks that any gifts or contributions be made in Mr. Schwartz's memory to San Luis Obispo's many local charities and non-profit organizations, including the San Luis Obispo Children's Museum, the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, Central Coast Chapter of Camp Fire, Santa Lucia Council Boy Scouts, American Institute of Architects, the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County, the League of Women's Voters and to the City of San Luis Obispo, Kenneth and Martha Schwartz Mission Plaza Trust Fund.

Tribute Wall

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“ Both Ken and Martha were a big part of my "SLO City" family. We worked together on many projects at both the Jack House and Mission Plaza. From finding the period correct floral design carpet (so many samples) to choosing the proper shaped rocks (in Adelaide country) for the Plaza fountain improvement project. And so much more.

SLO town is forever better as a result of their dedication to the community.

Larry Tolson (retired) SLO City Public Works

Lawrence Tolson - October 26, 2019 at 04:21 PM