

Alfred I., Catharine J., and Eleanor G. Switzer Scholarship

The **Alfred I., Catharine J., and Eleanor G. Switzer Scholarship** was established to honor the legacy of Alfred, Catharine, and Eleanor Switzer. This scholarship was created to support students who reside in Los Osos California and are pursuing a degree in Applied Fine Arts, Architecture, Engineering, Mathematics, or Science.



Alfred Switzer was born in 1911 in El Paso, Texas. When he was 11 years old his family moved to Pasadena, California. He graduated Magna Cum Laude from the California Institute of Technology with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Los Angeles District office and was put to work designing army training camps during World War II. Later he served in the Philippine Islands and Bolivia and was awarded the U.S. Army Bronze Star Medal for his "Meritorious achievement of service." He resigned from the Corps to establish a civil engineering practice in Van Nuys, California. In his 17 years of practice, he designed 95 mobile home parks in the USA and Canada.

Catharine Johnson Switzer moved to Pasadena from Kansas to study and live with her sister. She graduated from the Pasadena Junior College and worked at a local bank. Alfred and Catherine married in 1940. Catharine's cheerful, spirited, and somewhat mischievous nature was a perfect companion to Al's orderly, logical ways. When the Corps assigned Al to Bolivia, Catharine went along and became the first female to drive a car in La Paz. In 1970 the couple retired and moved to San Luis Obispo, after he designed Morro Shores mobile home park. Catharine passed away in 1979 after being married to Al for almost 40 years.

In 1983, Al married Eleanor Harper, a longtime family friend. Eleanor had been Catharine's Matron of Honor at their wedding in 1940. Eleanor had previously been married, with three children, all of whom treated Al as a "dad". Eleanor passed away 14 years later, in 1997. Eleanor's three children continued to be close family for Al.

Al was very involved in his community of Los Osos. He served on so many governing boards that in August 2003 the local Chamber of Commerce gave him their "Lifetime Achievement Award" for his extraordinary service to Los Osos for over 30 years. Al spent his remaining years doing the things he most enjoyed -reading books, solving park engineering problems, corresponding with his many family members, and enjoying visits with them all.

