

LA ENTRADA and Corte Madera named 'Blue Ribbon' schools by U.S. Department of Education. Page 9

The Almanac

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHIRTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2008 | www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

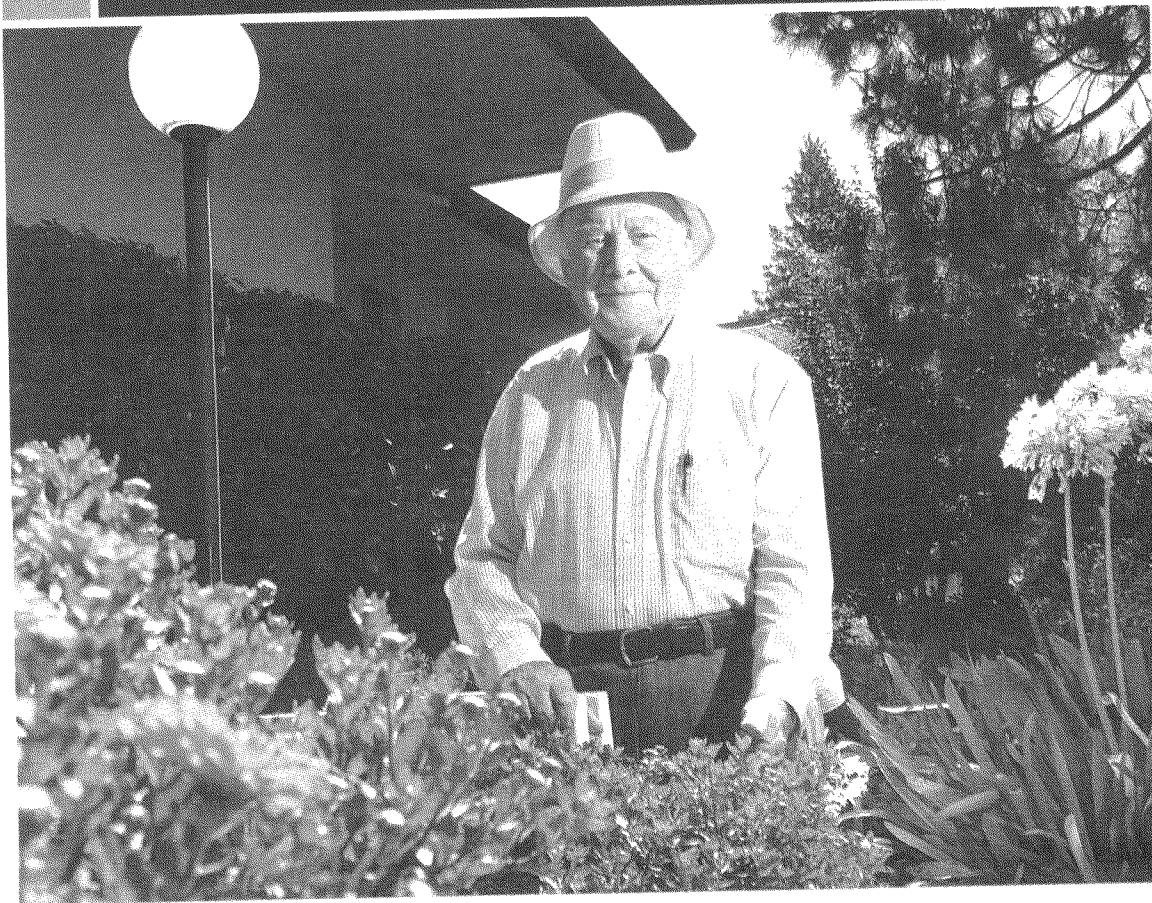
VOL. 44 NO. 3

FROM LINFIELD OAKS TO SAUDI ARABIA

CHARLES EVERSON DESIGNED LANDSCAPES,
HOMES, AND A NEW CITY IN THE DESERT

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FROM LINFIELD OAKS TO SAUDI ARABIA



Above: Charles and Betty Everson, left, visit a camel market with friends near Jubail Industrial City in Saudi Arabia in the early 1980s.

Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac
Left: Charles "Chuck" Everson at the Menlo Common complex in Menlo Park. Recently he was awarded the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department at his alma mater, Utah State University.



Right: Business partner David Barwick

Charles Everson designed landscapes, homes, and a new city in the desert

By Marion Softky
Almanac Staff Writer

Charles "Chuck" Everson holds California Landscape Architect's License #158, dated June 1, 1954.

California didn't even register landscape architects when Mr. Everson started work in 1951 with a fresh degree from Utah State University.

Linfield Oaks, one of Menlo Park's early subdivisions surrounding Sunset magazine, provided the first job out of college for Mr. Everson and David Barwick, his close friend and colleague for 61 years.

That first job was also a shock. "We went to work with a pick and shovel, landscaping and digging foundations for houses," says Mr. Everson. They thought of re-enlisting in the Army Air Corps.

Pretty soon, the two of them expanded to architecture and were designing houses in Linfield Oaks as well as landscaping them. "They went up awfully fast and sold awfully fast," Mr. Everson recalls. The most expensive went for \$26,000. "That's a lot of money when you're working for \$300 to \$400 per month."

Mr. Everson and Mr. Barwick both went on to impressive careers as landscape architects, contractors, planners and

developers during the building boom following World War II.

Mr. Barwick left Menlo Park for Southern California in the early 1960s. There he was landscape architect for Rossmore Leisure Village. He left that to join Bechtel and become landscape architect for Calabasa Park, a development project for 3,000 acres once owned by film magnate Jack Warner. It had provided the location for many famous films, including "The Good Earth," "Burma Road," "National Velvet," and several Robin Hood movies that needed a Sherwood Forest.

For Mr. Everson, the high point of his career was three years in Saudi Arabia, where he helped design, plan and build a new city in the desert.

From 1982 to 1985, Mr. Everson worked for Bechtel Corp., building "Jubail Industrial City" on 200,000 acres beside the Arabian (Persian) Gulf. He was project manager in charge of medical facilities, landscaping, recreation and parks. He supervised the planting of more than a million trees and shrubs, and literally made the desert bloom.

"That was the high point of my career. It's not often you get to build a new city," he says.

In April, Mr. Everson and Mr. Barwick were reunited at their alma mater in Utah to receive the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department.

Riding the boom

Chuck Everson was born to a pioneering family that moved to Idaho two years after

the Civil War. "My grandmother remembered seeing Lincoln," he says.

Mr. Everson entered the Army Air Corps in 1943, and spent the next two and a half years in a bomber crew, loading and unloading the planes before and after missions. He remained in the Air Force Reserve after the war, and retired in 1985 as a major and civil engineering officer.

Chuck Everson met Dave Barwick when they entered the landscape design program at Utah State University in 1947 under the GI Bill. They were roommates and classmates there, and have stayed close ever since.

After graduating in 1951, they headed off to California together. "He had a 1939 Buick, and I had \$100. And that was about it," Mr. Everson says with a chuckle.

Within three days of reaching the Bay Area, the two budding landscape architects had jobs with Claude Lindsay, developer of Linfield Oaks — jobs using a pick and shovel.

"Wow! What a letdown," Mr. Barwick said in his recent speech at Utah State. "However, it was the best thing that ever happened to us. ... We learned more about plant materials than we ever would behind a drafting table."

From Linfield Oaks, their careers took off, along with the boom in development and housing that was sweeping the Bay Area and the country.

Working for a variety of companies, Mr. Everson selected sites for development, and planned for housing, industry — "the whole works."

Among many projects, he remembers: serving as director of planning for early

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Charles 'Chuck' Everson

senior retirement communities in the Southwest; master planning 32,000 acres of eastern New Orleans; representing the owner in building a high-rise office building in Kansas City ("not the one that fell down"); and being project manager for the first condos in San Francisco, built along Embarcadero around Pier 39. "They started selling at \$50,000; now they're around \$2.5 million," he says with a chuckle.

One frustration: T. Jack Foster got to convert Brewer's Island into Foster City.

When the marshy island was still a hayfield, Mr. Everson remembers riding horseback around it, and seeing the possibilities for developing a new city. At the time, he worked for Utah Construction Co., which had two big dredges that had excavated for the Oakland Airport and Bay Farm Island across the Bay.

Utah wasn't interested, he says, so T. Jack Foster got to build San Mateo County's first major city into the Bay.

Meanwhile, Mr. Everson married a local girl, Betty Wolfe, and began raising a family. They have two children and five grandchildren, and now live at Menlo Commons.

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Ivan is off to work.

But he'll be back after his summer job at a global management consulting firm to mentor kids like young Chase at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula. Ivan Martinez, 18, returns because the Club helped *him* beat the Opportunity Gap that defeats so many kids in his neighborhood. Caring staff and volunteers coached Ivan in academics and in life skills, and now he's a sophomore at San Jose State University. Most of all, Ivan says, the Club inspired him to expect more of himself. That's why we know Ivan will earn his college degree and that one day he'll be off to work at his dream career in music production.



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Sarah Palin is coming to Woodside

Republican vice-presidential candidate Gov. Sarah Palin of Alaska is scheduled to visit the Portola Road estate of Woodside residents Tom and Stacey Siebel for a fundraising reception and lunch starting at noon Thursday, Sept. 25.

The basic ticket price is \$1,000 per person. A "McCain 2008" lapel pin will be yours for a contribution of \$2,500, according to a summary of the event from the

California GOP Web site.

One photo opportunity, a two-person reception with the candidate and four tickets to lunch are available for "hosts" who donate or raise at least \$10,000, the summary said.

Donations and reservations must be received by Monday, Sept. 22. For additional information, contact Caitlin Ashlock at 310-309-2101 or ashlock@mccain08hq.com.

EVERSON

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On June 13, 1990, The Almanac's cover featured a photo of three generations of graduates from Los Lomitas School: Betty Everson, with her daughter and granddaughter.

Making the desert bloom

Building Jubail in the Arabian desert was probably the best — and easiest — project Mr. Everson ever undertook. "There was a lot of money behind it. We could do anything," he says.

The city includes a port, an oil refinery, a steel mill, numerous other factories, and one of the world's largest desalination plants, which also generates electric power.

It has been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest public engineering and construction project in the world.

In this mammoth enterprise, Mr. Everson was project manager for health services, which involved building a hospital and clinics, as well as recreation facilities, including football and soccer fields, and parks.

The work included his first love, landscaping. He was in charge of turning sand dunes into green landscapes with fields, trees and orchards fed by desalinated water. "It's delicious water," he says.

The scale of the work at Jubail was staggering. "We moved enough sand for a strip one yard high and nine yards wide completely around the world," he says. There could be more than 30,000 people working on the site at one time.

Mr. Everson had abundant resources to work with, thanks to the oil wealth creating the new city. There would be "3,500 guys doing the landscaping in one area," he says.

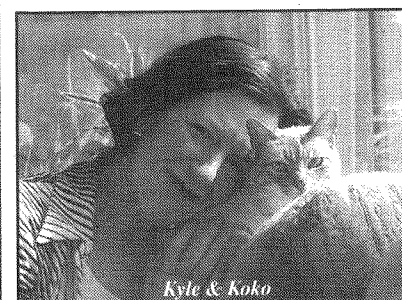
"We would fill a Boeing 747 with palm trees. We'd plant them, and they'd grow like mad," he adds. "Palm trees lower the temperature. The figs are delicious. The dates are huge."

As for working or traveling in Saudi Arabia, he advises, "Just mind your own business and obey the laws of the land, and you're OK."

"We had a very good time in Arabia," Mr. Everson says. "The Saudis are very friendly people. I still have friends there." ■

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