

# Turkey Trot: a new Moraga tradition?

By Sophie Braccini



Ron Haas

Photo provided

The Moraga Country Club with the support of the Chamber of Commerce will host this year's first annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot on Nov. 23, exemplifying the club's renewed desire to be involved with the town's recreation scene. The purpose, according to MCC general manager and Chief Operating Officer, Ron Haas, is to launch a new tradition of family friendly community connectivity.

In order to preburn calories and build an appetite for the feast to come on Thanksgiving day, local residents are invited to participate in either a fun 3K trot or a serious 5K run within the country club. The giving portion of Thanksgiving is not forgotten since all the event's proceeds will go to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties.

Both runs will start at 8:30 a.m. in the driving range parking lot, off Country Club Drive. The first 2.4 miles meandering through the club's streets and golf cart paths will be mostly flat and can accommodate strollers, and gentle runners/walkers. The serious runners will continue past the range and into more hilly and challenging terrain around and through the club's golf course.

The two circuits were designed by Bob Fritzky, who is an avid runner, a country club member, and vice president of the Chamber. He explained that Haas' idea immediately resonated with him, as well as with the rest of the Chamber's board, which will provide volunteers for the event.

Haas, who is always on the lookout for creating new ways to engage his membership

in interesting recreation avenues, jumped at the possibility when he recognized no such event existed in Moraga. He said that the question was either to make it an exclusive club event or to open it to the community. This latest option carried the final decision with the involvement of the Chamber.

Fritzky says that it is a very good sign that MCC, the second largest employer in Moraga, is showing its desire to be a part of the town and the business community. He hopes that the trot will become a regular Thanksgiving morning event.

Haas, of course, hopes for nice weather, but his experience tells him that families with young children, young adults and serious runners all enjoy the opportunity and have a good time, no matter if the weather cooperates or not. He remembers fun-filled mornings at the different private clubs he managed before working for MCC, with people pushing strollers, bringing visiting family members and pets, including a beloved pet pig.

Participants can enjoy the beautiful scenery and views of the country club while MCC treats them to warm drinks and munchies.

Turkey Trot registration can be made online at [www.runsignup.com/moragaturkeytrot](http://www.runsignup.com/moragaturkeytrot).

The company powering this site provides the management of the registrations, and bibs with an electronic chip for automatic recording of participants' performances. The costs per person is between \$20-\$30, depending on the type of run.

# OIS fall production of 'Spamalot' opens Nov. 30

Submitted by Jeanette Lipp



Lancelot cast and crew

Photo provided

This fall, the Orinda Intermediate School's Bulldog Theater presents the production of "Monty Python's Spamalot" Young@part edition, beginning Nov. 30.

This version of the 2005 Tony Award winning musical, "Spamalot," is designed for youth theaters. The story centers around King Arthur and his search for the Holy Grail. After a rather silly bit of miscommunication leads us briefly to Finland, our king and his ever-faithful squire, Patsy, begin to search for knights to accompany him on his quest. He finds his first in the unlikely guise of Dennis, a hideous local mud farmer. After convincing the locals that he is the king by conjuring the Lady of the Lake to prove it, Dennis is transformed into Sir Galahad. The rest of the knights are found far and wide and

The Lady of the Lake and her Laker Girls, send our stalwart band on their way. They meet up with an unforgettable slew of outrageously kooky characters and musical hilarity ensues as Arthur and the knights make their journey.

There are two casts, which include approximately 60 OIS students along with an additional 14 OIS students serving on tech crew. Performances will run Nov. 30 through Dec. 2 at the OIS Bulldog Theater. The performance lasts approximately 90 minutes, with one intermission. For show time information and to purchase tickets, visit [www.showtix4u.com](http://www.showtix4u.com). Tickets are also available at the OIS Theater a half hour prior to show times.

## Celebrations

### Lafayette resident receives 'Lawyer of the Year' award

Lafayette resident R. Lewis Van Blois was recently named the 2018 Best Lawyers "Lawyer of the Year" for Product Liability Litigation – Plaintiffs in Oakland. Van Blois has over 40 years of experience as a practicing attorney. After earning an undergraduate degree from George Washington University, Van Blois worked in the U.S.

Senate as a legislative assistant. A law degree from the University of California Law School at Berkeley followed, as did more than 150 jury trials. He was voted Top Attorney in Northern California for seven years and was ranked in the Top 100 National Trial Lawyers in the U.S.

## In Memory

### Stephen Roy Holbrook

1949 - 2017



Stephen Roy Holbrook of Moraga, Calif., beloved husband of Libby and father of Bryan, passed away Aug. 12 from pneumonia. He was 68. Despite early health issues including contracting polio at age 4 resulting in lasting mobility and lung effects, he earned his bachelor's in chemistry and his Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Oklahoma.

He worked as a postdoc at Duke University and met his wife, a biochemistry graduate student. They married in 1978, moved to Oakland in 1979, welcomed a son in 1987 and moved to Moraga in 1993. Steve worked as a staff scientist at Berkeley National Laboratory, first in Prof. S-H. Kim's lab and then as head of his own group that

researched nucleic acid and protein crystal structures, and prediction of novel RNAs. He and Libby shared an office and worked together.

He authored 100 scientific papers and mentored countless undergrads, grad students, technicians, and postdocs during his career. He received the DOE Outstanding Mentor award and a Division award for Scientific Excellence by an Underrepresented Member. He volunteered with youth sports and scouts, was a lifelong fan of the A's, Warriors, 49ers, and OU Sooners, and loved March Madness and fantasy baseball. He also sang exuberantly in church, was co-founder of an investment club, and enjoyed science fiction books and movies. He became ill in 2007, spent a year and a half in the hospital, and eventually returned to work.

He retired in 2012 after being seriously injured in a 2010 fall. He was then confined to a wheelchair and dependent on a ventilator. Despite these challenges, he remained optimistic, always had a big smile, and exuded a true joy for life. He leaves behind his wife Libby, son Bryan, daughter-in-law Jamie, sister Debbie, in-laws Lee, OJ, Marianne, and Mary, nephews Ryon, Andrew, Jonathan, and Larry, nieces Megan and Ashley, great nephews Ethan and Zachary, great nieces Millie and Lauren, caregiver Brittney, grandpup Flapjack, and numerous friends and colleagues. He lived a full life and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. The family welcomes memorial donations to Zion Lutheran in Piedmont, Calif., or to your favorite charity.

## In Memory

### Mary Riggle

Aug. 16, 1923 – Nov. 5, 2017



Mary Riggle died peacefully Nov. 5 at 94 after a long full life.

Mary met her first husband, Capt. Ed Crane at an officers' dance in Richmond during the war. Soon after, he was in a terrible car accident and not expected to walk again, much less fly. Determined, he indeed flew again, many missions, only to die tragically when an officer he was ferrying to another base pulled rank and flew, uncertified, and crashed. While stationed in Panama, Mary taught school, gave birth to Linda and then to a son who was born with spinal bifida and died. These losses created a strength and fight that showed until the end of her life.

With 5-year-old Linda in tow, Mary moved to rural Orinda and bought a house on Greenwood Court with creeks in front and back (and snakes). As a single woman she was not invited to join the neighborhood association. She met and married William "Chris" Christiansen, a 6 foot 10 inch giant of a man in kindness as well as height and before long Susie and Nanci were born. Those were years of swimming at Carroll's Ranch, a cabin at Twain Harte and bridge and golf as often as she could find babysitters.

Many years later she and Chris parted and started new lives. Mary married an old Air Force friend, Glen Riggle, also living in Moraga, gaining as well his two grown daughters, Barbara and Peggy, and grandchildren who she treasured as she did her own.

Years after Glen's death, Mary met and couldn't help but fall for Angelo Petropoulos, a charismatic and hilarious Greek gentleman whose warmth and humor made her laugh again. Together they kept young and healthy into their 90s, with Thai Chi, Angelo's salads, and funny cocker spaniels.

An only child, Mary was especially dedicated to her friendships and her extended family. She inspired us all with her energy, youth, and tremendous can do spirit. She will be missed.

## Share Your Celebrations and Remembrances

If you would like to share an announcement about a special event or achievement, such as a wedding, engagement, scholarship or graduation of a local resident, or about a special person from Lamorinda who has passed, send a photo along with your text (up to 250 words) to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com), and include "Celebrations and Remembrances" in the subject line.

Submit stories and story ideas to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com)