

Published November 15th, 2017

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 Petropulos, 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.

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