



Abelardo Jose Cantu

August 5, 1957 - August 30, 2026

Lubbock, Texas

Abelardo Jose Cantu died in Lubbock on August 30, 2026. He was sixty-nine. Born there on August 5, 1957, he grew up knowing the gin as a clock that did not sleep, and he learned a press before he learned a highway. A bale, he said, is a kind of promise: it has to arrive tight or the whole story is late.

He spent twenty-four years on a night shift that fed boxcars before daylight, first as a helper, later as the man who could hear a tired ram before the logbook admitted it. He did not advertise. Managers called him because he would scrap a bale even when the truck was already promised. He kept extra water for the clerk whose morning had already been too long. He charged a fair hour on the side when a church supper needed more mercy than a price list.

He married Anita Cantu in 1980. They raised a son and a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the budget admitted. Anita taught school. Abelardo packed lunches that could survive a dry wind. After a bad afternoon he sat in the car with the radio off until his hands were quiet.

Friends remember a man who brought extra bread to a night shift without staying for thanks, who knew which intern needed a second explanation, and who hummed while he worked as if the press were a conversation. He loved a late-summer tomato, a clean map of the yard, and the particular quiet after the last bale. He died in Lubbock, in the heat he had always preferred to a clean cold. The gins still open. Someone else will count the racks.

Services

A gathering in Lubbock in the evening. A gift to a night-shift meal fund or a school breakfast program suits him.

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