



Eleanor Claire Jankovic

November 7, 1943 - August 3, 2026

Hilo, Hawaii

Eleanor Claire Jankovic, 82, of Hilo, died on August 3, 2026. Born November 7, 1943 in Hilo, carrying Croatian-American stories that arrived without footnotes. From the start, she treated promises like tools: keep them sharp, do not lend them lightly.

She moved beets and people without confusing the two. A beet-bin chalk stub decided shifts fairer than any memo. Colleagues still mention a beet-bin chalk stub.

She married Gary in 1968. They kept a house that stayed modest when the neighborhood did not. They raised three sons through public schools and ordinary weather. After Gary died in 2019, she kept the routines that still made sense: the walk, the garden, the Sunday call.

Neighbors remember someone who knew every child's name on the block. She preferred the hour before a town fully wakes. Hilo was home enough that she never rehearsed an introduction. The work gloves still keep the shape of a grip.

What remains is not a legend but a practice: showing up, keeping a promise, leaving a place better than you found it. Her life was the kind America is built from and too often forgets to name.

Services

A memorial gathering in Hilo with coffee afterward. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a local workers' fund, clinic, or neighborhood library is welcome.

NN-OBIT-2026-C672

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