



Harold Takeshi Kipnes

August 13, 1937 - September 1, 2026

Hilo, Hawaii

Hilo lost Harold Takeshi Kipnes on September 1, 2026. He was 89. Born in Hilo on August 13, 1937, into a Japanese-American household that treated work as a language. Early on, he decided that a paycheck and a handshake should weigh the same.

He tended fires that turned cane into something shelves could trust. A bagasse fire poker wrapped preferred work over speeches. Colleagues still mention a bagasse fire poker wrapped.

He and Grace married in 1961 and raised a son and a daughter without needing an audience. After Grace's death in 2019, he held to quiet habits-coffee before dawn, a tended yard, a voice on the phone that still checked in.

Neighbors remember covered dishes that arrived without a speech. He liked early mornings before the heat or the noise. He died in Hilo, among streets he never needed to explain. The recipe card is still stained in the useful places.

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

Services

A quiet remembrance in Hilo. Those who wish may give to a neighborhood library, food pantry, or workers' aid fund instead of flowers.

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