



Ruth June Inoue

November 16, 1957 - August 19, 2026
Asheville, North Carolina

Asheville lost Ruth June Inoue on August 19, 2026. She was 68. Born in Asheville on November 16, 1957, into a Japanese-American household that treated work as a language. Early on, she decided that a paycheck and a handshake should weigh the same.

She ran presses that shook the floor into a rhythm. A press-die chalk mark meant her station would not guess. Colleagues still mention a press-die chalk mark.

She and George married in 1981 and raised three children without needing an audience. After George's death in 2019, she held to quiet habits-coffee before dawn, a tended yard, a voice on the phone that still checked in.

Neighbors remember a shovel borrowed and returned sharper. Mornings were her favorite shift at home. She died in Asheville, on streets that already knew her pace. 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 quiet remembrance in Asheville. Those who wish may give to a neighborhood library, food pantry, or workers' aid fund instead of flowers.

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