



## **Tsuneji (Tony) Sakakibara Sensei**

### **February 3, 1937 – July 22, 2013**

Sakakibara Sensei was born in Handa (Aichi), Japan. He held a 5<sup>th</sup> dan in Judo and, after he came to the United States, he taught Judo in the Phoenix area. In 1968 he began training in Aikido with Jon Mamoru Takagi Sensei at the Phoenix YMCA. After Takagi Sensei's death in 1984, he took on the role of Chief Instructor at Arizona Aikido, where he also served as a member of the Board of Directors. He was awarded 6<sup>th</sup> dan in Aikido January 20, 1999. As his health started to cause him difficulties, he moved into the role of Chief Instructor Emeritus, but continued to teach classes at Arizona Aikido and he was still teaching two classes a week into the middle of July 2013!

Sensei entered the hospital on the morning of July 22, 2013, and was placed in the ICU. His blood pressure was out of control, his abdomen was filling with fluid and though they kept draining it, it continued to fill, and he had septicemia, an infection in his blood. He just was not able to win the battle and died around 1:30 p.m.

He was such an important part in all our lives! His wit and wisdom will be long remembered and we will miss his instruction greatly!