

Tsuneji Sakakibara

Obituary



Sakakibara, Tsuneji

Tsuneji "Tony" Sakakibara - Born February 3, 1937 in Handa Shi, Aichi Ken, Japan - had a large family growing up - siblings included four brothers and two sisters. In Jr. High School, his dear friend Shunzo told him about a pen pal he had in Illinois and Tony became interested. Due to his desire to learn English - he began exchanging letters with people all over the world. He had many, many pen pals - this is how he met the love of his life, Patricia Burkholder, who was living in Arizona. He wrote to Patricia for approximately 15 years. This was their courtship as he proposed marriage in his letters. In November 1964, Patricia took a boat over to Japan to meet and marry her husband. He married Pat on November 28, 1964 in Handa Evangelical Lutheran Church, Handa Japan. Approximately 6 months later, they left Japan and settled in Phoenix Arizona. They were married for 48 years. Survived by his wife Patricia, two sons Kenneth, James (Laura), and their two daughters Victoria and Hannah, and his beloved granddaughters. Surviving family in Japan are: sisters Chieko, Fusako, brothers Minoru, Takashi along with many nieces and nephews. Tony was preceded in death by his parents and brothers Hiroshi and Shigeru. He graduated from high school

in March 1955, was admitted to the English Literature Course of Aichi University in April 1957, and graduated with an English Lit Degree in 1961. Sensei Tsuneji taught many people and students simple lessons about life and Aikido. One of which was showing that Aikido teaches that we should not control others with power, but with love. If we use physical strength against opponents, they may give up and, later, seek revenge. If we convince opponents with love that they can become friends, they will follow us. This is true on and off the mat. "Teaching is very important to me. I want to leave a theme or idea that will help the next generation." At his bedside as he passed was his family, very dear friends and students - His students said he has three great loves: martial arts, his garden and his granddaughters. He was devoted to his granddaughters and did everything he could to teach them about their Japanese heritage. He was a man of honor, loyalty and respect. His loss is indescribable. We have faith he is up in heaven, with God our heavenly father, Jesus our brother and reunited with his parents and brothers. A Memorial Service will be held to remember and honor his life on Saturday, August 2nd 10th at 10am at Resthaven Funeral Home (6450 W. Northern Ave, Glendale) Condolences and memories for his family may be sent to www.westresthavenfuneralhome.com



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- See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/azcentral/obituary.aspx?n=tsuneji-sakakibara&pid=166208109&fhid=11612#fbLoggedOut>