



# Conrad Shuji Sakamoto

APR 10, 1946 - FEB 25, 2024



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# Conrad Shuji Sakamoto

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## C onrad Sakamoto Obituary

Conrad Shuji Sakamoto loved a good red wine. He loved a good sake. He loved gardening. And he loved his family. Sadly, Conrad, age 77, passed away in Pearl City on February 25, 2024. He was a wonderful and loving husband, father, grandpa, brother, and son. He was a leader, a loyal friend, trustworthy, a man of principles and integrity. He was someone so many looked up to and sought out for advice and wisdom. In addition, Conrad also loved the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and the Olaloa Retirement Community, both of which he retired from. He was also a veteran of the Vietnam War, having earned two purple hearts during his service, and he also held a black belt in karate. His neighbors probably remember him as the one with all of the fireworks every New Year's Eve.

Conrad loved having fun, yet was the hardest working person – so much so that he could make the Energizer bunny look bad. Conrad was an intelligent, practical man. He was also a simple man and loved simplicity, yet at the same time he was complex, a complex thinker. Process improvements were a passion of his, at work and at home.

Conrad was born in Honolulu at the former St. Francis Hospital in Liliha to Wilbur Hideo Sakamoto and Mildred Toyoko Kawate Sakamoto. Conrad spent most of his childhood on Koa Street in Wahiawa. His father worked for the California Packing Company (CPC) (Del Monte).

Conrad shared many stories of growing up in a pineapple camp, of learning to be resourceful, of making his own toys out of clothespins among other things, of learning to fix things himself, and of gardening. Conrad was a proud graduate of Leilehua High School, class of 1964. Like his sisters before him, he put himself through college, graduating from the University of Hawaii with an engineering degree. Shortly after college graduation, he was drafted into the Army and sent to Vietnam. Not long after he was discharged from the Army, Conrad went to work for the Navy as a civilian employee of the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard where he worked for his entire career. Conrad and his first wife welcomed two sons into the world: Nicholas Hideyoshi Sakamoto, Sr.,



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and Ricky Shuusaku Sakamoto. When the marriage didn't work out, Conrad found himself a single parent of two young boys while trying to work a demanding job. In addition to help from his family, Conrad's co-worker and best buddy, Kathy Kishimoto, jumped in and "hanai'd" the boys, introducing them to church life and incorporating them alongside her family of 3 kids. It was at Waipahu United Church of Christ that Conrad met Pastor Christopher Eng. They shared a love of martial arts. For Conrad, karate. For Pastor Chris, Tai Chi. Conrad's involvement in the church grew and grew, with him eventually serving as Moderator. It was at Waipahu UCC that his widow, Debbie, met him. Conrad welcomed Debbie's daughter from her previous marriage, Liko, into his life, saying he always wanted a little girl. Conrad and Debbie married in March 1998 at Debbie's mom's home in Kailua. Both Conrad's mother and Debbie's oldest brother had terminal illnesses, and the site was selected as the wedding venue so that they could rest if needed.

When Conrad retired from the Shipyard about 2004, he looked forward to gardening, special projects, and home improvements. Again, think of the Energizer bunny... However, after a few years, retirement was nice but he missed regular human contact, too. (Debbie was working.) He was hired by the Olaloa Retirement Community where he served as Administrator until his second retirement in 2015. While he was at Olaloa, one of his passions was bringing the community of 500 or so residents together. In his first year, they had a large and successful 4th of July gathering, they began a Santa parade tradition, complete with carolers (residents), they formed volunteer groups that took on projects. Conrad and his administrative assistant, Pam Ito, were a force to be reckoned with. Conrad and the landscaping and maintenance staff designed and built a waterfall feature, and also cast letters spelling out O-L-A-L-O-A, which is featured in every real estate ad for Olaloa today.

A couple of years after his retirement from Olaloa, Conrad began to show signs of forgetfulness. At first, we all sloughed it off as merely "getting older", not realizing that a horrible disease known as Lewy Body dementia was setting in. In 2018 as his condition became more noticeable, it was hard for his family to accept that the wonderful, vital, intelligent person that he was was slowly beginning to slip away. Through no fault of his own. His dementia progressively got worse, and the greatest rate of decline began in summer 2023. In October 2023, he came under the care of Bristol Home Hospice. It was a relief to have Bristol on board, and we are eternally grateful to Bristol for the exemplary, loving care they provided. They also prepared daughter Liko and wife Debbie for what was to come. His final week of life was spent in prayer, encouragement, listening to worship music, friends and family coming by to see him, all of us thanking him for loving us with everything that he had, thanking him for living the very best life he could, thanking him for



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touching so many lives – and not just touching them, but touching them profoundly, leaving his indelible mark on our hearts – and letting him know that it was OK for him to go; he had more than earned his eternal rest.

Conrad is survived by wife Deborah Ann Kaipuala Poepoe Sakamoto; sons Nicholas Sr. (Megan Rei Alicuben), and Ricky Sakamoto; stepdaughter Kaleilikolehuaowaoala “Liko” Sevaaetasi; grandchildren Nicholas Jr., Grace (Daiandre) Harden, Liana, and Gabrielle Sakamoto, Reagan Kawakami; siblings Reita (Mike) Shimamoto and Edwin T. Sakamoto of Honolulu, Lorraine (John “Jim”) Faust of Louisiana; nieces Loriann Faust (Ben) Milligan of Alabama, Dr. Megan Sakamoto-Chun (Stephen); nephews Dustin Shimamoto, Eric Sakamoto (Quinn), and last but not least, our beloved dog, Trip.

Conrad’s Celebration of Life will be held at Mililani Memorial Park, Makai Chapel, on Thursday, May 9, 2024, with visitation beginning at 9:30am, service at 10:30am, with lunch immediately following. Aloha attire. Any expression of floral aloha for Conrad is welcomed.

To send flowers  
to the family, please visit our floral store.

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## Tribute Wall

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PI

**Pam Ito** posted:

I worked with Conrad as the admin assistant when he came aboard as the Administrator for Olaloa in May 2008. Until his retirement in 2015, it was the best of times for the Olaloa Retirement Community. His accomplishments in 7 short years was amazing because of his many talents and generous big heart. It was a sad day when he announced his retirement and I did not expect to be saying good-bye to him 9 years later. Debbie, thank you for taking care of Conrad until he took his last breath. I will always cherish the fond memories of knowing Conrad. Until we meet again, Aloha Conrad.

May 8 at 2:09 AM

PS

**Phyllis Seto** posted:

Iâ€™m a resident of Olaloa and met Conrad here as our administrator. He had so much love and Aloha for the community. He said his goal was to bring together the community and make one big Ohana. Which he successfully achieved. I worked with him on different projects and he was very caring and grateful for any help I gave him. He was truly a joyous man. I missed him so much when he retired. He said â€œitâ€™s timeâ€ when I asked him to reconsider his retirement. Whenever he saw me later he always had a nice smile and warm hug to share. May you rest in peace my friend. Love, Phyllis Seto

April 21 at 7:39 AM

RE

**Renee** posted:

Debbie- I will never forget how happy you were when you first started seeing Conrad. The way you would laugh when we talked about him. Iâ€™m so happy you had so many good years together. You were both in loveâ€!. He planted roses for you (so you always had flowers) and you learned to cook his favorite Japanese food. You enjoyed each other and loved each other with your all. Conrad was such a nice guyâ€!. I will miss him as he is resting in love.

March 22 at 6:59 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Conrad by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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