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The world's oldest person, Japan's Kane Tanaka, dies at age 119

April 25, 2022 · 5:42 PM ET



MATTHEW S. SCHWARTZ



Kane Tanaka, born in 1903, smiles as a nursing home celebrates three days after her 117th birthday in Fukuoka, Japan, on Jan. 5, 2020.

Kyodo/Reuters

Although she didn't quite make it to her goal of 120 years old, Kane Tanaka still lived long enough to become the world's oldest person — a title she held for the past three years, and attributed to family, sleep, hope and faith.

Tanaka died last week at 119, Japanese authorities announced. Tanaka, who had been living at nursing home in Fukuoka, died on Tuesday at a hospital.

According to Guinness World Records, Tanaka was born prematurely on Jan. 2, 1903 — the same year the Wright brothers brought powered flight to the world. She was the seventh child in her family.

田中カ子

@tanakakane0102

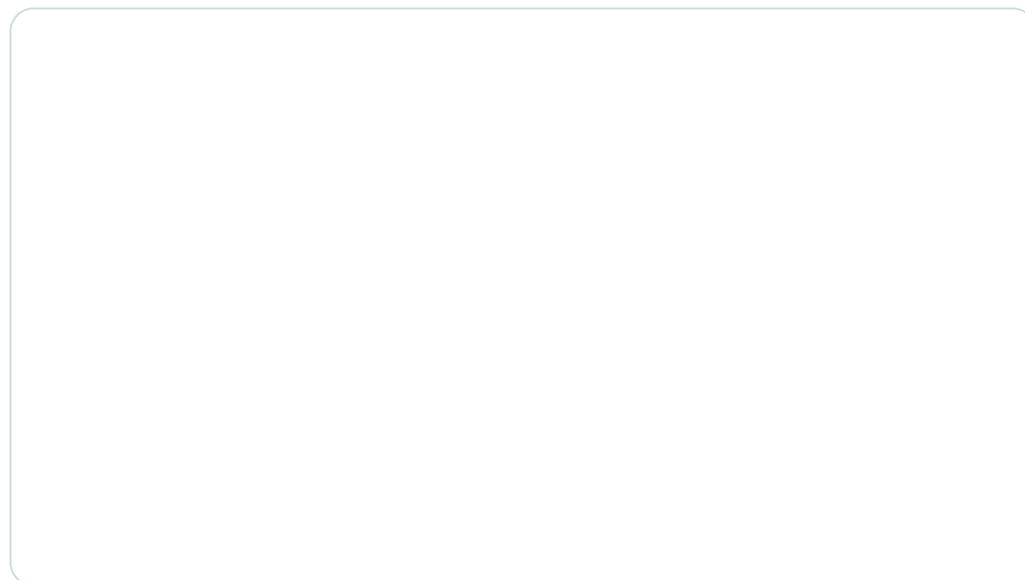


【大快挙】119歳到達🎉

無事に119歳を迎えることができました！
サラ・ナウスさん以来22年ぶりの119歳到達です🎉

最新のカ子さんの写真です📷
12月に親戚が会いに行った時のものです。

たくさんの方々に支えられてここまでくることが出来ました🙌
これからも楽しく明るく元気に過ごしてほしいです😊



10:02 AM · Jan 1, 2022



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When she was 19, she married Hideo Tanaka, and helped run a family business selling sticky rice, udon, and the Japanese dessert zenzai.

She had four children and adopted a fifth.

Tanaka loved chocolate and soda. During a 2019 presentation ceremony to celebrate her being the oldest person alive, she was given a box of chocolates — which she immediately opened and began devouring.

Tanaka was tapped to carry the Olympic torch during as part of the torch relay leading up to the Olympic Games in Tokyo, but her relatives deemed it too risky given COVID-19.

Earlier this month, Tanaka surpassed Sarah Knauss of the U.S. to become the second-longest lived person in recorded history. Jeanne Louise Calment, a French woman who died in 1997, remains the longest-lived person at 122 years and 164 days.

The oldest currently living person is now said to be Lucile Randon, a 118-year-old French nun. Randon is also the oldest known survivor of COVID-19.

[guinness world records](#)

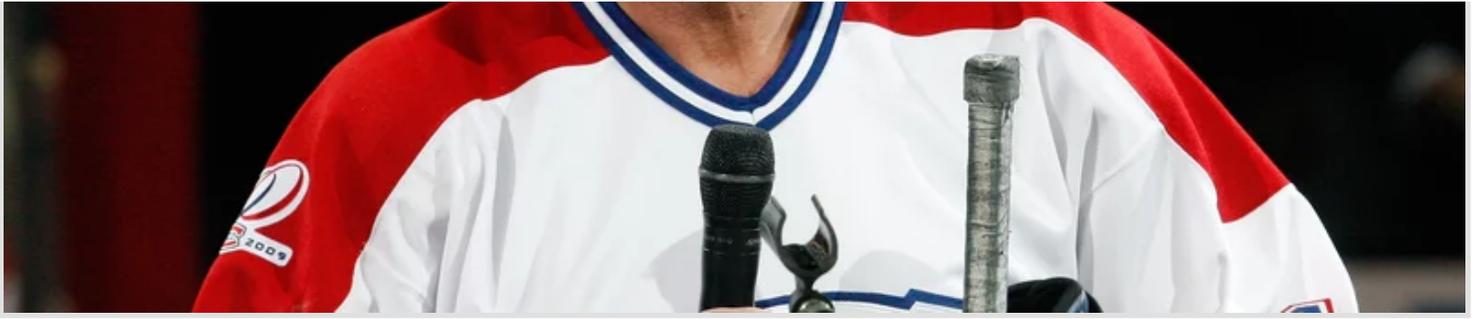
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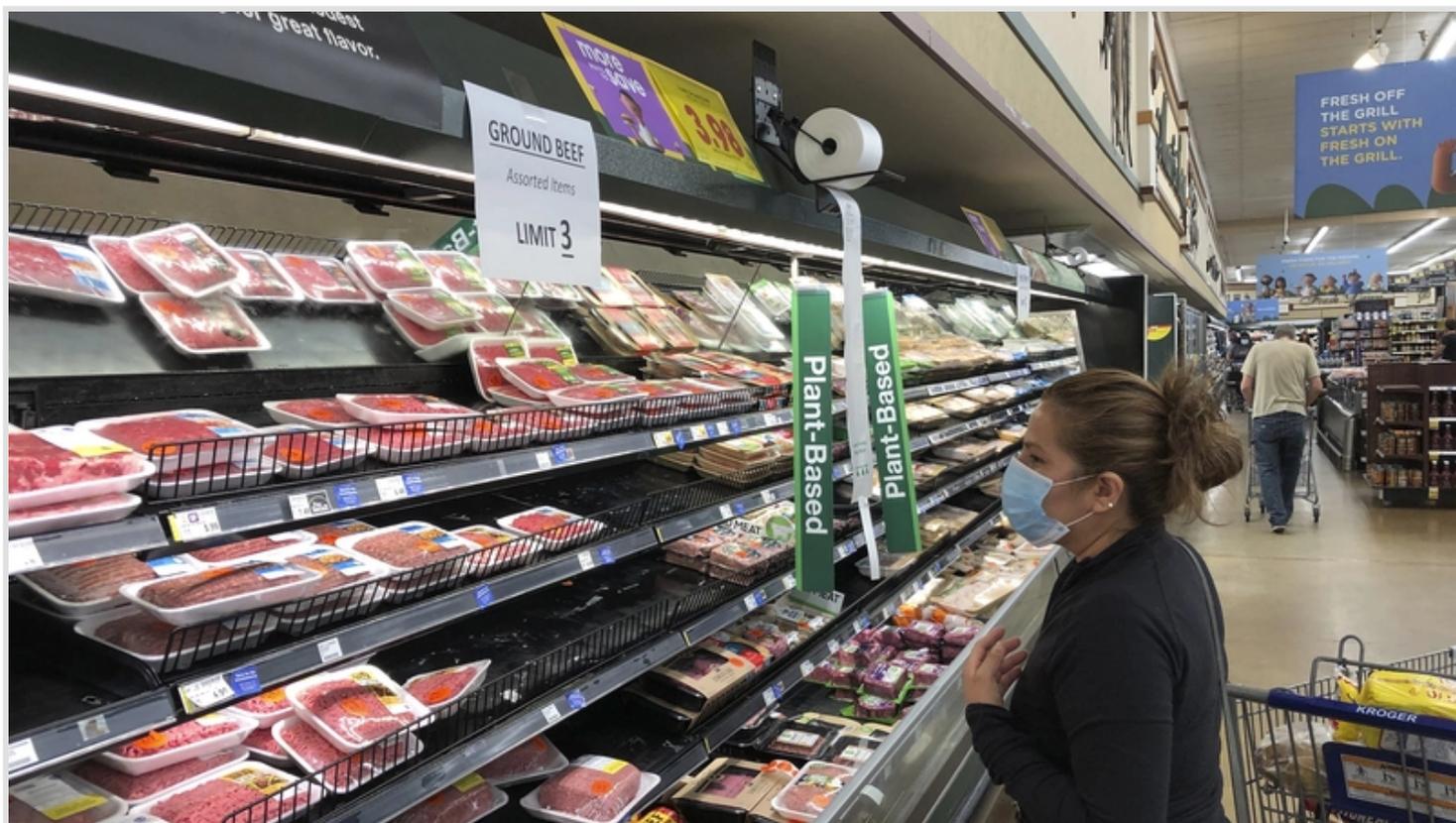
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