



Mr. Leo F. Pelleriti, Jr., 82, of [Belfast, Maine](#) and Gulfport, Florida, and formerly of Orono, Maine and Watertown, Massachusetts, passed away on July 18, 2025 at home, surrounded by loved ones. He was the beloved husband of Brona Levin Pelleriti; former husband of Gloria C. Rickard of Spokane, Washington (formerly of Orono, Maine); and the devoted father of John A. Pelleriti, Jennifer S. Pelleriti-Sarmiento, and Zachary M. Pelleriti.

Leo was born on September 13, 1942 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He spent his early years in Belmont, Massachusetts with his beloved grandparents, Antonio and Giovanna Pelleriti, and playing with his cousins in Pequossette Park. He moved to Watertown, Massachusetts with his father, Leo F. Pelleriti, Sr., and mother, Nancy J. Pelleriti (Parisi); he graduated in 1960 as a three sport athlete (football, basketball, and baseball), and played for Watertown Hall of Fame Football Coach, Vic Palladino. Leo went on to a post-grad year at Bordentown Military Institute in Bordentown, New Jersey, and then continued his career as a student-athlete at Widener University (formerly Pennsylvania Military College).

Upon graduation Leo was commissioned into the Army Reserve. He lived and worked in both St. Louis, Missouri and Los Angeles, California for General Motors. In 1966 he volunteered for active service and completed the U.S. Army Ranger School. In 1967 he was deployed to Vietnam, where he served as an infantry platoon leader in the 9th Infantry Division. He was wounded in action in November, 1967, and medically retired from the Army in 1968. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Combat Infantryman's badge, among other honors for his service. While recovering at Fort Ord, California, where he was a DJ at the base radio station, he married Gloria C. Sundin, on July 28, 1969. The couple moved to El Segundo, California, where Leo decided to pursue his career in education. He completed his student teaching at Dominguez High School in Compton, California. Son, John, was born on September 26, 1970, and daughter, Jen, was born on December 19, 1972.

That year Leo read an article for cheap land in Cusick, Washington, and he was looking for a new experience in which to raise his young family. Along with several other families, Leo and Gloria moved to Washington state, where they

collaboratively built several log cabins and bought horses, Queenie and Star, and pony Little Bits (from whom young John was bucked). Son, Zac, was born at Fairchild Air Force Base on April 16, 1975. The family moved to Spokane, Washington, where Leo, through the G.I. Bill, fully immersed himself in scholarship with the Jesuit Community at Gonzaga University; he rediscovered his love of knowledge, reading, and learning, earning his Master of Arts Degree in History in 1978. He then loaded the family into the cab of a U-Haul truck, with Baron, the family's boxer, and moved to Sebec Lake, Maine. Leo wanted to be closer to his family in Boston and return to Maine, where he spent childhood vacations in Camden and Sebang Lake.

For the next two decades Leo taught and coached, first, at Dover-Foxcroft Academy and Piscataquis Community High School, and then at Orono High School. In 1980, to be closer to his job in Orono, he and Gloria built a passive solar home on 54 acres in Charleston, Maine, where their English mastiff, Buck, roamed the fields and streams. After two years the entire family moved to Forest Avenue in Orono. John, Jen, and Zac thrived in Orono, made life-long friends, and followed their father and mother's example by establishing a strong work ethic and discovering and following their passion as scholar-athletes at Orono High School. Leo's impact, throughout his career, on students' lives is immeasurable. He lived his life and carried himself in a way that encouraged self-respect and dignity. He had an enormous capacity for compassion and his witty humor was incomparable. He inspired everyone he worked with to achieve their own greatness by following their bliss, thus allowing each person the grace to find their path. He was the head coach of the OHS football and baseball teams, winning the baseball State Championship in 1994, co-captained by catcher and son, Zac. Leo exemplified a well-balanced life and loved his family endlessly.

Upon retirement in 1996, he untied the lines on his next great passion, boating. His love of boating began with the gift of his father's boat, the JohnJenZac. A few years later, he set off on the first of many seasonal voyages down the intracoastal from Maine to Florida on the Proteus. Cruising the islands and coast of Maine was his greatest passion outside his family, teaching, and service. Penobscot Bay was his home on the water from Castine and Eaton's Boatyard, to Holbrook Island and the Fox Island archipelago. Eventually, he found his winter home, on the Jennifer Sarah, at the Naval Air Station Key West at Boca Chica Key, Florida. In Boca

Chica he tended bar and continued to cultivate his life of retirement on the water. He met and then married Brona Levin—the blind date that never ended—on Anna Maria Island, Florida, August 18, 2001. The couple loved their adventures on the high seas, and shared a passion for the water, music, and life. Leo introduced Brona to his version of Maine, she quickly became smitten with "the way life should be" and their amazing friends. The couple decided to build a life on land in Belfast in 2006 to create special memories with their growing family, while maintaining an active boating life. Leo and Brona travelled to Europe and fell in love with Florence, as well as to destinations across the United States. They adored each grandchild as they were welcomed into the Pelleriti family, and Leo continued his role as teacher, coach, and mentor to the next generation.

Leo was predeceased by his parents, Leo and Nancy; many aunts, uncles, and cousins. He is survived by his wife of 24 years, Brona (Levin) Pelleriti; son, John, and daughter-in-law, Tiffanie, and their children Kai, Bryce, and Gage of Tampa, Florida; daughter, Jen, and son-in-law, Rob, and their children Mia and Roman of Watertown, Massachusetts; son, Zac, and his partner, Diana, and her two children, Shepard and Holland of Orono, Maine. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Marilyn Levin of Clearwater, Florida; brother-in-law, Jeffery Levin and wife Bonnie of Key West, Florida; his former wife, Gloria (Pelleriti) Rickard, and her husband Mike of Spokane, Washington; and his many wonderful cousins and their families.

The family would like to thank the medical professionals at the Togus VA Hospital in Augusta, Maine for the quality of care and compassion, and the Sussman House and Hospice staff who provided tremendous support and encouragement during the most difficult of moments. You are all appreciated more than you know. A celebration of life will be held at the Orono Performing Arts Center, 14 Goodridge Drive, Orono, on August 15, 2025 from 11:30-2pm, with a gathering from 2-4pm at Woodman's Bar & Grill, 31 Main Street, Orono.

For those who wish to remember Leo in a special way, please honor his memory by listening to each other's stories and being kind and respectful to one another. In lieu of flowers, the family is establishing an annual memorial scholarship.

Donations can be made out to Orono High School (memo: Leo F. Pelleriti, Jr. Memorial Scholarship), and mailed to Orono High School, 14 Goodridge Dr., Orono, Maine 04473.

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