



## Leo A. Geleta

July 12, 1923 - February 7, 2025

Leo A. Geleta, born in Cohoes NY, passed away in Baltimore, MD on February 7, 2025 after spending 101 years delighting family, friends and colleagues.

Born in Cohoes NY in 1923, he was a 1941 graduate of Cohoes High School, on both the football and bowling teams – sometimes to the detriment of his studies. A member of the greatest generation, he enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943, going on to serve in the European Theater of Operations. While in Europe, he went to Officer Candidate School, earning his commission as a Second Lieutenant. After the war, like millions of other servicemen, he was discharged with plans to use the GI Bill to continue his education and submitted multiple applications. After several months without acceptance letters, he re-joined the Army in the Counter Intelligence Corps. Just a few weeks after his reenlistment, he received the acceptance letter from Princeton University.

The training requirements for his new military specialty took him to Fort Holabird, in Baltimore Maryland, with regular off-duty weekend dashes to Cohoes to court Mary Standarski. Upon completion of his military training, Leo received orders for duty with the US Army Occupation Force in Japan. Leo called Mary, and told her that if they were going to get married, it needed to happen quickly. It did - on March 14, 1947 they began their 74 married years

together. Their time in Japan was interrupted by Leo's service in Korea during the Korean War, when Mary returned to Cohoes to wait with their first son, Robert.

Upon returning to the States, Leo and Mary shared several assignments in the U.S., including time in Syracuse NY, where their second son, James, was born. Eventually, after more training, the family went to Berlin Germany, where Leo worked in the U.S. Military Liaison Mission – Potsdam as an observer of the Soviet military in East Germany. When off duty, the family traveled throughout western Europe enjoying the many different sights and cultures.

Leo's last military assignment was back to Baltimore, and Fort Holabird. After retirement with 22 years of military service, Leo and Mary decided to stay in Baltimore, with Leo beginning a second career as a stock broker, spending twenty-three years with the brokerage firm Bache, Halsey Steward Shields. Then finally retirement stuck! He loved tending the radishes, tomatoes and asparagus in his garden, and for as long as he was able, cutting the lawn with his walk-behind mower. When Leo and Mary would go to a restaurant, he would tell the server he wanted "hot, hot, hot coffee!" During the baseball season, he would always have a radio tuned to a game of the Baltimore Orioles. In the colder months, he enjoyed watching college basketball, and taking naps in his recliner. But always a person to be active, Leo did volunteer work, either as an organizational officer or a simple member, with military retiree groups affiliated with his military intelligence experience.

Leo was pre-deceased by his wife Mary (Standarski) Geleta in 2023. Survivors include son Robert and his wife Cheryl of San Francisco, CA; son James and his wife Sharon of Fairfield PA; step granddaughters Jamie (and spouse Joshua) Garretson of Aspers PA, Katie DeOms of Aspers PA, and Kacie (and spouse Brian) Spearman of Pittsburgh, PA.

Leo and Mary will be interred together at the Gerald B.H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery at 1 PM on March 14, 2025 – on what would have been their 78th wedding anniversary. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Salvation Army. As children of the depression, Mary often mentioned when the only Christmas gift she received was a doll presented by the Salvation Army.

<https://www.timesunion.com/living/article/Cohoes-native-played-25-year-role-in-hot-cold-16946847.php>