



Hector Orlando Melendez Alvarez

May 7, 1936 - December 5, 2025

Héctor Orlando Meléndez Álvarez Obituary

With hearts filled with deep sadness, the family of Héctor Orlando Meléndez Álvarez announces his passing on December 5, 2025, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. His passing was peaceful and surrounded by family.

Héctor was born on May 7, 1936, in San Miguel, El Salvador, where he was raised by his mother and grandmother. Growing up along the Pacific coast, he developed a love for the ocean and became an excellent swimmer, even saving others from drowning on several occasions. From an early age, he worked hard, taking on odd jobs and adventures that carried him across El Salvador, Honduras, the US, and eventually Canada.

In his twenties, Héctor explored Honduras' Caribbean coast, falling in love with its people and places, especially the islands of Utila and Roatán. Later, he moved to San Salvador, where he began a career in the flexographic printing industry as head plate moulder and met María, his wife of 57 years. Together they built a family and raised two children.

In 1970, Héctor once again showed his courage and determination by moving to New York in search of better opportunities. Two years later, he reunited his family there, beginning a new chapter together. He worked tirelessly in

factories across Brooklyn and Queens, and eventually took on the night shift maintaining Salmon Tower II on Fifth Avenue, a 60-story skyscraper admired for its architecture. Though the work was demanding, Héctor carried it out with pride, knowing it provided stability for his loved ones.

After eight years in New York, he made the decision to return to El Salvador. That journey became one of his most cherished memories—a 10-day drive from New York to San Salvador filled with adventures and stories he loved to recount. Back in El Salvador, Héctor and María worked side by side, building and running a family business in San Marcos for more than 13 years. Those years were marked by resilience, partnership, and the joy of creating something lasting together.

In 1990, seeking safety and opportunity, they immigrated to Canada, settling in Halifax.

Héctor was known for his warmth and sociability. He loved striking up conversations with strangers, sharing candy with neighbourhood children, and lending a helping hand. “Everyone knows Héctor” was a phrase often heard, and it reflected his generous spirit. He also loved walking—whether through Manhattan, San Salvador, or Halifax—and prided himself on knowing the streets of New York “like the back of his hand.”

Sports, and especially soccer, were at the very heart of Héctor’s life. The World Cup was sacred to him, and he followed it with devotion, admiring the greats of the game and savoring every match. He often spoke with pride about growing up playing “fútbol” alongside his friend Cariota Barraza, who went on to shine for the local team of Club Deportivo Águila and the Salvadoran national team. One of his earliest memories of the sport was listening to the 1954 World Cup final, when West Germany staged a remarkable comeback against Hungary. That match sparked a lifelong love for

“Die Mannschaft”, a passion he carried proudly with a collection of their jerseys spanning decades.

Héctor’s love of the game also gave him unforgettable experiences. In 1961, he traveled to Guatemala City to watch the 5-time European Champs Real Madrid on tour, witnessing legends like Puskás and Alfredo Di Stéfano, who scored twice that day. From then on, he was a devoted fan of “Los Merengues”. In 1966, when Santos FC came to San Salvador, Héctor not only watched Pelé play but also had the chance to meet him in person—a story he loved to retell with a sparkle in his eyes. Years later, while living in New York, he saw Pelé again with the NY Cosmos, this time alongside other legends in Franz Beckenbauer and Carlos Alberto, moments that deepened his joy for the sport.

Soccer was not just something Héctor watched—it was something he lived. He coached teams wherever life took him, wrote commentaries for local magazines, and shared his passion with his family. One of their most cherished memories together was traveling to Tegucigalpa in 1981 for the World Cup qualifiers, where both Honduras and El Salvador earned their place on the world stage. For Héctor, soccer was more than a game—it was a lifelong companion, a source of pride, and a way to connect with others, whether on the field, in the stands, or at home with his loved ones

Héctor lived by simple but powerful rules: no job was beneath you, education was essential, and kindness mattered most. He instilled these values in his children and grandchildren, who were his greatest pride. He delighted in their accomplishments, attended their games and recitals, and encouraged them to live with the same curiosity and resilience that defined his own life.

He is survived by his sister Marina Meléndez; his wife María Meléndez; his

children Rosa (Rahbar) Rahimpour and Víctor (Jane) Meléndez; and his grandchildren Jonathan, Rosa, Sheila, and Nadia.

Memorial donations may be made to a charity of your choice or to the Alzheimer's Society of Canada.