

Obituaries



LEO MIREN COK, MD, 95, of Warwick, passed away on April 20, 2024. Born in Trieste, Italy, he was the son of the late Andrej and Milica (Golob) Cok.

At the early age of 16, he joined the Slovenian Partisan (Gregorcic Brigade) fighting guerilla style against the Nazi German forces. After a few months he was captured by them and sent to Dachau Con-

centration Camp near Munich, Germany. Through unbelievable horrors, including being thrown in a mass grave, he managed to crawl out before bulldozers buried the bodies. He survived using his language skills as a camp interpreter long enough until the American forces liberated the camp on April 29, 1945. He said that his victory over the Nazis was that he was still alive.

It was experiencing all this suffering that Leo Cok in 1947 embarked on the journey to become Dr. Cok. He was a graduate of the University of Zagreb, Yugoslavia, (now Croatia), receiving his Doctorate in Medicine in 1953.

In 1956, at the age of 28, he took the SS America from Calais, France to New York, NY. He completed his residency and specialty in Psychiatry at Northern Westchester Hospital in Mt. Kisco, NY. While there he met another recent immigrant

working at the hospital from the Dominican Republic, Gladys Lara, PhD.

In 1957, they moved to Kansas City, Missouri and were shortly thereafter married on March 22, 1958. After less than a year and not liking being so far away from the ocean, he was able to secure a job offer from the "Ocean State", i.e., Rhode Island, where he diligently served as the Director of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse unit at the Eleanor Slater State Hospital.

On November 6, 1970, he had a son, Igor Andrew Cok. His marriage lasted 23 years.

Dr. Cok continued to work as Director of Alcohol and Drug Abuse for the State of Rhode Island until his retirement 32 years later in 1990.

In 1994, he met Adeline Lonardo at the gym, and they remained partners until he passed.

He is survived by his beloved son, Igor Andrew Cok of Warwick, and his sister, Vera Vessel of Trieste, Italy. Dr. Cok was the brother of the late Andro Cok.

In his memory, memorial donations may be made to: Doctors Without Borders, 40 Rector Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10006, or UNICEF, 125 Maiden Lane, New York, NY 10038, or the RI Food Bank, 200 Niantic Avenue, Providence, RI 02907. ❖