



Obituary

Achilles passed away peacefully in his home in Ladera Ranch, California at the age of 94. He was a true 'Achilles' - a warrior for all of humanity. At 93 he still lived independently, doing it "his way" with his loyal companion, his cat Hercules, Born in LaPorte, Indiana in 1924 to two Greek immigrants, Peter Achilles and Alexandra Anton (Pappademitriou) Achilles was raised with his older sister Bessie (Molenda) and younger sister Becky (Hrisomalos). His family instilled a love of learning early on with daily chalkboard quotes, spelling challenges, stories/parables and history lessons in both Ancient Greek and US History.

Service Summary

Visitation

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Sat Jul 27, 2019

Saint Andrews Greek Orthodox Church

52455 Ironwood Road
South Bend, IN 46635

Funeral Service

12:00 PM Sat Jul 27, 2019

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Achilles was drafted in 1942 to WWII, assigned to the Army Air Corp, (there was no US Air Force at that time) and was handpicked to assist the head oral maxillofacial surgeon during surgery. This was at the base dental clinic in Kern, Utah. During this time, he discovered his aptitude for surgery and a passion for medicine. He turned down a full ride at Purdue Engineering and the chance to be a fighter pilot for a chance to be a physician. He served on active duty until 1945.

He chose the harder path, getting accepted in medical school without having met all the criteria. A good challenge never deterred Achilles. He started his master's program in Anatomy at Indiana University (IU) which included teach the first-year medical students. The reports and Achilles commitment impressed the Medical School Dean to 'take a chance' on him, opening the door for his life's commitment as a doctor/healer.

After serving in the Korean War, he matriculated at Indiana University School of Medicine in 1953 and graduated in 1957. He interned at Charity Hospital in New Orleans, LA before moving with his wife Betty Aspasia (Stavropoulos now Veras) and their two sons, Peter and Mark to start a solo practice as a Family Practitioner in the rural area of Cucamonga, CA (~40 miles east of Los Angeles). Their daughter, Stephanie was born a year later.

He was the first family physician in his community and extended his services to everyone His little black bag was always at the ready to make house calls at all hours of the day or night, tending to every emergency from delivering babies

to treating workers with gunshot wounds. He was respected by all. Even warring gang members would stop their fighting to allow him to treat an injured member. His excellent surgical skills were recognized by local surgeons who often asked him to assist in the operating room.

He continued his practice for 33 years until duty to his country called him back to service for a third time. He volunteered for active duty as a Lieutenant Colonel and flight surgeon in Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990. He was given a special exemption to the Air Force mandatory retirement age of 62 for active duty. By this time, he was 66 years old and became the oldest active duty person serving in a combat zone anywhere in the world. He was the first Air Force doctor to land in Saudi Arabia and was tasked with establishing medical facilities for the thousands of soldiers and Airmen of the Delta Jeddah Tanker Task Force in Riyadh. He maintained his practice for as long as he could until he chose to dedicate his services full time to the military, a sacrifice he never regretted. In 2003, he retired from the CA Air National Guard completing a 61-year military career.

Achilles stood for his country, he stood by his patients who needed medical care despite their inability to pay for it, always standing up for justice. He obtained his law degree (JD) while he was the plaintiff fighting to protect doctor's rights within hospitals. His battle took him all the way to the California Supreme Court where he won what is still considered a "landmark case", one that many physicians currently reference.

Retirement never slowed Achilles thirst for knowledge or learning. He embraced technology to stay in touch with loved ones; he continued his love of building model airplanes, even committed to re-learn calculus, to understand it better, at 93. He continued his ever-expanding interest in understanding of humanity through his near constant reading. At 93, he traveled to Greece with his sister Becky and extended family to reconnect with his parents' roots in the family village of Vidiaki. He never gave up on living life to its fullest. Even in the end at 94, he defied the doctors and the caregivers' expectations to live. At 93, he survived a complicated 9-hour heart surgery. In true form, he gave those amazing heart surgeons one for their books. Achilles continued to share his humor, kindness, wisdom and light until the very end. He showed grit, determination, enormous grace and faith in the face of death. The same way he accepted all that life offered, he accepted death.

Achilles is survived by his sons Peter Anton, MD; Mark (Tracy) Anton, MD; daughter Stephanie Anton, DDS,MS (Bob); grandchildren Alex Anton, Kara Anton, Nikiya Bettey, Natalya Bettey, Zak Bettey, Tracy's son Santo and his most special and beloved sister, Becky Hrisomalos. He cherished the entire Hrisomalos crew from Bloomington where he made his home several months of each of the past 8-10 years.

Visitation will be from 11 AM- 12PM on Saturday August 3rd at St. Andrew's Orthodox Greek Church, 52455 N. Ironwood Rd, South Bend, followed by the Service at 12PM. Burial at Riverview Cemetery, 2300 Portage Ave., South Bend with Father George delivering the blessing followed by military honor.

In lieu of flowers, gifts may be made in memory of Achilles P. Anton to the Indiana University Foundation. These memorial contributions will soon be converted into the newly established Achilles P. Anton, M.D., J.D. Scholarship that we hope will benefit first-generation immigrant, adult students (29+), with financial need and academic achievement, who are pursuing a medical or law degree at Indiana University.

Checks can be mailed to Indiana University Foundation. (please write: "Achilles P. Anton" in the memo section) and mailed the Indiana University Foundation, PO Box 6460, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6460. Or online at: <https://www.myiu.org/one-time-gift>. Select 'IU Foundation', 'Memorial gifts account'. Click 'Add write-in gift'. In the field that reads "Gift in memory of:", please type: "Achilles P. Anton". All gifts are deductible as charitable contributions within the limits of the Internal Revenue Code.

Charitable donations may be made in Dr. Achilles's memory to the following organization:

In memory of: Achilles P. Anton to the Indiana University Foundation.

Checks can be mailed to Indiana University Foundation. (please write: "Achilles P. Anton" in the memo section) Indiana University Foundation, PO Box 6460, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6460