

## Obituary in Knoxville News Sentinel; January 3, 2016

Dr. Peter Mazur - Oak Ridge, TN



Dr. Peter Mazur, a pioneer in the study of Cryobiology, died Wednesday, Dec. 30th, 2015 at his home in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Dr. Mazur was born in New York City in 1928. He earned his AB magna cum laude from [Harvard University](#) in 1949, and from that institution in 1953, he received his Ph. D in biology. After four year serving with the United States Air Force's Research and Development Command (during which he earned his Captain's bars), Mazur spent two years as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at [Princeton University](#). In 1959 he moved to Oak Ridge, Tennessee to join the staff at Oak Ridge National Labs (ORNL), where he began a long and distinguished career that spanned nearly six decades. Dr. Mazur was a prolific author and researcher who penned over one hundred and twenty scientific

papers, works that helped propel Cryobiology into an honored and highly respected field of research and study. The foremost among these publications encapsulated a seminal study in which Mazur, along with Cryobiologists Stanley Leibo and David Whittingham, pioneered technologies and procedures that successfully lead to the freezing and thawing of mouse embryos without cell damage. This groundbreaking collaboration, lead by Dr. Mazur, paved a path toward fruitful and practical discoveries, among which were enabling the preservation (in a cost-effective way) of the genetic lines of endangered species and the maintaining of frozen cattle embryos with the potential of boosting the overall supply of food in areas stricken with famine. Along with providing this watershed event in Cryobiology research – which many contend formed a foundation upon which other such research (the freezing of umbilical cord stem cells) could build – Mazur has illuminated the field with a plethora of other studies. For instance, he worked to genetically modify the mosquito, to hopefully disarm the insect, so that it becomes incapable of carrying the parasite that causes malaria. He also devoted much time and effort in the study of *Drosophila*, as he explored methods of freezing with the goal of maintaining thousands of mutant lines of *Drosophila* for valuable genetic research. Over his long and brilliant career, Dr. Mazur has received numerous awards and honors: among them an R and D Award and the Distinguished Service Award. He was also appointed a corporate fellow and chair of the ORNL Corporate Fellows Council and is listed in *Who's Who In America* and *Who's Who In The World*. Peter Mazur, as well, earned accolades for his skill as a teacher. In the classroom, on the lecture circuit, or one-on-one with his promising post-docs, Dr. Mazur imparted the fruits of his knowledge and intellect to the biologists of the future.

Peter Mazur is survived by son, Timothy S. Mazur; daughter-in-law Kathy Mazur; step-daughter, Jennifer Dawson; step son-in-law Richard Dawson; grandson and granddaughter Andrew and Lauren Mazur, and step granddaughter and grandsons Sydney, Richard, and Taylor Dawson. Drusilla S. Mazur, his first wife, died in 1982. His second, Sara Jo Mazur, passed in 2003. We thank you, Dad. Throughout your extraordinary life, you have been leader, mentor, and teacher to all whom you have touched. We are grateful for that and for you. Our family extends a heartfelt thank you to Laquita Foley, Peter's longtime housekeeper and friend, whose help and love were essential

and invaluable.

Memorial service will be Tuesday January 05, 2016 at 1:00 pm at the Chapel on the Hill Church in Oak Ridge Tennessee. Interment will follow the service at Oak Ridge Memorial Park. Online messages may be left for the family at [www.martinfuneralhomeoakridge.com](http://www.martinfuneralhomeoakridge.com) Martin Oak Ridge Funeral Home is serving the Mazur family