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## Ralph Brinster a Recipient of the 2002-03 Wolf Prize in Medicine

## In Memory of Speaker Matthew J. Ryan

Recently I attended two very moving services in memory of Matthew J. Ryan, Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The first was held at St. Mary Magdalen Church in Media on April 8, the day after his body lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda in Harrisburg. Matt is the first person to be so honored since Abraham Lincoln in 1865. The service was attended by over one hundred and fifty members of the General Assembly and by Governor Rendell and three past Commonwealth governors including Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. The second service was in the magnificent Chamber of the House of Representatives in the State Capitol on April 14, a stone's throw from the architecturally distinguished Speaker Matthew J. Ryan Legislative Office Building, a tribute by his colleagues in every branch of State Government.

I am delighted to report that Matt's name will now grace the facade of yet another building, one perhaps as close to his heart as the one on Capitol Hill. Last February, the University Trustees resolved that VHUP be renamed as the Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. This is the first time a building on the Penn campus has been named for a state politician since Benjamin Franklin.

Why was Matt Ryan honored in such a remarkable way and why did we change the name of the small animal hospital? At both memorial services, the tributes were uniform in their outpouring of love and respect for Matt, he was revered by everyone on both sides of the aisle and his skills in leadership in the House are the stuff of legend. Matt loved the House of Representatives and did everything in his power to see that legislation was passed that brought the greatest benefit to the citizens of Pennsylvania. He was a brilliant leader with a steady finger on the pulse of the legislative agenda, he had an mischievous Irish wit and, despite his enormous power in Harrisburg, was among the most humble men you could ever wish to meet.

Sometimes, when I needed advice, I would call and ask him out for lunch. Matt's favorite place was a rather seedy little café near his Media law office, where he would always have a chicken salad sandwich. Lunch never cost

more than \$5.00 and was fascinating as he shared advice that involved millions of dollars.

Matt loved the School and he loved his black Labrador, Magic; he probably would have been happiest if we had renamed VHUP as Magic's Hospital but this name could be too easily taken amiss. Matt was a humanist who cared deeply about the people of Pennsylvania and he readily understood that veterinary medicine was of enormous importance to the Commonwealth's number one industry, agriculture. He was very proud of the School and supported it in every way he could during more than three decades of leadership. Our current pre-eminence in veterinary medicine is a testament to Matt's unwavering support.

The University community, in expressing its admiration and affection for Matt Ryan, is honored to have his name associated with its Veterinary Hospital, an institution dedicated to serving the people of Pennsylvania, Matt's people. We cherish his memory and miss him enormously.

**Alan M. Kelly**

*The Gilbert S. Kahn Dean of Veterinary Medicine*

## Ralph Brinster a recipient of the 2002-03 Wolf Prize in Medicine

**Dr. Ralph L. Brinster, V'60**, Richard King Mellon Professor of Reproductive Physiology at the School, has been selected as a recipient of the 2002-03 Wolf Prize in Medicine. The Wolf Prize Jury cited him "for the development of procedures to manipulate mouse ova and embryos, which has enabled transgenesis and its applications in mice." Dr. Brinster shares the prize with two other scientists, Dr. Oliver Smithies of the University of North Carolina, and Dr. Mario R. Capecchi, of the University of Utah. The three researchers were honored for developing techniques "for introducing and modifying individual genes within mouse eggs and embryos" stated the prize jury.

Dr. Brinster, a veterinarian, developed a culture system to maintain mouse and other mammalian eggs in vitro and he identified many fundamental characteristics of egg culture. This was essential for the generation of transgenic animals. Dr. Brinster first showed that it was possible to colonize a mouse

blastocyst with stem cells from older embryos. He was the first scientist to microinject fertilized eggs with RNA and was a pioneer in the field in applying these microinjection methods to generate transgenic mice.

The Wolf Foundation was established in Israel by the late Dr. Ricardo Wolf who served as Cuba's ambassador to Israel. The Wolf Prize in Medicine has been awarded since 1978 "for achievements in the interest of mankind and

friendly relations among peoples, irrespective of nationality, race, color, religion, sex, or political view." There is also a prize in agriculture, chemistry, mathematics, physics and the arts. The 2002-03 Wolf Prizes will be conferred by the Israeli President Moshe Katsav at a special ceremony at the Knesset in Jerusalem on May 11, 2003.



**The consul general of Israel in Philadelphia, Giora Becher, presents the official letter about the Wolf Prize to Dr. Brinster.**