



Ernst Breitenberger

June 11, 1924 - April 30, 2020

Ernst Breitenberger, age 95, passed away on April 30, 2020. He was born in Graz, Austria to the late Julius Johann Breitenberger and Anna (Wiesinger) Breitenberger. He was preceded in death by his son, Roland Breitenberger, and survived by his ex-wife, Janine (Dufaure) Breitenberger, children, Caroline Breitenberger (Earl Devanny), Gisele (Neil) Murdoch, and Eric Breitenberger (Julie Rowland), as well as grandchildren, Nicole (Austin) Gibney, William Devanny, Caroline Murdoch, Jamie Murdoch, and David Murdoch. He earned Ph.D. degrees from the University of Vienna in 1950 and Cambridge University in 1956. He was a faculty member at the University of Malaya in Singapore and the University of South Carolina in Columbia before settling in Athens to teach and do research in theoretical physics at Ohio University. He was a member of the American Physical Society, Mathematics Association, History of Science Society, New York Academy of Science, Gauss-Gesellschaft, Rotary International, and Sigma Xi. After retirement in 1994, he traveled the world, including visits to India, China, Nepal, Antarctica, and the Northwest Passage. The family wishes to express gratitude to the residents and staff at Brookdale Trillium Crossing in Columbus, who welcomed him into their community. Services will be held at a later date, prior to internment in Frohnleiten, Austria, near his parents and beloved Tante Mitzi. Contributions in his memory may be made to the Breitenberger/Wright Graduate Endowment in the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Ohio University, or to The Rotary Foundation (Chicago, IL). To send an online condolence, please visit www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com.

Comments



“ My deepest condolences to Dr. Breitenbergers, family for your loss. Dr. Breitenberger is someone one cannot forget if you have studied under him. All graduate students had to take his Math Practicum class at 8:00 in the morning (I did in 1984 fall). This class taught you how to think. He used to say "Engineers do not think.". Now that I am a professional mechanical engineer I have to agree with him. But having someone like him teach you how to think clearly has definitely helped my career, I think like a physicist when I solve problems, much to the amazement of my engineering colleagues.

He recommended many books to students, which I still have and use them regularly. Behind his strict demeanor he was a very kind soul. I can still hear his thundering voice. When we made mistakes in our assignments, he would write, "you are all blind."

-Sekhar Samy

Sekhar Samy - September 16, 2020 at 11:40 PM



“ To the Breitenberger family,

Ernst was a very memorable Physics and Astronomy faculty member at OU. When I joined the faculty (with a brand-new PhD) in 1966, I quickly learned of his importance in building a quality PhD program. His demand for rigor was obvious, but equally important (and much less obvious) was his demand that every student in the program be treated fairly. After my retirement, I happened to join the Athens Rotary Club and found that Ernst was a long-standing member of the club. When asked why he had joined Rotary, his reply without hesitation referred to the charity work they do at exceptionally low overhead. There-after, that became my reason for having joined.

--Roger Rollins

Roger Rollins - May 05, 2020 at 03:08 PM



“ To Caroline and family,

I was sorry to read of your loss. May the love of family sustain you in this time of grief.

Joan Herbers

Joan Herbers - May 03, 2020 at 08:25 PM