



Harris Laning Perry Pepper

Harris Laning Perry Pepper age 82 of Gladwyne, PA died peacefully at home July 29, 2025. Born in Philadelphia in 1942 to Hester Marie Laning and Dickinson Sergeant Pepper, MD, H.L. Perry Pepper grew up in Hartford, CT, graduated from the Frederick Gunn School (The Gunnery) before attending the University of Pennsylvania for his BA and the Wharton School for his MBA in Health Care Economics.

Perry started his career in healthcare as the Assistant Director of Presbyterian Hospital before becoming the President of the Chester County Hospital, where he happily led and grew the hospital for 34 years. He was a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives. He was a past chairman of the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania, the Delaware Valley Hospital Council, the Voluntary Hospitals of America East, and the Board of Health of Lower Merion Township in Pennsylvania. Perry also was a Fellow and a Trustee of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

Throughout his career and into retirement Perry was committed to health care education. He served in an advisory capacity to both the master's in public health program and MBA programs at West Chester University. He served for several years as a preceptor at the Medical School of the University of Pennsylvania. Aside from a host of professional and historic organizations, he was a member of the Philadelphia Club and an active member of St.

Christopher's Church, Gladwyne, where he served on the Vestry.

Curious about everything, Perry had numerous hobbies. He was an ardent fly fisherman and lifelong member and past President of The Swiftwater Preserve. He cherished his children and grandchildren and especially loved doing projects with them at his workbench. Gadgets spread across his desk with many computers, wires, and gizmos. In retirement he renewed his HAM radio license and often participated in emergency communications. Perry adored a good party and any excuse to set off his cannons in celebration. He loved playing the harmonica, doing magic tricks, visiting the hardware store, consuming popcorn, Chardonnay, and being prepared for any potentially disastrous situation. Perry always wore bowties, told jokes, and delighted in making people laugh.

Perry's family was the light in his life. He is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 56 years, March Wier Pepper, daughters Meredith Taylor (Lucius), Page McConnel (James), grandchildren Pepper and Quinn Taylor, and Elsie and Perry McConnel, his twin T. Sergeant Pepper (Marion), his sister Laning Thompson (Steve) and many other adoring family members.

His Memorial Service will be held on Saturday August 9th at 11 AM in St. Christopher's Church, Gladwyne, PA.

In lieu of flowers please consider a contribution in his honor to his last leadership project, the Capital Campaign at St. Christopher's Church.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG 9. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Christopher's Episcopal Church
226 Righters Mill Road
Gladwyne, PA 19035

Tribute Wall

NM

“ In 1985, I became a solo cardiologist at Chester County Hospital. From the start, Perry gave me advice and mentored me and eventually my new cardiology group became good partners with the hospital. Freuently, while doing rounds, I would stop by his office just to chat. I loved his humor and I still repeat his sayings. He will be missed.

Dr. Nicholas Vaganos

Nicholas Vaganos. MD - August 12, 2025 at 02:57 PM

BW

“ For Perry, it was all about the patient experience, and no one knew better than Perry that for those at the bedside to treat patients well, the example needed to start at the top-and by nature he was perfectly suited to the task. Kind, intelligent, well intentioned, and considerate, he was the right man for the time and the place. Whether it was on his hands and knees putting out a fire in the laundry room or addressing 400 attendees at a Longwood Gala, he had a sense of optimism and personality that made you want to follow. Such a good friend. My very best to his family,

Bill Wylie

Bill Wylie - August 11, 2025 at 11:21 AM

JF

“ Perry’s service was such a wonderful tribute to him and spiritual as he would had loved it to be. March, I know he is so proud of you, with such grace you read his wishes and memories. I know my Ken would have given you best hug. Continued love and blessings.

Fondly, Jeanie Flickinger

Jeanie Flickinger - August 10, 2025 at 09:55 AM

LC

“ *Fly with the Angels in Heaven Mr. Pepper. A life well lived and an earned place in heaven. You will be missed. Loretta Colberg*

Loretta Colberg - August 09, 2025 at 06:49 AM

TR

“ *I have known Perry for about 40 years through our mutual membership in the Swiftwater Preserve fishing club. All of the accolades below are on point. My admiration for Perry was wide and large as his beautiful combination of compassion, leadership and love of life will always remain as a standard for my own life's aspirations. I will miss him but will also continue to be inspired by his noble character and quick laugh. Tom Roosevelt*

Tom Roosevelt - August 08, 2025 at 11:33 AM

AG

“ *To the Pepper Family,
It was my great pleasure to work with Mr. Pepper - he truly made each employee feel that we worked with him. Mr. Pepper knew every employee by name.
Thank you for sharing him with us on every holiday - he visited all the hospital units and departments on holidays. We loved him for that.
My deepest condolences to you. Mr. Pepper will be missed by all of us who were fortunate to know him.
Anne-Marie Guthrie, RN*

Anne-Marie Guthrie - August 07, 2025 at 01:13 PM

SW

“ To the Pepper family.

I met Perry in my healthcare work at Chester County Hospital. While I was a longtime vendor, Perry made us all feel a part of the hospital family. What an outstanding person leading the hospital, in the community and in our healthcare industry.

May his memory be for a blessing. My condolences to his family and friends.

Steve Wagman

Steven Wagman - August 06, 2025 at 10:28 AM

GR

“ To the family of Mr. Pepper, please accept my sincere condolences on Perry's passing. He was always a delight to talk with whenever I had the pleasure of seeing him at CCH. May he rest in peace.

GEORGE S RUSSELL - August 05, 2025 at 06:17 PM

DD

“ My first memory of Mr. Pepper was when he became President of CCH when I was in training at CCH nursing school. He never failed to smile and say hello to everyone who passed him in the hospital hallways. 12 years later, I came back to CCH as an employee and had to present to the board a number of times. Needless to say, the first time, I was nervous and a little terrified as I had never presented to a board before. Walking in he looked at me with a knowing smile and look that said, don't worry--you will do fine. He had that way about him, to make everyone feel comfortable! Years later, had to quit my job for a family illness, and then later my own illness, he called and said--call if you need anything, we are here to help. 6 years later I came back to CCH and felt confident that he was still at the helm! I have worked at 3 other hospitals and a home care agency where the administrators were not even approachable! He was missed when he retired and now, he will be missed on this side of heaven. My prayers and sympathy to his family. Mr. Pepper: well done, good and faithful servant!

Diane Dieffenbach - August 05, 2025 at 05:29 PM

MJ

“ Dianne and I knew Perry for most of our adult lives. We are so much the better for that friendship. I will not forget his effortless grace in navigating paths through difficult channels that many of us failed to clearly see. Somehow, I think he implicitly understood that civility is a tool best used to augment wisdom. He will be well missed; a source of inspiration whenever the sky may darken.

Michael Johnson - August 05, 2025 at 12:41 PM

JK

“ Many words come to mind when I remember Perry: great sense of humor, contagious laugh, trademark bowtie, fun to be around, tinkle in his eye, good listener, disagreements never turned into grudges, erudite, tough as nails when he had to be, mentor and, maybe most of all, gentleman. I and many other colleagues are fortunate to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Perry during his years at The Chester County Hospital. I always looked forward to being with him (even when we disagreed), learned so much from him and was constantly impressed with his thoughtful, mission-driven decision making and leadership skills. I wish I had had a chance to go fly-fishing with him. He was "one of the good guys" as his friend, Stu Fine, said when we shared the sad, sad news of his passing. Perry has many accomplishments and accolades, but for me, his legacy is the truly wonderful person he was.

John Kepner - August 05, 2025 at 12:39 PM

DE

“ Perry was such a unique fellow. I have had the pleasure to know Perry and March.
Such a great couple.
As a physician Perry was always there to champion our cause and always give me wise counsel.
We was also a committed musician and our physician band had him sit in. He played a mean harmonica.
Mostly I will miss an old school yet contemporary gentleman who enriched all of our lives.

Dennis Easter - August 05, 2025 at 09:26 AM

SW

“ Condolences to the family. We are all thinking of you. Perry Pepper loved Chester County Hospital. Everyone here loved him back. He was our heart and soul. We are sad to see him go.

Sarah Weaver - August 04, 2025 at 08:04 PM

KK

“Perry was just an incredible human being. A true gentleman who really cared for people. I worked in the Emergency Department for over 40 years, before he came and after he retired. There was no one like him, before or since. On his his last day before retirement, he took the time to walk down to the ER from his office and gave me a photograph of my wife which he had found in the hospital archives. It is a beautiful picture of Denise as a young nurse holding a pediatric patient. His caring and kindness had no limits. It was a joy to have known him.

Kim Kelton - August 04, 2025 at 07:44 PM

RR

“So sorry to hear of Perry's passing. I had the pleasure to work with Perry throughout his time at Chester County. I attended many meetings with him and despite frequent tensions at these meetings he always remained a gentleman and never lost his sense of humor. I never forgot when he met with me and asked what he could do to help and support our practice. When does this happen with hospital administration? The world has lost a great man Rich Rissmiller

Richard Rissmiller - August 03, 2025 at 09:03 PM

JR

“ My condolences to the family of Perry Pepper. I’m sure many are expressing a story of how Perry affected their life, and I want to share mine.

I joined the medical staff of The Chester County Hospital as a pulmonary specialist in 1986. My previous involvement in hospital environments was during training and some internal medicine jobs. Almost universally I experienced tensions between hospital administrations, medical staff and nursing staff. Groups and individuals seemed more concerned about their needs (especially financial), rather than working together to provide patient care.

I quickly learned that was not the culture at TCCH under Perry Pepper. His hospital administration supported the nursing staff and encouraged additional training; community Family Physicians and General Internists were encouraged to serve on hospital committees as well as direct the care of their patients when hospitalized; medical and surgical specialists were being added to expand the scope of care the hospital could offer patients, but not to take over the care of the community physicians. In other words, everyone in the hospital was working together to give the highest quality and the most compassionate care possible.

Although my hospital experience was limited, I knew that this way of rendering care was special, recognizing the importance of teamwork, and that all members are important. I thought I was in Healthcare Delivery Heaven.

But by the start of the new Millenium changes were occurring in healthcare

delivery. The intensity and complexity of new treatments began to require on- site / full-time physicians and physician extenders (employed by hospital), financial pressures were keeping community physicians in their offices requiring hospitals to hire more physicians, and independent hospitals were finding it necessary to merge with larger healthcare systems.

TCCH has not been immune to these forces. But the culture started by Perry, and continued under the guidance of Michael Duncan, and now by Dr. Karen Pinsky has survived. Many hospital and Penn Medicine members in the past and currently are responsible for perpetuating his legacy. The residents of Chester County can be grateful.

John Roberts - August 03, 2025 at 04:58 PM

TA

“ My wife Terry and I have known Perry and March for about 20 years, mostly through St. Christopher's Church in Gladwyne. Perry led the committee which brought us a new Rector, Hillary Raining, in 2014. I remember his delight in that; he knew it would work, and it did. As Property Chair for some years, Perry used his extraordinary knowledge of how things work (from electronics to mechanics and all things practical) to keep our obsolete systems functioning. For our Capital Campaign, he translated that perspective into a message for supporting the future of the church. The word Terry and I associate with Perry is "delight." He was delighted to tell and hear stories. He loved to start speeches with a sudden flame or explosion (pretending to be screwing up). He relished being Dr. Science in our Vacation Bible School. He felt and projected delight,,a twinkle in his eye...even though he was often in significant pain, from the effects of his childhood rheumatoid arthritis. He was always kind. A colleague from Perry's hospital days said that kindness was his main leadership principle (how often do you see that in the CEO?), and we experienced that at St. Christopher's too. We will miss him.
Tom Allen

Tom Allen - August 03, 2025 at 11:44 AM

AL

“ I had the privilege of working with Perry over my 20+ years at CCH. He was an incredible leader and treated everyone as a friend. He made all proud to be part of the CCH family. My condolences to the Pepper Family.

Andrea Levenite - August 02, 2025 at 10:56 PM

BK

“ I was born at CCH, met Mr Pepper when I was with West Chester Police Department, and proved to be a thorn in his side on occasion. Later, I was fortunate to work at CCH, and become further acquainted with him. It was indeed the most incredible experience to work for such a true leader, who encouraged me to “not make this a career limiting decision “! Powerful leadership! He will surely be missed!

Bill KLINGER - August 02, 2025 at 04:12 PM

DC

“ I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Pepper and I am so blessed to have known him. Prayers for his family and friends. I know he left a great legacy at CCH.

Debbie Cahue - August 02, 2025 at 08:44 AM

“ In 1993 I was working at a hospital in Philadelphia but living in Chester County when a medical director position in my specialty opened at Chester County Hospital (CCH). I considered applying, but first asked a trusted colleague familiar with the local-regional healthcare landscape what, if anything, she knew about CCH. I don't remember anything she told me except for this: The main reason you or anyone should want a position at CCH would be the opportunity to work with Perry Pepper. I was offered and accepted the job, and very quickly understood what she meant.

Phrases and words such as "larger than life" and "iconic" have become cliches, but when applied to Perry they are simple matters of fact. Perry always elevated the work--we weren't just working at a not-for-profit hospital, but executing on a "charitable mission." We didn't just have challenging jobs, but were engaged in a battle--with disease and a broken healthcare reimbursement system. Fortunately we were thoughtfully and capably led by a brilliant tactician of a general who frequently cautioned all staff but especially his "aides-de-camp" to "keep your powder dry," invoking the spirits of our geographic but his actual soldier-sailor forebears.

Yet for all his brilliance, and a scholarly vocabulary that frequently drove me to hard copy dictionaries and encyclopedias (before they were online), Perry was very down-to-earth and very very approachable. Yes, this is the same guy that happened to have a harmonica in his car (and in the right key) to jam with the physician blues band at a CCH Medical Staff event.

While there are so many stories, momentous decisions, crucial board votes with the Hospital's future hanging in the balance, etc., some of my fondest memories are of those quieter times Perry would come into my office to chat--he standing while I sat. Ostensibly we were having a conversation, but he would generally end up gazing out the window at the gated parking lot as he chewed on and ultimately worked out a next move in whatever chess game we might be playing. He would thank me for helping him, but mostly

I was a set of ears, listening to him. Now I am a broken heart, already missing him.

Richard Donze

Richard Donze - August 01, 2025 at 09:59 PM

LT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Laning Pepper Thompson - August 01, 2025 at 09:17 PM

LT

Perry was such a wonderful brother -- generous, sympathetic, and always ready to laugh. I will miss him terribly.

Laning Pepper Thompson - August 01, 2025 at 09:21 PM

JF

“ Many hugs to the family of Perry. I had been working at CCH for 6 months when Miss Jean Oakes introduced Perry. A long friendship began and lasted. He was the kindest and most respected leader, no one could fill his shoes. He would come in all hours to round and see and hear the employees, even cleaning off the night shift nurses cars during a snow storm. Perry and my husband Ken, CFO, had not only a working partnership, but were the best of friends. We kept in touch these many years and when Ken passed away last year, Perry comforted me with the warmest words from his heart. (They now can give each other a big hug). I will treasure all the notes I have from him. Perry loved talking about his daughters over the years, we had daughters the same age, and would update each other on the grandchildren. Prayers and blessings and know Perry will watch over his beloved family.
Jeanie Flickinger

Jean M. Flickinger - August 01, 2025 at 08:10 PM

ES

“ When Perry arrived at CCH, most of the nurses were graduates of the diploma program. Perry had the foresight to encourage the nurses to enroll in the RN to BSN program, even bringing faculty on site. His encouragement to the nursing staff was a tremendous gift for which I will always be grateful.
Elizabeth Smoker

Elizabeth Smoker - August 01, 2025 at 03:19 PM

KB

“ I had the great honor of calling Perry my friend as well as a mentor. Coming into healthcare mid career he guided me often as both a member of my board (DVHC & VHA) and a dedicated member. We especially bonded over the fact that his grandfather Harris Laning (his namesake) was both an Annapolis graduate and a four star Admiral commanding the U.S. Navy’s Battle Fleet on the eve of WW2.

Perry was always there for me and anyone who turned to him. Residing in Chadds Ford, CCH was our community hospital. Once when my wife Melissa and two young children (7 and 2) were in a terrible automobile accident (car was totaled) they were all rushed to CCH and as usual I was on travel. Perry personally saw to their care and kept me informed until I could get there. Such a True and Honorable Gentleman who always went above and beyond!!! He will be sorely missed by all who were blessed to know him. Fair Winds and Following Seas my dear friend.

Rear Adm Kenneth J Braithwaite, USN(ret)
31st Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway
77th Secretary of the Navy

Kenneth Braithwaite - August 01, 2025 at 03:14 PM

MK

“ I worked at CCH for 20 years while Mr Pepper was CEO. He was a kind and approachable leader. I have warm memories of his presence on holidays and personally thanking staff for service on a holiday. What a class act!!!

monika Kantner - August 01, 2025 at 12:26 PM

LD

I worked under Mr Pepper's leadership at CCH for over 10 years. Was great leader and always welcoming and smiling. Prayers for his family

Linda Dowell - August 01, 2025 at 12:39 PM

SM

I remember him (along with his daughter) coming to the NICU after midnight on Christmas Eve to thank us for being there. It was the little things like that that meant alot.

Sharon Madera - August 01, 2025 at 05:02 PM

DH

As a member of the Women's Auxiliary for many years, I remember Mr. Pepper as being our greatest supporter. He always had an open door, a smile on his face, and we could talk with him about anything. Our condolences to his family.

Debbie Hess

Debbie Hess - August 04, 2025 at 05:34 PM

GH

Condolences to the whole Pepper family. I have been a nurse at CCH for almost 40 yrs with a majority of it under Mr. Pepper's leadership. What a kind, warm, gentle Leader. Always wanted the best for all the staff.

Gianna Hyland

Gianna Hyland - August 05, 2025 at 10:40 AM

PP

“ *This is very sad. Worked and volunteered at CCH for many years. Love and respected this wonderful man. My prayers to his family*

Peggy Bean Pastino

Peggy Pastino - August 01, 2025 at 11:44 AM

EZ

“ *I worked at the old CCH for 25 years .. under Perry Pepper as our CEO/President. He was amazing! Too notched! Perry always had an open door and you could talk to him about anything. He is definitely a pillar in our community and he will be deeply missed! Rest in peace my dear friend...*

Elizabeth Zehner - August 01, 2025 at 11:35 AM

ME

“ I have had the privilege of working for The Chester County Hospital for 58 years and all 34 years with Mr. Pepper. He had so many special qualities but the most important was the feeling of being a family that he instilled in every employee. He knew everyone's name and made each of us feel an important part of the team. There were many challenges over the years, but patient care has always come first. I believe his guidance and leadership made Penn Medicine Chester County what it is today.

When we became part of Penn Medicine, I stepped down as Director of Health Information Management, but I was not ready to retire. I went part-time and started to work remotely. I moved to the beautiful small town of Washington, Ct. which has a private school "The Gunnery". Whenever I go by, I think of Perry.

Mariann Eavenson

Mariann Eavenson - August 01, 2025 at 10:53 AM

WZ

“ I had the pleasure of working with Perry for 4 years at the end of his career at Chester County Hospital. He was a joy to work with everyday and I always learned something from him. His vast knowledge of many things intermingled with great stories and a crazy good sense of humor was unmatched by anyone I know. Perry, may you rest now in the arms of Jesus. You made a difference in this world 🙏

Wendy Zaloga - August 01, 2025 at 10:39 AM