

Contents

Proem.....1

Podcast intro.....1

There’s Something Happening Here.....2

Voila - Meeting Mighty Casey Quinlan .....3

Call to action .....8

Revelations–CeCe Casey’s Photo Tour of Mighty Casey Quinlan .....8

.....13

Jan and Danny sign off.....13

Reflection from Hank.....14

Podcast Outro .....15



Figure 1: M Casey Quinlan over the years, several photographers

Proem

**Health Hats:** On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024, we spread Casey’s ashes in the Gulfstream of the Atlantic Ocean near Stuart, Florida. This episode layers several of the many pieces of that experience. I stopped here because I’d had enough. Time to publish! You’ll find an intro conversation between Jan Oldenburg and me recorded on June 27<sup>th</sup>, followed by self-introductions of the dispersal party, recorded by our guide, Karen Hallett. Next, we’ll take a historical photo tour of Casey’s life, piloted by Casey’s sister, CeCe. I only included about fifteen of the almost one hundred photos, as the resulting three-minute clip took almost twenty hours to produce. We’ll end with me reading

Hank Burchard’s post-event reflection, and then Jan and I will wrap it up. The written and audio include everything except the videos, of course. I will create a 17-minute video with the introductions and a three-minute one with the photo tour. I’m resurrecting Casey’s website to include all her podcasts and the contents of six VHS and one Beta tape Casey recorded over the years. The URL will be Casey’s <https://mightycasey.com>. Try it to see if we’ve got it ready.

Podcast intro

Welcome to Health Hats, the Podcast. I’m Danny van Leeuwen, a two-legged cisgender old white man of privilege who knows a little bit about a lot of healthcare and a lot about very little. We will listen and learn about what it takes to adjust to life’s realities in the awesome circus of healthcare. Let’s make some sense of all of this.



<https://www.health-hats.com/pod221>

There's Something Happening Here

**Health Hats:** Why don't you tell us a little about how this memorial event for Casey took place? What was the genesis of it besides her dying?

**Jan Oldenburg:** Yes. One of the things that Casey had specified in her will was that she wanted to be cremated and she wanted her ashes spread half in the Humboldt current, up the coast of California near Coronado, where she grew up. Half in the Gulf Stream, which is not on the Gulf side of Florida, as you may have thought, as I thought originally, it's on the Atlantic side. And she specified that a portion of her life insurance be dedicated to this event under the auspices of her sister, short of a blood test, Piper. So, Piper with a few family members organized the first boat journey last fall off of the coast Coronado. And they thought through and designed a service. And then they orchestrated the second half, this spring at the end of May, in Florida. And Danny, that's the event that you and I joined for. And it was a mix of family members, people who loved Casey from several of her many incarnations and focus points and I think it was the first time all of us got together, but it was Casey's wishes. And I learned afterwards that part of the reason for specifying these two locations is that eventually the Humboldt current and the Gulf Stream join up and circumnavigate the Globe including I believe, passing past London and the UK.

**Health Hats:** I participated obviously with you and in the preparation of it that there were several fits and starts, in terms of the logistics now. So can you just tell us briefly about the arranging those logistics.

**Jan Oldenburg:** There were a number of a lot of moving parts to coordinate. One was the location and a boat of sufficient size, but there was a trade-off between the date, the boat, the size, and how many people could come. And Casey's family. New and connected with family members and people they were aware of, but they didn't know all the people from the healthcare side of Casey's life. So, they asked me to help coordinate that side of it. I pulled in. A couple of people that I knew Casey loved from the Richmond area. That was Myra Isaacs my partner in helping to manage all things Casey in hospice and Casey estate. Hank Burchard who was a longtime friend from West Virginia, and then I worked with several people. Dave DeBronkhardt you, Danny, others, to circulate the word, get as much of the word out to people as we could. But by the time we were at that stage of the organization, it was only three, maybe four weeks before the date. And the date was at the beginning of Memorial Day weekend and so people had plans already. And so there were also fits and starts about who could come when they'd come. And then the boat that we were initially going to go out on ended up in dry dock. So, then they had to scramble for an alternate boat. And that changed the date as well as the rain dates and that further churned for some people in terms of their arrangements. It's a combination of lots of people trying to organize something, lots of moving parts in terms of all the pieces and lots of people coming from various points in the country.



Voila - Meeting Mighty Casey Quinlan

**Jan Oldenburg:** I'm Jan Oldenburg. I met Casey, and I think we figured out it was 2012. Wow. We knew each other before that through Twitter, but we met in the flesh in San Francisco at Stanford MedX. And kept in closer touch after that. But it was when I moved to Richmond in 2017 Casey took me under her wing to introduce me to everything in Richmond, which deepened and broadened our friendship.

**ePatient Dave:** I'm Dave DeBronkhardt, known on the internet as e-patient Dave, the patient empowerment guy. I was a cancer survivor in 2007, and then in 2009, I found myself on the front page of the newspaper because I had looked into my medical record and discovered a whole bunch of garbage in there. It turned out it was a significant policy problem in Washington. One night, there was a reception in Washington at Political Innovations, and this loud red-haired woman walked in talking about charisma. I'm going to give you a big wet smack on the kisser. Because she had just gone through her first cancer adventure, and she had an opinion that what I was advocating for was a good thing. She was not going to, the fact that none of us had ever heard of any such thing.



Figure 2: Image Dave DeBronkhardt from video by Karen Hallett

**Piper Dankworth:** Casey knew me before I knew her because she was older, and we'd known each other since I was born. So, she is the older sister I never had; as she used to say, you are a sister short of a blood test. I grew up with her and CeCe, and we shared love of horses, love of the sea, love of martinis, love of Buffet, and she's just been a dear friend of mine for sixty-six years. Wow. Nice.



Figure 3: image of Piper Dankworth from video by Karen Hallett

How did you know Mary Casey?



Figure 4: Image of CeCe Casey from video by Karen Hallett

**CeCe Casey:** I'm the second of the Casey kids. Mary, yes. I can call you Mary. It was first me and then Mike.

**Michael Casey:** She used to refer to me as Rotten Baby Brother.

**CeCe Casey:** I learned a lot from Mary. Mainly not to call her Mary in front of other people. She didn't like her that much, but M Casey Quinlan took me on a tour down to Nashville and Memphis for my birthday. And the way she drove, we made it in record time. I was used to how she drove because I grew up having her drive me to my eye doctor appointments. She went from Chula Vista to Coronado, so I knew exactly how fast we were. I dealt with her a lot down where she went. I met a lot of interesting people. Some of them probably asked how that girl ended up being Casey's sister. Because I'm not exactly exuberant. When we found out that she had cancer, she would just go deep into reading, researching, and talking to people. She has collected so much knowledge that no one has before, and I'm proud to be her sister.

**Myra Isaacs:** I met Casey around 2008. She was on the Board of Directors of Virginia Supportive Housing. When I was a staff member, we were assigned to work on projects together, and we just hit it off. We have been friends ever since. We had adventures together. It was fun.

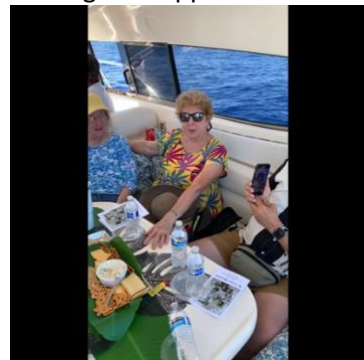


Figure 5: Image of Myra Isaacs from video by Karen Hallett

And I met Jan. I still can't remember exactly where, but like once, probably five years ago, and didn't stay in touch. That's right. Anyway. And then, because we got so involved in just seeing that things weren't together and needed to be, I went to Casey one day and said, what do you want me? Do you want to step up? She said, you pretty much did the same thing. And she asked us to try to help as best we could. My pleasure. Unfortunately, my husband had just passed away the year before, so I had expertise that I didn't want, and I had, and I felt like the best thing I could do was pass that along. And it did help because we were going on the journey with hospice, and I also have a background in healthcare



Figure 6: Image of Danny van Leeuwen from video by Karen Hallett

**Danny van Leeuwen:** I'm Danny van Leeuwen, known as Health Hats. I have no idea how I met Casey. I can't remember. I would say we were partners in crime because she was a revolutionary, and I'm not so much. I'm more of a figure-out how everything works and tinker with the system to our benefit. We helped each other from different points of view. It was helpful. Yeah, I think we had. Then she started her podcast, and I was podcasting. I advertised on her podcast, and then she started failing and was having trouble getting her podcast out. We would get together and have a recorded conversation. Then I would edit it for me to use, and then I would edit it for her to use her intro and outro, so they were different but the same. We did that, I don't know, three or four times. Four. Four, okay. We did those four times over the years. And that was a hoot and an essential relationship for me.

**Hank Burchard:** Hank, Casey, and I go back to the late 20th century, a whole other millennium. She and I met through an affinity group for the Patrick O'Brian sea novels. And my function in her life was to be her hunting guide. We hunted him on my property in Maine and wherever else the law allowed. My role was restaurant guide in Richmond. She and I visited all the good restaurants in Richmond and made a good start before things went wrong.

And but you turned her into quite a hunter. She had a musket loader gun. She was a born hunter. All she needed was somebody to hand her a gun, and she picked it up extremely fast. And because she's a woman, she wasn't playing macho.



Figure 7: Image of Hank Burchard from video by Karen Hallett

**CeCe Casey:** She ended up with a bear rug.

**Myra Isaacs:** I named him Fred. Fred freaked me out every time I walked into her room, so I was happy to have to say to Fred I might have a friend



<https://www.health-hats.com/pod221>



Figure 8: Image of Laurie Rodgers Stukel from video by Karen Hallett

**Laurie Rodgers Stukel:** I am Mary Quinlan Casey's or Mary Casey Quinlan's youngest cousin on the Rogers side of the family. And I guess I've known her all my life; she was the oldest cousin and somebody I have always admired or admired so much for what I saw her do on stage. And I went to New York City when I graduated high school.

I went to school and met her at NBC, and she showed me around and always was somebody I looked up to. We didn't grow up together other than all the beautiful times we had as cousins. We have 13 amazing cousins with whom we have spent a lot of time. But she was always the oldest and somebody I always looked up to.

Then, in 2010, I got breast cancer, and I didn't. I did know that Mary had breast cancer, but it was unique because we didn't have it in our family at all, which doesn't matter anymore. But we had that in common, and she provided me with so much information and inspired me so much, and I'm very thankful for her. And I miss her. She saw me here in Florida, and I was just overjoyed that she had come and spent some time here. Very happy to meet you all. We're close friends.

**Amy Price:** I'm Amy Price, and a lot of us here. I don't know exactly when I met Casey because Casey kept coming in and out of my life. We both had a bit of a revolutionary bent and that resilience. And what I admired is that with that strength, she had such a gentle compassion for people who weren't strong like that or that, who couldn't speak for themselves. She had a lot of tolerance, and she was kind. I just loved her. She was an awesome writer. So sometimes we would go back and forth, like writing things. At BMJ, the most fun I had with her, I think, was when we were in London, and we were filming a movie, like a class on co-producing research with patients.



Figure 9: Image of Amy Price from video by Karen Hallett

**Michael Casey:** Sounds riveting.

**Amy Price:** Yeah, it was fun. We just went over it and ate the whole time, which was also excellent.

**Michael Casey:** She always had a nose for the best restaurants; you can find them anywhere. Come to San Diego. Take me to great restaurants. I'd never heard of it.

**Amy Price:** She could make art from anything, whether it was speaking, movie, writing, actual digital QR code on her chest, that QR code on her chest. And what kind of statement is that? And that statement lives on. I think several organizations are translating that.

**Jan Oldenburg:** The QR codes are becoming an HL7, a health level seven standard. It's becoming a standard. The QR code is this big on your chest. Not, it's not being quite literally translated in that way.

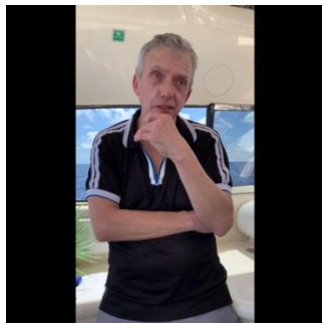


Figure 10: Image of Mike Casey from video by Karen Hallett

**Michael Casey:** All right. QR code. Really? Yeah. So, let's think about QR codes for a minute now. Anyway, yeah. I'm trying to avoid this, but so yeah. How long have I known Casey? Since my birth, blah, blah, blah. But she was always going back to what Laurie would say in my life; she was always like this occasional special guest star when I was a kid. Because she would be in college or she'd be in New York, and then bam, she's there. And everything's different when she's there. Yeah. And I had this kind of hero worship thing for her for most of my childhood because she was just so resolute, and when she wanted something from God, she went out and got it. I don't know. She made a big impression on me that way and had a sense of humor that just wouldn't die, and it came in useful many times. I went through some rough stuff in the nineties with my younger two kids or my older two kids. And she was by my side through this whole thing, not physically all the time, but she was constantly checking in with me. And how are things going? And then, when she had cancer later, I did try to do the same for her, but I know that it was more natural for her than it was for me. And she just was, like you say, compassionate and caring about the people around her, and she wanted them to do better and have a better life.

I can't believe it took her as long as it did to figure out this angle on healthcare that she had. But she wrote a book, as you all know, *Cancer for Christmas*. And that's right. That's her, like her, so on brand for her. To turn a life-threatening medical situation into a gag life, you know, 's a lot of courage. That's a lot of courage. And I keep saying she's been going up a little while now. I keep coming across things where I want to find out her opinion. I can't; she has always been the coolest. No. But she was always the coolest of the three of us. She knew more about music and culture than anybody I knew. When I was in second grade, she gave me a copy of the album *Cream* on my birthday, which, if you think about second graders, you might say advanced.

Maybe he'll like it, but I listened to it and became a *Cream* fan. It was crazy. And then she got the first *Harry Potter* book and sent it to my oldest when Scholastic was still publishing it, and there were like 20,000 copies of it in the world or whatever. And she just said this is going to be great. This is a great story. And she was right. She didn't know how she used it, but they would get it. But that's the kind of

cool hunting that she would do. And so when I come across stuff, I'm like, no. What does she think of this? I miss not having her here to be able to ask her.

#### Call to action

I now have one URL for all things Health Hats. <https://linktr.ee/healthhats>. You can subscribe for free or contribute to Patreon. You can access show notes, search the 600-plus episode archive, and link to my social media channels. Your engagement by listening, sharing, liking, and commenting makes quite an impact. Thank you.

#### Revelations—CeCe Casey's Photo Tour of Mighty Casey Quinlan

Casey's sister, CeCe, took us on a historical photo tour of Mary Martha Casey's life. I've selected several photos to share in the video and written version of this documentary, which can be accessed here <https://health-hats.com/pod221>. The tour was not chronological, although this presentation is, sort of. I selected some music to help blend the disjointed nature of the audio. We start with Mary and her mom, Betty. Then that's Mary having a very in-depth conversation with Santa Claus when she was maybe five. I think that was a Halloween costume or something. I don't know.



<https://www.health-hats.com/pod221>





Figure 11: Guess which one is Casey?

This is one of my favorite pictures of Mary Casey.



Figure 14: Talking on the phone all her life



Figure 14: Sibs-Mary CeCe, Mike



Figure 14: Casey and horse

What is she doing there? Five or something, and she's on, she's on the phone with somebody looking very attentive and just yakking up a storm now. Then, the 610 North picket was in the front yard with the three Casey kids and one on a horse.

She got the part of Aurora in the school play. She was in eighth grade, and they went out and bought or rented a spinning wheel.



Figure 15: Ready for the play

She took us all to Yankee Stadium. Dad had been to Yankee Stadium when he was a young guy in the Navy and not since.



Figure 16: Sibs at Yankee Stadium

She asked for dispersal of her cremains on the oceans. No wonder.



Figure 18: Sailing by herself



Figure 18: On a boat

Casey doing stand-up comedy



Figure 19: Bird of Paradise



Jan and Danny sign off

**Health Hats:** The memorial happened Memorial Day weekend. It was a hoot and a half. So, from your perspective, what did you get out of it?

**Jan Oldenburg:** It's a great question. I, because I have been living with Casey's dying now for more than a year. And by that not just dealing with the emotional fallout of it, but also dealing with the state issues.

**Health Hats:** And because you're the executor, right?

**Jan Oldenburg:** One of the executors. Because I'm the executor. I have felt as if along the way. I was probably the only person there who, I knew everyone except one of Casey's cousins. And I think I was the only person at that intersection of all the moving parts. And I also had been talking to various people as I was trying to figure out, things about the estate. And so, in some respects, I had thought that I really had done my grieving. But one of the things I realized was that I really needed the ritual and the ceremony and the gathering together and the telling of stories to have the process come to some sort of completion. And for me, that was important.

**Health Hats:** I loved hearing about all these different chapters in Casey's life. I especially, appreciated hearing about Casey as a sailor and a hunter. These were nowhere in my grasp of her I knew she was very eclectic. I loved hearing the stories. Grieving is an opening of your heart. You just don't know When you open your heart, you don't know. You don't know what's going to come out. So, it's nice to grieve in a safe space and I felt like this was safe and the grief, certainly the, emotion, the, that feeling in your chest and your throat and your God, everything, your gut. But also, oh, another adventure I felt my. My life with Casey, was an adventure and so this was nice to have yet another adventure with her.

**Jan Oldenburg:** Absolutely. It was, I was so glad I went and so honored. Be in. The event itself and frankly, in Casey's life, she cast a big shadow, but she also opened a big tent. It was it was lots of room for every kind of person and every kind of adventure and I really felt like I got a little bit of a snippet of that from, the time I was able to spend with Casey, and it was renewed and refreshed by hearing those stories from people from all over her life.

**Health Hats:** Thank you.

**Jan Oldenburg:** Thank you, Danny.

#### Reflection from Hank



Figure 20: Image of Hank Burchard from video by Karen Hallett

Snuggled in my forgotten hunting bag as we left for the dock were several miniatures: Captain Morgan rum, Tito's vodka and Hennessy Cognac, which I'd intended the three of us to stream overboard to cheer Casey along, with a travel-size flask of Tabasco as coda/kickstarter.

This morning, I took them down to my creek, where Casey often crossed the bar, and whose ripples sang to her as she stalked Pecker Wood deer and turkeys. Indian Creek flows into the Piney, a tributary of James His River, and on to the Chesupioc, as the original owners knew it, whence mountain waters meander offshore to mingle with that great river in the sea we call the Gulf Stream. Should Casey lag or flag on her long last voyage, may the tipple tide her Thamesward.

I'm so very very glad I did. It wonderfully expanded my understanding of Casey, with whom my relationship was long and loving but limited. Although she doubled in brass, she

left her advocacy career pretty much at home when she came to Pecker Wood, focusing on hunting, fooding, computer tutoring and mourning the decline of the newsbiz, so the round-table discussion of her many parts was a revelation to me. I had signed up for the trip largely from a sense of duty to her shade and you and Myra, but it turned out to be deeply healing. And y'all's cheerful, capable companionship and caretaking was Casey's final gift to me



<https://www.health-hats.com/pod221>

Podcast Outro

I host, write, and produce Health Hats the Podcast with assistance from Kayla Nelson and Leon and Oscar van Leeuwen. Music from Joey van Leeuwen. I play Bari Sax on some episodes alone or with the Lechuga Fresca Latin Band.

I'm grateful to you who have the critical roles as listeners, readers, and watchers. Subscribe and contribute. If you like it, share it. See you around the block.



<https://www.health-hats.com/pod221>