

Reflections

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20 Years Later...

During the coming year, Gilchrist will celebrate 20 years of compassionate, specialized care by recognizing and honoring that which makes us special: our commitment to providing care that is individualized, specialized, compassionate and focused exclusively on what is most important – the patient and his or her family.

It is a commitment forged during Gilchrist's earliest days, when the organization was known as Hospice of Baltimore and a small cadre of clinical staff provided care to just a handful of patients.

In fact, 20 years later, Reggie Bodnar, RN, still remembers the first call for care – and the second and the third. As the newly hired clinical director for the fledgling hospice, she wrote the policies. She admitted the patients. And then, she drove all over metropolitan Baltimore providing care during the frigid and legendarily icy winter of 1994.

“We were so committed to doing this right,” said Reggie, who remains in the same role today. “There’s no perfect way of providing hospice. It’s all about what’s important to the patients.”

For founding Medical Director Dr. W. Anthony Riley, a geriatrician, the start of Gilchrist provided the opportunity to create an organization that would be all-inclusive, offering end of life care and services not just for cancer patients, but for all those with life limiting conditions. That goal would take Gilchrist into nursing homes and it would bring patients still receiving advanced treatments like feeding tubes and ventilators into hospice – both radical concepts in the 1990s.



Gilchrist Hospice Care's founding benefactor, Jeanne "Jinny" Vance with her husband Laddie Dance.

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1994

Hospice of Baltimore begins providing home-based hospice care to patients and families in Baltimore City and Baltimore, Carroll and Harford Counties.

1996

Gilchrist Center opens, thanks to the support of philanthropist Jeanne "Jinny" Gilchrist Vance and many other generous donors throughout Central Maryland.

1997 Hospice of Baltimore merges with **Hospice Services of Howard County** and begins providing care in Howard County.

2008

In honor of Jinny Vance, who died in 2003 Hospice of Baltimore and Howard County is renamed **Gilchrist Hospice Care.**

2010

Gilchrist Kids accepts its first pediatric hospice patient.

2011

Gilchrist Center Howard County opens to bring inpatient hospice care to the Howard County community.

20 Years Later...

(continued)

"In the early days, hospice wasn't for the elderly, those dying of dementia or other illnesses," said Dr. Riley, who, like Reggie, has been with the program since its earliest days. "We worked to fill gaps in the care continuum."

It was all part of a vision forged in large part by the organization's founding benefactor, Jeanne "Jinny" Gilchrist Vance, who had seen, as a hospice volunteer in Florida, the good that hospice could do and wanted to create a quality non-profit hospice that filled an unmet need in Central Maryland.

"She wanted something to ease the distress for patients who were going to die and for the families who were going to suffer a loss," said W. Lee Thomas, Mrs. Vance's long-time friend and attorney and a founding and current board member of Gilchrist. "Jinny was very insistent that the family be cared for as well as the patient."

As those early months went by and the calls for care increased, so did the lessons of how to create not just a good hospice but an extraordinary one – by recognizing the patient's central role in directing his or her own care; by helping to ease the often unspoken burdens facing families; by discovering, and then helping to fulfill, patients' last wishes and goals.

GUIDING THE WAY...



1996: Gilchrist Board members gather to place the cornerstone at Gilchrist Center (l to r) Joe Keelty, Nancy Klueh, Pedie Killebrew, Connie Pitcher, Lee Thomas, Bob Kowal, Laddie Dance, Jinny Vance, Carol Peltier, Gary Cohen.

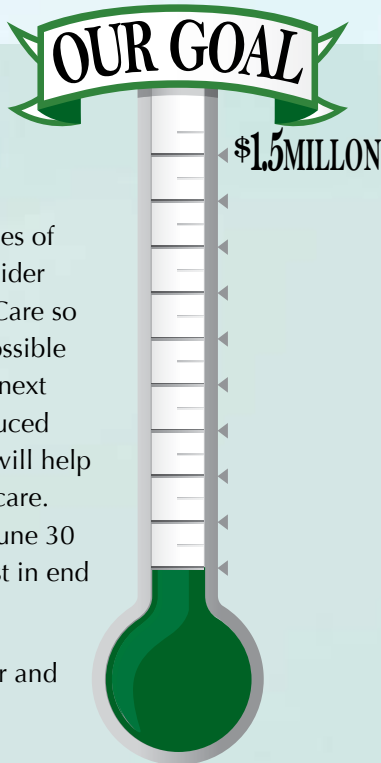
Two decades and 40,000 patients later, those lessons learned during the earliest days still provide part of the framework for Gilchrist, now a national-award winning hospice and the largest such organization in the State of Maryland.

Twenty years later, Dr. Riley continues to shape the vision of Gilchrist as a premier hospice organization dedicated to providing the finest in end of life care. So do Mr. Thomas and Ms. Bodnar – and a handful of other staff members who were among the organization’s first hires.

Help us continue to Guide the Way

As we celebrate two extraordinary decades of “Guiding the Way,” we ask that you consider making a donation to Gilchrist Hospice Care so that we may continue to offer the best possible care for our patients and families for the next 20 years – and beyond. In this era of reduced insurance reimbursements, your dollars will help us remain the gold standard for hospice care. We are seeking to raise \$1.5 million by June 30 to enable us to continue to offer the finest in end of life care.

Please use the envelope in this newsletter and make your gift today.



**Dr. Tony Riley,
Medical Director**

“I did talks as a geriatrician around the community and saw that there was no organized concept of end of life care. I really couldn’t practice geriatrics without hospice services and do what was right for my patients.”



**Reggie Bodnar,
RN, MSN
Clinical Director**

“I remember going to New Orleans for my first ever hospice conference in early May 1994 and getting a frantic call from one of our nurses that, oh my goodness, we now had 16 patients.”



**W. Lee Thomas,
Board Treasurer**

“Hospice was something patients could understand. Individuals know they are mortal, and they have an innate desire to be comforted and to make sure their families are cared for. Physicians were a little harder to convince. For many years, their idea was to save the patient at all costs.”



**Kim Stewart,
Hospice Aide,
Harford Home Care**

“So many things have happened over the past 20 years and I am proud to still be a part of this organization.”

... FROM THE BEGINNING

Helping a Patient Connect with the Outside World

Volunteers play an important role for many hospice families. Their assistance may be as simple as sitting and talking with a patient while a loved one runs an errand or it may be more involved – time spent creating a lasting relationship by helping a patient complete a few final projects.

In the year since he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, Pat Callahan has lost the ability to walk and the use of his arms and hands. Still, he has lists to make and letters to write and notes to distribute.

That's where Gilchrist volunteer Barbara Buchman, a one-time professional proofreader and Hallmark store owner, comes in. Once a week, Barbara spends time with Pat in his Kingsville home, visiting, talking about life and, perhaps most importantly, acting as Pat's "personal scribe."

Over the past several months, Barbara has helped Pat write letters for a "personal project," penned a "honey do" list for his wife and written countless thank yous.

The two have established a routine for each of Pat's projects, talking through Pat's ideas, and writing a rough draft during their visits. Barbara takes the finished thoughts home and neatly rewrites them on thank you cards.



Gilchrist volunteer Barbara Buchman and Gilchrist patient Pat Callahan share a laugh while they work on Pat's thank you cards.

"He never complains in any way about what's happening to him," said Barbara, who began volunteering with Gilchrist nearly two years ago. "This experience has brought me another friend."

For Pat, who sought out Gilchrist's care last spring, remaining upbeat is imperative, despite his physical limitations: "With the help of Gilchrist's caregivers and my loving family and friends, I've been able to keep a positive attitude, which gives me a quality life."

And with Barbara's help, he can continue to communicate with others, even though he is now mostly house bound: "Barbara has just done a great job capturing my thoughts. She helps me continue to connect with the outside world."

A Memorable Graduation

It had been just nine months since Alisha Allen-Williams was diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer, but as Thanksgiving approached, Alvina Williams could see the changes in her daughter. Alisha was becoming more confused. Her balance was off.

With the encouragement of her daughter's Gilchrist Kids team, Alvina had already arranged for an early graduation for her daughter, a senior at Western High School in Baltimore City, to be held at the end of November. But as Alisha's condition worsened, Gilchrist Kids staff urged Alvina to move up the date.

And so, on November 12, with her family, her closest friends, her teachers, city schools and public officials, and her Gilchrist Kids nurse and social workers on hand, Alisha, a gifted artist and aspiring fashion designer, received her diploma.

City Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke spoke. So did Western Principal Alisha Trusty. A Gilchrist volunteer snapped photos of the event, held in the school gymnasium, which had been



Alisha, pictured with members of her Gilchrist Kids team.

festively decorated for the occasion, complete with red carpet. The school showered Alisha with gifts – a t-shirt signed by her class, a class photo, a big white teddy bear and others.

"She enjoyed it. I kept telling her, this is your graduation," said Alvina. "I hope she realized what was happening, at least for that day."

The morning was nothing short of spectacular: "It was unbelievable," said Alvina. "I got to see my little girl get her high school diploma."

Sadly, Alisha, died at home on December 19 with her family by her bedside. She was 17 years old.

Social Worker Grants Christmas Wish

For decades, Ruth and Alan Stocksdale were regular churchgoers. But when Ruth's advanced dementia robbed her of the ability to understand what the minister was saying, Alan decided it would be best if they just stayed home. In fact, it had been several years since Alan had attended services by the time Gilchrist Social Worker Wendy Kobb began working with the couple.



The Stocksdales with social worker Wendy Kobb.

After hearing of the important role faith had played in the couple's lives, Wendy offered many times to sit with Ruth so Alan could attend services. Each time, he opted to instead stay with his wife of 68 years.

As Christmas approached, Wendy asked once more: "I reminded him that I wasn't doing something above and beyond. This is how we could support him."

And so on Christmas Eve, Wendy stayed with Ruth so that Alan could attend afternoon services with one of the couple's four children.

"Gilchrist has been a marvelous addition to our lives. Both Wendy and our nurse, Andrea Katz, make sure I retain some sort of normalcy", he said.

For her part, Wendy said she plans to continue to encourage Alan to do things for himself even as he cares for Ruth. "I don't want him to feel he has to miss things. It's our pleasure to help," Wendy said.

Advance Care Planning



*Dr. W. Anthony Riley,
Gilchrist Medical Director*

Dr. W. Anthony Riley, the medical director of Gilchrist Hospice Care, will present a free, informative series of talks designed to educate the public about steps they can take to ensure that their future health care needs are met and their end of life wishes followed.

The talks will be held monthly at 5:30 p.m. in the Civiletti Conference Center on the Greater Baltimore Medical Center campus. Each session will walk participants through the discussions they should have with their loved ones. Copies of the forms individuals will need to communicate their care wishes to their families and caregivers will be provided. Talks will also be held the following dates on the following topics:

- Tuesday, March 4 and Wednesday, June 18: "Advance Care Planning – Choosing Treatments Wisely for Diseases of the Heart and Lung"
- Wednesday, April 16 and Tuesday, July 15: "Advance Care Planning – Choosing Treatments Wisely for Diseases of the Brain"
- Tuesday, May 20: "Advance Care Planning – Tools and Decision-Making Principles"

For more information and to register for one or more discussions, please email nconradi@gilchristhospice.org or call 443-849-8205.

Gilchrist Community Outreach in the City

Gilchrist Hospice Care is teaming up with two other area non-profit hospices this year to provide monthly informational sessions at each of Baltimore City's 13 senior centers in an effort to educate city residents about end of life care and the grief process.

Staff members from the three hospices – Gilchrist, Joseph Richey and Stella Maris – will present on everything from hospice to caregiving to understanding grief and coping during the holiday season.

The initiative is modeled after a similar program offered in Baltimore County in 2008 for which Gilchrist won a Business Partner Award. The city-sponsored program, entitled "Stepping Toward Emotional & Physical Success" or S.T.E.P.S. is designed to provide outreach to minority populations in hopes that they will call hospice if they or a loved one is diagnosed with a life limiting illness.

For more information, please call Baltimore City Senior Information & Assistance at 410-396-2273.

Updates



Two Discussions Planned



Dr. Ira Byock

In celebration of our 20th anniversary, Gilchrist Hospice Care is sponsoring two enlightening talks by Dr. Ira Byock, a leading palliative care physician, author, and public advocate for improving end of life care, and Professor of Medicine at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth.

The sessions include a morning talk recommended for physicians and nurse practitioners, with others welcome, entitled, "What are Doctors for? The Physician-Patient Relationship Through the End of Life," and an afternoon discussion for general audiences on "Providing 'The Best Care Possible' Through the End of Life." Dr. Byock will be available to sign his books, *The Best Care Possible*, *The Four Things That Matter Most* and *Dying Well* following each presentation.

Cost for each session is \$15 and continuing education credits are available.

Registration is now open at gilchristhospice.org/byock

Upcoming Events to Benefit Gilchrist



On Monday, March 17 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., the Paul J. Kelley, Jr. Charitable Foundation will host its annual St. Paddy's Day Bash at the Gathering Place in Clarksville.



On Sunday, October 26 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Gilchrist will host its Taste of Howard County at Turf Valley. This annual event will feature specialties from more than two dozen of Howard County's premier restaurateurs and caterers, as well as a live and silent auction.



On Friday, December 12 from 7 p.m. to midnight, join us at the Holly Ball as Gilchrist Hospice Care celebrates 20 years of providing the finest in end of life care. Held at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, this elegant and always festive evening will feature fine dining and dancing.

For more information on the above events, please call David Drake, Director of Development, at 443-849-8241.



Guiding the way.

443.849.8200

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Gilchrist Hospice Care provides services without regard to race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, ability to pay or national origin.

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Lori D. Mulligan	Sr. Director of Development, Marketing & Community Services
Megan Dempsey	Design & Production
Lisa Burgunder	Writer

Unleash your power

by making a gift through your will

Having a will is important to protect your loved ones and be sure that your wishes are honored. A will can direct how your assets are distributed and can be used to pass money to people and causes you care about. Without a will, the courts decide how your property is distributed.

You can include meaningful causes like Gilchrist Hospice Care in your will and reduce your taxable estate. **And, a gift through your will costs you nothing during your lifetime!**

For more information, contact David Drake, Director of Development at 443-849-8241 or d Drake@gilchristhospice.org

