

Reflections

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The Jewish Hospice Program will include an addition to Gilchrist Center Towson. Pictured here is a rendering of some of the addition's features, including a Jewish chapel.

The Jewish Hospice Program

Jerry Fader spent just nine days as a patient of Gilchrist Hospice Care – the first eight in his own home under the watchful eye the Gilchrist home care team, his last day at Gilchrist Center Towson. The warmth, generosity and compassion offered by the staff during those intense, emotional days left a lasting impression on his son, Steve.

Gilchrist was a lifeline for the Fader family and one that was offered and gratefully received as Jerry Fader's health precipitously declined, leaving his family devastated, anxious and unsure of where to turn for help.

After his father's death in 2011, Steve Fader wanted to ensure that the gift of care and comfort his father and family received from Gilchrist would always be there for families throughout the Greater Baltimore area, but he also wanted to take that care a step further – to create a Jewish hospice program at Gilchrist that would customize hospice care based on the beliefs, customs, rituals and observances of

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the Jewish community. He envisioned that such a program might encourage those who immerse themselves in the strict teachings of their faith at the end of life to seek out the valuable resources and exceptional care offered by hospice.

A survey of the Jewish population in the Greater Baltimore area conducted in 2010 by The Associated, the local Jewish federation, found that the number of Jewish seniors had increased dramatically in the 10 years since a previous survey. Statistics also continue to show that hospice care and services are underutilized by Jewish individuals residing in the area.

“My family’s experience with Gilchrist is a gift that I’d like to share with other Jewish families. I know we can remove any perceived cultural barriers to this crucial service by creating a specialized program at Gilchrist in line with the teachings of Judaism,” he added.

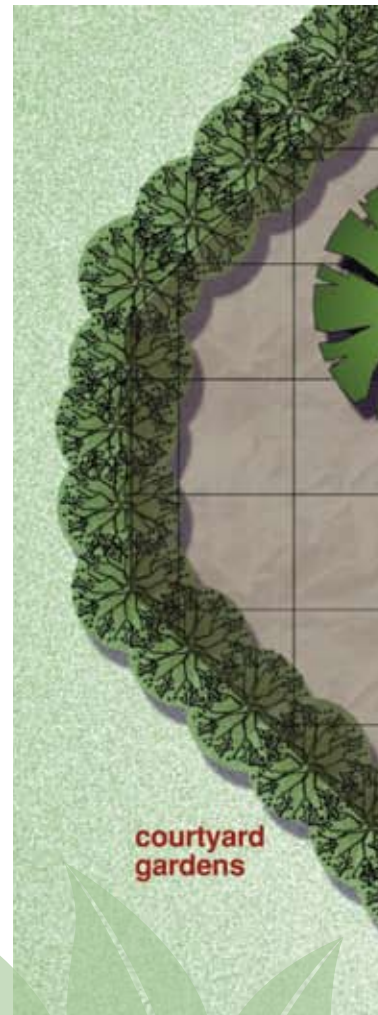
“It’s been nearly four years since my father died, and I still think about him every day. He was a wonderful role model and friend.”

I remain grateful to Gilchrist Hospice Care for ensuring that he was comfortable, for maintaining his dignity at the end of life, and most importantly for giving me the time and strength to say goodbye.”

- Steve Fader

The new Jewish hospice program at Gilchrist will focus on care that is culturally-attuned to the unique health care decision-making issues at the end of life that may arise from concerns with following Jewish laws, customs, rituals and beliefs. In doing so, the program will unite the components of Gilchrist’s traditional hospice program with specific enhancements, which include:

- the addition of a rabbinic advisor to assist families with decision making, if they so desire;
- special training in Jewish beliefs and practices for hospice team members, including volunteers;
- and a collaboration with Jewish Community Services, an agency of The Associated, to provide broad support for individuals and families, as well as volunteer training and recruitment, staff training, grief counseling and support groups.



This connection between The Associated and Gilchrist will provide an invaluable link to the organized Jewish Community.

The hospice program will be overseen by an advisory committee of specially-selected Gilchrist staff and volunteers, as well as community members and religious representatives invested in its success.

In addition, Gilchrist is working with Steve Fader and The Associated leadership to raise funds for a renovation and addition to Gilchrist Center Towson that will add 2,415 square feet of new space, including a Jewish chapel, family room and courtyard and to renovate an existing kitchenette to make it kosher.

For more information on the program please contact Lori Mulligan, Senior Director at 443.849.8214 or lmulligan@gilchristhospice.org.

Below is a floor plan that illustrates the renovations at Gilchrist Center Towson, which will include a family area, prayer table, Jerusalem stone wall, living wall, water wall and a beautiful courtyard that will be open to all.



A Musical Tribute

Sue Pratt associates music with memories – and songs with loved ones. So it only felt natural to use songs and hymns to represent her feelings and thoughts about family members as she looked for a meaningful way to create a loving tribute for a family reunion in July.

Working with Gilchrist Music Therapist Lacy Kidwell, Sue chose songs while Lacy sang and played them on her keyboard and encouraged Sue to talk about her memories. By the time the duo was done, Sue had 15 songs ready for the July event – with Lacy planning to perform some in a medley and to lead a sing-along of others.

“Music gives Sue a connection not only to herself but to those who had an impact on her life,” Lacy said. “It helps her to continue to express herself and to feel close to those she has been separated from – either through death or because of the limitations of her own illness.”

For Sue, a retired English teacher who suffers from the effects of a stroke and from pulmonary fibrosis, a thickening of the lung tissue that makes breathing and speaking difficult, Lacy’s presence has been an unexpected bonus to her Gilchrist team. Music and singing have always been a part of the very fabric of her family and she continues to find comfort in the songs she loves.

So when, during one visit, Sue pointed to a picture on her bookcase and mentioned that her brother, who died many years ago, had loved the song “Danny Boy,” it sparked the idea to create a family tribute through music.

For Sue, the project was both a profound and worrisome experience – profound in that it gave her a chance to find



Lacy Kidwell, Gilchrist music therapist, and Sue Pratt rehearse some of the songs for the July reunion.

ways to honor her loved ones and worrisome in that she fretted that she had chosen the wrong songs. One song she knew she got right: The one for herself, “Imagine,” by John Lennon.

With the project now complete, Sue still takes great comfort in Lacy’s visits and listens to CDs of her singing on her toughest days.

“Lacy is like a gift from heaven,” said Sue. “She’s so beautiful in spirit and her music is lovely.”



Compassionate Caregiver

In June, Gilchrist Music Therapist Lacy Kidwell was honored as a finalist for the 2015 Dr. John Adams Rounds Compassionate Caregiver Award. The award recognizes those who provide exceptional care and service to GBMC’s patients and families.

Pictured left: Lacy proudly poses with her family and her award from the Compassionate Caregiver ceremony held in early June.

A Veteran's Special Day

More than six decades after he took part in the first of two historic flag-raisings on Iwo Jima's Mt. Suribachi during World War II, Navy Gunner's Mate Second Class Warren "Bud" Gensler felt compelled to pen a poem about his experiences, which he would read aloud, every year, during Memorial Day commemorations at an Essex cemetery.

But as his health declined, it became too difficult for him to attend those annual commemorations; eventually he lost track of the poem. It wasn't until he began visiting regularly with Gilchrist Hospice Care Chaplain Jonathan Panitz, himself a retired Navy chaplain, that he began searching again for the poem. Ultimately, his daughter found it in a box in her home.

This Memorial Day, Gilchrist arranged for Mr. Gensler to read his poem once again – this time for his fellow residents at Joyous Assisted Living in White Marsh, along with members of his Gilchrist team and hospice volunteers who had served in the military.

For Mr. Gensler, the opportunity to talk about his wartime experiences with Jonathan and to read his poem once again on Memorial Day was remarkable.

"I didn't think anyone would want to get together here and listen to an old Navy man," Mr. Gensler said. "This means so much."



A few of the Gilchrist team members who attended Mr. Gensler's poem reading (l to r) Michelle Caldwell, volunteer and ret. Army; Reggie Bodnar, Clinical Director; Warren Gensler; Kim Perez, volunteer and ret. Navy; Jonathan Panitz, chaplain and ret. Navy

Watch a video of Mr. Gensler's Memorial Day poem reading:
gilchristhospice.org/whv

*"They went ashore
without a sigh*

*Many went there
destined to die*

*The battle raged on for
many a day*

*On they fought to keep
the enemy at bay*

*Medic. Medic. You could
hear the cry*

*Help me save my buddy,
don't let him die."*

Excerpt from Warren Gensler's poem, *Memorial Day*

Briefs &

Travels to Tanzania



Gilchrist's Controller, Wayne Barth helps lift one of the suitcases of supplies that the team brought with them.

In May, three leaders in Gilchrist's partnership with our sister hospice, Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital's Hospice and Palliative Care program, traveled to Tanzania for a week-long visit with program staff and leaders, as well as officials with organizations overseeing the program's care.

During their visit, Gilchrist Executive Director Cathy Hamel, Controller Wayne Barth and Tanzania Partnership Coordinator Robin Stocksdales took a ride in Nkoaranga's new Toyota Land Cruiser ambulance, which was provided through the generosity of Gilchrist's donors; learned more about the palliative care program's future plans; and visited with patients. They left behind six large suitcases filled with basic medical and other supplies.

Since 2011, Gilchrist has underwritten Nkoaranga's day-to-day operating budget, as well as enhancements to their program. The global partnership, which began in 2009, is supported by private gifts and support.

Advance Care Planning Talks

Discussing end-of-life wishes doesn't have to be difficult.



Dr. W. Anthony Riley, the medical director of Gilchrist Hospice Care and Gilchrist Greater Living, is offering a free, informative series of talks that are designed to educate the public about the importance of Advance Care Planning in their health care journeys.

The talks are offered at 5:30 p.m. in the Civiletti Conference Center on the Greater Baltimore Medical Center campus. Copies of the forms individuals will need to formalize their care wishes will be provided.

The Advance Care Planning talks schedule through the end of 2015 is as follows. There will be no sessions in August or December:

- **Tues. July 21:** *"Advance Care Planning – Tools and Decision-Making"*
- **Tues. Sept. 15:** *"Advance Care Planning – Choosing Treatments Wisely for Diseases of the Heart and Lung"*
- **Tues. Oct. 20:** *"Advance Care Planning – Choosing Treatments Wisely for Diseases of the Brain and Nervous System"*
- **Tues. Nov. 17:** *"Advance Care Planning – Tools and Decision-Making"*

For more information, or to register for one or more of the discussions, please visit the Gilchrist website at gilchristhospice.org/advancecareseries or call 443-849-GBMC (4262).

Updates



Expanding Our Reach

Gilchrist Services, the non-profit parent organization of Gilchrist Hospice Care, is continuing to expand its services to ensure that patients with chronic, serious or terminal illnesses and their families receive the best possible care and support throughout their health care journeys.

Gilchrist Services programs are designed to offer care that is comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate and that addresses all patient and family needs, whether they are medical, emotional, social or spiritual. The Gilchrist Services continuum of care provides education, guidance and care for patients earlier in their disease trajectory and through the end of life.



In addition to adult **hospice** and the **Gilchrist Kids** pediatric hospice programs, Gilchrist Services includes:

- **Greater Living**, a geriatric and palliative medicine physician practice for older adults with chronic and serious illnesses;
- **Support Our Elders**, a nurse practitioner-led program for older individuals with advanced illnesses or conditions, including those who are home-bound;
- **Gilchrist Transitions**, a program for patients who are not yet eligible for or have been discharged from hospice care due to stable health;
- **Gilchrist Palliative Care**, a hospital-based medical and psychosocial program for seriously ill individuals who may or may not be eligible for hospice;
- **Gilchrist Counseling and Support Services** for caregivers and family members who have experienced a recent loss or who wish to have volunteer assistance;
- **Gilchrist Global Partnership**, a collaboration through which Gilchrist and Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital's Hospice and Palliative Care program in Tanzania share information and wisdom. Gilchrist Services financially supports our partner through the generosity of our donors at home.



Visit the new website at:
gilchristservices.org



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443.849.8200

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11311 McCormick Road, Suite 350
Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031

For referrals call: 1.800.HOSPICE
(1.800.467.7423)

HOWARD COUNTY
5537 Twin Knolls Road, Suite 434
Columbia, Maryland 21045
phone 410.730.5072

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Catherine Y. Hamel Executive Director
Lori D. Mulligan Sr. Director of Development, Marketing & Community Services
Megan Dempsey Design & Production
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TASTE
OF HOWARD COUNTY
CHEERS TO THIRTY YEARS 

Cheers To
30
Years

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18
TURF VALLEY, ELLICOTT CITY | 5-9 PM

★ Chairs: Tracy & Bob Lucido ★

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