

# Reflections

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## Giving Families Choices

*Gilchrist Care Choices offers patients the option to seek treatments while receiving hospice support service.*

When John Suprock was diagnosed with leukemia last December, the 70-year-old Air Force veteran had lost 30 pounds and could barely walk. His latest diagnosis added to an already lengthy list of health conditions including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and diabetes. Despite a hospital stay, his health declined and doctors offered little hope. Feeling out of options, John resolved to spend his remaining time out of the hospital and at home with his wife of 42 years, Joan.

The comforts of home boosted his spirits, and to everyone's surprise he began eating more, gaining strength and feeling more like himself. Although eligible for hospice services, John did not feel emotionally ready and didn't want to give up the option to seek treatment, especially now that he was feeling better.

As John and Joan began weighing their options, they learned about Gilchrist Care Choices—a new model of care initiated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services meant to empower people with greater flexibility in deciding between hospice care and curative treatment when faced with life-limiting illness.



John Suprock, pictured with Gilchrist nurse Patti Crowl, is grateful for the choice to pursue treatment while at the same time receiving a safety net of Gilchrist services.

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# Giving Families Choices (continued)



Unlike traditional hospice programs in which Medicare does not pay for curative treatments, Gilchrist Care Choices allows patients to continue treatment with their own doctors while receiving the support and safety net of hospice services. Gilchrist is the only hospice in Central Maryland offering this option.

Gilchrist nurse Patti Crowl visits John and his wife, Joan, at their home.



“When someone is given a diagnosis and hears the word ‘hospice,’ it’s hard to accept,” explains Patti Crowl, John’s Gilchrist nurse. “Gilchrist Care Choices is a wonderful option for John, because he is able to live his life to the fullest and he has the resources available when he needs them. They know they can call me any time if they have concerns, and he can still go to his hematologist.”

Patti visits every two weeks, providing medical guidance, practical advice and someone to talk to. Through Gilchrist Care Choices, a social worker provides emotional and social support, while a chaplain is available to provide spiritual comfort. Families can call a triage nurse any time of day or night, helping them avoid unnecessary ER visits. And volunteers offer companionship and a helping hand.

In the meantime, John can continue to receive treatments such as blood transfusions that improve his quality of life. For John and his family, Gilchrist Care Choices has been ‘a godsend’—“Gilchrist is there with us every step of the way,” says Joan. “It takes the fear out of going through this for John and for me.”

*“Gilchrist is more than just a medical resource,” she adds. “They go beyond that—emotionally, it just makes everything so much easier. It’s a really big comfort to know they’re here.”*

Joan is amazed at how well her husband has fared. He has maintained his sense of humor and is able to do the things he loves, like spending time outside, gardening, even going to the casino. “Before, he couldn’t walk without a walker,” says Joan. “He couldn’t do anything. We thought he didn’t have any time left. Now look at him. I don’t want to say it’s a miracle, but in a way it is.”

**To learn more about Gilchrist Care Choices, visit [gilchristservices.org/Choices](http://gilchristservices.org/Choices).**

*“Gilchrist Care Choices empowers families to choose the care that’s right for them. They benefit from the human touch that hospice is well known for, while continuing to receive treatment from their physicians. Instead of having to choose either Gilchrist hospice or continuing treatment, with Gilchrist Care Choices, they can have both.”*

*—Raquel Braithwaite, Program Manager of Gilchrist Care Choices*



# Making Every Moment Count

For Gilchrist patient Yorlenny Garcia Granados, every moment spent with her children is precious. So when her hospice nurse, Ashya Adolemaiu-Bey, told her she had won a Gilchrist raffle for tickets to an Oriole's game, Yorlenny was thrilled for the opportunity to surprise her two sons, Jahir, 5, and Anthony, 6, with a day at Camden Yards.

Ashya had submitted Yorlenny's name in the raffle knowing that the family would enjoy a special day out together. Yorlenny, in turn, asked Ashya if she and her children would join her at the game, and the two families shared a wonderful afternoon at the ball park.

"I want to help her make every moment count," says Ashya. "We had a great time at the game...We made a memory for her children that day."

Originally from El Salvador, Yorlenny came to the U.S. at age 21 in search of more opportunity and a better life. But after having difficulty breathing one day at work, the soft-spoken, single mother of two was shocked when doctors at the hospital delivered devastating news: her heart was failing due to a congenital heart defect. A heart transplant was the only treatment, but her immigrant status rendered her ineligible.

*"I want to help her make every moment count...  
We made a memory for her children that day."*

*—Ashya Adolemaiu-Bey, Hospice Nurse*



Patient Yorlenny Garcia Granados and sons, Jahir, 5, and Anthony, 6, enjoy a day at the ball park in May, with Gilchrist nurse Ashya Adolemaiu-Bey (pictured bottom left).

Yorlenny knew she wanted to spend her remaining time at home, living each day to the fullest and taking care of her two young children as long as she could. So she chose hospice care.

The expert medical care of the Gilchrist hospice team keeps her pain and symptoms under control, allowing her to keep living life on her own terms. She remains an active member at church, where she volunteers as a greeter, and enjoys spending time with her brothers and cousins.

Yorlenny is grateful for the care she has received from Ashya and all of her Gilchrist team, which includes a social worker, chaplain and child-life specialist. "They care for me and worry for me. I have a special love for each one, and I always pray for them," says Yorlenny.

Despite the progression of her heart disease, Yorlenny is not afraid of the future. She draws strength from her faith and her family, and the confidence that her Gilchrist team will be there to help. "Whenever I call, they answer quickly and solve what I need," she says. "They always take care of me."



## Keeping His Grandmother's Memory Alive



Nathan is only 13, but already he is making his mark on the world.

Earlier this year, Nathan started a GoFundMe campaign asking friends and family to support his mitzvah project. One of his goals was to raise money for a tribute garden wall plaque at Gilchrist Center Towson in memory of his grandmother Harriett.

"I wanted to do this because my grandmother was such a special person in my life," says Nathan. "At Gilchrist, they did a good job taking care of my Bubbie, and I wanted to give back to them for doing that. She was herself again when she was there and she was happy."

In just two months, Nathan raised over \$1,500, which he will split between Gilchrist and another Baltimore area nonprofit. His tribute donation will allow us to continue caring for all the special grandmothers in Baltimore who mean so much to their grandchildren. Thank you, Nathan, for your extraordinary generosity to Gilchrist!

### Honor Someone Special with a Gilchrist Garden Wall Plaque

Create a meaningful and lasting tribute to a loved one through a beautiful garden wall plaque. Your gift will honor the memory of a loved one and make a difference in the lives of those we serve. Plaques will be displayed at Gilchrist Center Towson or Gilchrist Center Howard County.

**To learn more and purchase a plaque, visit [gilchristservices.org/GardenWall](http://gilchristservices.org/GardenWall) or call 443.849.8213.**





## Saying Goodbye to a Dear Friend of Gilchrist

Elizabeth (Betsy) Richardson, a longtime Gilchrist Services board member and devoted friend of Gilchrist, died in February. Betsy was one of Gilchrist's most dedicated advocates and supporters, giving her time, her resources and her unique talents to an organization she truly loved.

At the time of her death, she was serving as secretary of the Gilchrist Board, a position she had held for as long as anyone can remember. But Betsy gave far more of herself in her work as a volunteer. For over 20 years, Betsy, often accompanied by her dogs, would visit hospice patients in long-term care facilities, providing these patients with a welcome diversion and a friendly smile.

She and her husband, Sonny, were regular supporters of Gilchrist's fundraising events, Taste of Howard County, the Holly Ball and, in recent years, the St. Paddy's Day Bash. Betsy frequently volunteered at Gilchrist's Howard County office and her contributions, as well as her kind and gracious demeanor, were always welcomed.



*“Betsy was a remarkable woman,” says Cathy Hamel, President of Gilchrist Services. “She was kind and unassuming but undaunted in her devotion to Gilchrist and hospice in general. She understood and appreciated the value of our work and was one of our greatest proponents. She will be greatly missed.”*

# Gilchrist Staff Honored

Congratulations to Gilchrist nurse Ellen Metzger for being named one of Baltimore's Top Nurses in *Baltimore* magazine's 2017 "Excellence in Nursing" issue.

Only 50 nurses area-wide received this honor and Ellen was selected for providing the highest level of care in hospice, palliative care and home health care. The magazine and its panel of highly experienced nurse advisors were looking for nurses who go beyond the call of duty. Ellen was featured along with six GBMC nurses in the May issue, coinciding with National Nurses Week. Ellen describes her work as 'a calling' and considers it a great privilege to be present at one of the most intimate times in a patient's life.

*"I can't think of a greater privilege than being able to bring about comfort, on multiple levels, to a patient and family. I just love what I do."*

*—Ellen Metzger, Gilchrist Nurse*



Another Gilchrist staff member was honored at GBMC's 2nd annual Art of Nursing Awards in May. Hospice aide Irene Irby of the Howard County Home Care team won the Clinical Assistant Support Award. These awards recognize nursing staff who exemplify and embody the fundamental elements of the art of nursing within their field, providing excellence and personal care to every patient, every time. Congratulations to Irene for this distinguished award.



## Caring for the Caregiver

Gilchrist held an all-day wellness retreat in April, attended by more than 40 caregivers living in Baltimore City. Attendees, many of whom have been caring for an elderly or ill loved one for more than 10 years, learned about the wide range of services offered by Gilchrist and the community. The day included inspirational and informative discussions on self-care, as well as massage, meditation and information on local government and nonprofit resources for caregivers.

**For further information, please contact Deb Jones at [djones@gilchristservices.org](mailto:djones@gilchristservices.org).**



# COME & GET IT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2017 ★ TURF VALLEY RESORT, ELLICOTT CITY ★ 5:00-8:30PM



With this year's western theme of "Come & Get It," the annual Taste of Howard County event will feature the sweet and savory creations of more than 20 of Howard County's premier restaurateurs and caterers. All proceeds from the 2017 Taste, which is being chaired by Pete Mangione, support Gilchrist Center Howard County, our 10-bed acute inpatient center in Columbia.

**You can support exceptional hospice services in Howard County through event tickets, a cash raffle, sponsorships and our Taste Online Auction.**

**For details, visit [gilchristservices.org/Taste](http://gilchristservices.org/Taste) or contact Cliff Hughes at 410.730.1764.**

## Supporters Get 'Jazzed' About Joseph Richey House

In April, 150 guests attended Gilchrist's first Spring Jazz Brunch, held at the Eubie Blake Jazz Institute in Baltimore City. The sold out event raised more than \$65,000 for the Joseph Richey House—Gilchrist's residential hospice center on Eutaw Street. Thank you for helping us make the event a success!



Co-chairs Heidi Kenny-Berman, Esq.  
and Neal Friedlander, MD



## Run for a Great Cause

Join the GBMC and Gilchrist team at the Baltimore Running Festival on October 21. Each participant will set a fundraising goal to benefit Joseph Richey House, Gilchrist's residential hospice center in Baltimore City.

**To learn about how you can support Joseph Richey House, contact Ted Blankenship at 443.849.8263 or [tblankenship@gilchristservices.org](mailto:tblankenship@gilchristservices.org).**



*Guiding the way.*

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# Summer Concert to Benefit Music Therapy

Thursday, August 10, 6 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Turf Valley Towne Square, Ellicott City

Join us at Turf Valley Towne Square’s Free Thursday Night Concert Series. Enjoy live music from the Maryland Entertainment Hall of Fame band Appaloosa, and enter our raffle benefitting Gilchrist’s music therapy program. Music therapy can help improve our patients’ quality of life by reducing stress, anxiety and agitation, while also giving them a way to express themselves, even if they can no longer communicate. At the same time, music therapy can be used as a tool to help caregivers cope with their impending loss.

For details about this event, visit [gilchristservices.org/Calendar](http://gilchristservices.org/Calendar).