

Reflections Newsletter

Spring 2018 | 888.823.8880 | gilchristcares.org



Your Family Is Our Family

In this Issue...

With Gilchrist's care and support, families never have to feel alone. For some, the Gilchrist team becomes like part of the family. In this issue, read about how the earlier hospice care is started, the more families can benefit. Also in this issue: caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's, why aging adults need a geriatric specialist, inspiring patients, upcoming events and more.

Above: Patient Duane Herbel with husband, Kevin, daughter, Grayson, Gilchrist hospice care social worker Anna Blyukher and nurse Valerie Appelt.



Like Family

Hospice care is not just for a patient's final days. The earlier hospice is started, the more time a family has to connect with the hospice team and receive valuable help and support—creating a richer experience for everyone involved.

Hospice nurse Valerie Appelt always looks forward to her visits with patient Duane Herbel. After she finishes checking his medications, blood pressure and breathing, Valerie often spends time talking one-on-one with Duane, and with his husband, Kevin, and daughter, Grayson.

Forging Bonds

Duane began receiving hospice care months earlier, when he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and through their time together, Valerie and the rest of the Gilchrist team have formed a close relationship with the family. They have seen Duane through emotional lows and anxiety, shared tender moments and laughter, and listened to plenty of stories.

"People often come to hospice only days before death, so they miss out on important guidance and support," says Anna Blyukher, the family's Gilchrist social worker. "With Duane and his family, we've had the opportunity to spend time getting to know them so that we could provide the best care."

"It feels like we're part of the family," adds Valerie. "We get as much out of the relationship as we give."

The Gilchrist team provides nursing care, medication to relieve pain and other symptoms, personal care to help with bathing and dressing, and emotional support that can be enormously helpful during serious illness. "Knowing Gilchrist is there whenever we need them has definitely been reassuring," says Kevin. "When Duane was in a lot of pain, three nurses came in the middle of the night."

"It feels like we're part of the family. We get as much out of the relationship as we give."

-Valerie Appelt, Gilchrist nurse



Duane Herbel with Gilchrist nurse Valerie Appelt

Shared Moments

Before Duane was diagnosed with ALS, he loved to travel, entertain and sing karaoke. Known as 'the life of the party,' he loved people, and they loved him back. He was a pediatric nurse and instructor at Johns Hopkins for many years, and he touched the lives of patients and colleagues alike—so much so that an award was named after him: the Duane Herbel Nursing Appreciation Award.

During a recent visit from Valerie and Anna, photos of Duane and his family flicker on the TV—showing trips around the world, cherished friends and touching family moments. Kevin shows them a memory book made by Duane's former colleagues when they learned he was sick. In it, former hospital residents wrote long, full-page notes, with sentiments such as "You changed my life," "You always made me feel important as an intern," and "You make the world a better place."

It's clear that Duane is an inspiration to many. When asked how it feels to know he touched lives so deeply, he responded, "I laugh... and then I weep."

For the Gilchrist team, moments like these shared with patients and families are one of the most rewarding aspects of the job. And for families, knowing that they are not alone is a gift beyond measure.

Gilchrist Nurses Among Baltimore's Best



Karen Bartosz, RN, MSN, CHPN,
Home Care Nurse
Howard County



Renee Ennis, BSN, RN,
Inpatient Nurse
Gilchrist Center Baltimore

Gilchrist nurses Karen Bartosz and Renee Ennis were named "Top Nurses" in *Baltimore* magazine's 2018 "Excellence in Nursing" issue in the Hospice/Home Health/Palliative Care category. A panel of nurses selected the top 50 nurses in 21 specialties in the Baltimore Metro area.

Karen Bartosz—one of our Howard County Home Care nurses—exhibits honesty, respect, wisdom and sensitivity, says hospice clinical manager Deborah Duhnke. "She has the natural ability to convey compassion to those she cares for." Karen finds it especially meaningful to be able to care for not just the patients, but their families, and says being a hospice nurse is "the best job I've ever had."

Renee Ennis, an inpatient nurse at Gilchrist Center Baltimore, brings patience, understanding and a calming spirit to her work. "Renee genuinely cares about each one of her patients and colleagues as if they were family," says Katherine Packett, hospice clinical manager. Renee enjoys helping each patient achieve a positive end-of-life experience. "I am their nurse but I am also someone who will laugh, cry, pray, sing and dance with them."

To learn more about these exceptional Gilchrist nurses, visit gilchristcares.org/excellence-nursing.

Gilchrist Named 'Great Place to Work'

Gilchrist was certified as a great workplace by the independent analysts at Great Place to Work®. Gilchrist earned this credential based on extensive ratings provided by employees in anonymous surveys.

"Being a 'Great Place to Work' is a ringing endorsement of our employee culture at Gilchrist," said Cathy Hamel, President of Gilchrist. "Our employees overwhelmingly share a sense of pride about their work and its impact on the community."

Employees rated their workplace in areas ranging from atmosphere, pride, communication, leadership, camaraderie and fairness.



Here are a few highlights of how employees rated Gilchrist:

- **93%** – I feel good about the ways we contribute to the community.
- **92%** – My work has special meaning: this is not "just a job."
- **92%** – I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- **92%** – When I look at what we accomplish, I feel a sense of pride.

To learn more, visit gilchristcares.org/greatplacetowork.

When a Loved One Has Alzheimer's

Betty Crowell was an intensive care nurse for much of her life, taking care of patients who were seriously ill. Now 80 and living with Alzheimer's, she is the one who needs care. For Jerry, her devoted husband of more than 50 years, caring for his wife at home is not easy, but with the care and support of their Gilchrist team, he is able to fulfill his wish to keep her at home.



Jerry Crowell cares for his wife, Betty, who has Alzheimer's, at home.

The first outward signs of dementia began a few years ago, when Jerry noticed his wife repeating herself. The numbers in the checkbook were off. More and more, she seemed to struggle with her memory, and when in the company of others, she often demurred, saying, "Jerry, you tell the story."

For a while, the decline was slow. But when Betty fell and broke her hip in 2014, Jerry says, things went downhill. She developed an infection and a wound that wouldn't heal, and could no longer walk. The Alzheimer's affected more than just her memory. She began having problems with agitation, anxiety and insomnia—once going without sleep for two days—and then lost the ability to speak. Jerry knew it was time for hospice.

Before enrolling in hospice care, Betty was taking eight medications, each with its own side effects. Gilchrist hospice nurse Sarah Astarita streamlined Betty's medications and made sure she was comfortable and not in pain or distress. She answered Jerry's questions and explained the progression of the disease. Jerry now had an entire team—including a nurse, social worker, hospice aides, a chaplain and volunteer—focused on helping him care for his wife while supporting his own needs as a caregiver.

"We find that with Alzheimer's, more than most other illnesses, families require just as much care as the patients themselves," says Sarah. "We provide the support to fulfill Jerry's wish of keeping Betty at home and caring for her despite the challenges and unpredictability of each day."

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of caring for someone with dementia is the emotional pain that can come when the person you love is no longer who they once were. "Ninety percent of the time, she doesn't know who I am," says Jerry. Members of the Gilchrist team spend time talking with him during their weekly visits—sitting, listening and helping him through any problems.

"The Gilchrist team has been a godsend."

—Jerry Crowell

Hospice aide Pam Scott visits each morning to get Betty out of bed, dressed and fed. "The Gilchrist team—they're like my family," says Jerry. "I can't pay tribute enough to them."

Each month, Gilchrist offers inpatient respite care for Betty to give Jerry time to visit his son, catch up on his own health care needs and to rest.

Jerry still holds Betty's hand and tells her he loves her every day, even though she may not understand him. "I don't know if she will be here tomorrow or a year from now. I'm just taking it one day at a time," says Jerry, adding, "I couldn't do it without Gilchrist."



Gilchrist hospice aides Pamela Scott and Michelle Connor with nurse Sarah Astarita (top) visit hospice patient Betty Crowell at her home.

Caring for an Elderly Parent? How a Geriatric Consultation Can Help

Gilchrist provides specialized geriatric consultations for older adults with multiple medical problems.

As people age, finding coordinated medical care can be difficult. It's not uncommon for an elderly adult to be prescribed multiple medications and treatments by different specialists. But who is looking at the big picture?

Gilchrist geriatrician Anna Monias, MD, answers questions about how a geriatric consultation can help older adults with serious illness improve their quality of life.

Why do aging adults need a geriatric specialist?

As people age, diseases and their symptoms are less likely to respond to typical treatments. General practitioners may not have expertise in disease progression in older adults or the time required to address multiple medical problems. As a result, they may not account for the possibly harmful effects on an elderly, frail patient when recommending surgery or complex medical treatments. Our Gilchrist geriatricians are experts in these aspects of care for aging adults. And we spend more than an hour with each patient and family to ensure a thorough assessment.

What does a geriatric consultation provide?

In the consultation, our geriatricians and nurse practitioners provide a comprehensive health assessment and a personalized care plan based on the patient's needs and goals of care. Once the assessment and plan of care is complete, we work with the patient's primary care doctor. We also offer coordinated referrals to community physicians to help ensure seamless care.

Who can benefit from a geriatric consultation?

Older adults who have multiple chronic illnesses or who have had problems with falls, incontinence, memory or mood, pain or frailty may benefit.



My parent is taking multiple medications prescribed by different specialists, but no one seems to be looking at their overall effect. Is that addressed in the geriatric consultation?

Yes. Gilchrist geriatricians assess the combined effect of medications and interventions on the individual's overall function, and whether or not they are beneficial. As people age, the body's ability to metabolize medicine changes and they may need reduced doses. Often, we find that medications a person has taken for many years are no longer working and need to be tapered or stopped.

To read the rest of this Q&A, visit the Gilchrist Blog at gilchristcares.org/geriatric-consultation.

Gilchrist Counselors Support Parkland Community

On Sunday May 20, Gilchrist Counseling & Support staff and volunteers participated in the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School "Day of Hope and Healing," held in Coral Springs, Florida. Grief counselors and other specialized practitioners from across the country were invited to offer their talents to support the needs of this grieving community. The event, which was free and hosted by The Bobby Resciniti Healing Hearts Foundation, included students, faculty, families and first responders.

Clinical counselor Hilary Harrington and Bereavement Program Manager Deborah Jones represented Gilchrist at the event, along with bereavement volunteers Donna Naslund and Kay Berney. The workshop offered

group discussions and one-on-one counseling by grief professionals, while speakers presented on topics related to grief, loss and healing. There were also opportunities to receive massage, reiki, grief yoga, aromatherapy and other healing modalities, and to create remembrance collages, prayer/memory flags and banners, and other artwork.

"It was a privilege for our staff to participate in this very meaningful day," said Deborah Jones. "Our hearts go out to the Parkland community, and it was an honor to be able to offer healing and support to help them rebuild hope."



Gilchrist President Wins Award

We are proud to announce that our own Cathy Hamel, president of Gilchrist and vice president for Continuing Care at GBMC, has been recognized by the *The Daily Record* as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women in 2018. The award recognizes high-achieving Maryland women who are making an impact through their leadership, community service and mentoring. Winners are selected by past Top 100 Women and business leaders. Nearly 425 women were nominated this year for the statewide honor.

"Maryland's Top 100 Women have achieved amazing accomplishments in their careers, but to be honored as a Top 100 Woman requires more than just career success," said Suzanne Fischer-Huettner, publisher of *The Daily Record*. "She must be an exemplary citizen, committed to her community, creating change and growing the next generation of leaders through active mentoring. *The Daily Record* is pleased to recognize these leaders."



Gilchrist Kids clinical manager Mary Tiso during an interview with Mary Beth Marsden and Don Scott.

Gilchrist Kids Featured in Facebook Live Broadcast

Pediatric hospice was the subject of GBMC's March Facebook Live broadcast, with local news personalities Mary Beth Marsden and Don Scott.

Gilchrist Kids pediatric hospice nurse Erin Bull said her role is to help families have "the best experience through the worst situation." Through her visits with families week after week, she develops close relationships with those she cares for, saying they become "like family." Being a hospice nurse, she said, is not just a job—it's an honor.

Misconceptions About Hospice

Mary Tiso, Gilchrist Kids clinical manager, dispelled a few misconceptions about pediatric hospice care. "Most think of hospice as a place, but really hospice is a concept or philosophy," she explained. Most patients are seen at home, though Gilchrist does have a four-bed pediatric inpatient unit at Gilchrist Center Baltimore for children who have symptoms that can't be managed at home or who need respite care. The Gilchrist team provides hands-on nursing care and emotional support, allowing families to focus on precious moments with each other. After a child dies, the family receives bereavement support.

Qualifying for hospice requires a prognosis of six months or less to live, though many children live longer—some even live years. Pediatric patients can continue to seek curative care for their illness and keep their same doctors while receiving hospice care.

The 'Language of Play'

An important component of the care is emotional support for the child and for the child's siblings. Gilchrist Kids child life therapist Beth Solomon fills

this role. A sick child may be scared about treatment and worried about the future, while a sibling may be struggling with feelings of guilt or fear. Beth works with children through what she calls "the language of play."

Many of the kids she works with are aware that they are dying, she said, even when parents try to hide it from them. Beth knows the child's clinical history and can give them one-on-one attention to help make a child feel comfortable and in control. Though some days are undeniably sad, most of the time she is finding ways to bring joy and peace to children, making their illnesses more bearable. The best days are when she makes a child smile or laugh again, or sees them pulling pranks and just being a regular kid.

Joy Despite Sadness

Working with dying children is emotionally difficult, but Beth finds meaning in helping them have the fullest life possible. "As sad and upsetting and tragic as it can be, it's also really beautiful," she said. "There can still be joy."

The final guest, parent Marci Scher, gave a moving firsthand account of her experience with pediatric hospice. Her son, Ian, was cared for by Gilchrist Kids for three years before passing away from a rare disease in 2016 at age 13. Erin Bull was their nurse.

With Gilchrist's help, Marci said, Ian was able to continue going to school and maintain the best quality of life until the end.

To learn more about Gilchrist Kids pediatric hospice program and see footage of the Facebook Live broadcast, visit gilchristcares.org/gilchrist-kids.

‘Wonder Woman’ Inspires Act of Kindness

Beth Tenser woke up one morning in 2010 with slurred speech. She thought she’d had a stroke. Over the next two years, she saw numerous doctors as her symptoms progressed, until she was diagnosed at age 43 with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)—the same disease that her mother died from just a few years earlier.

Now a Gilchrist hospice patient, Beth hasn’t let her disease get in the way of her life’s work. An accomplished graphic designer and photographer for many years, Beth founded an art exhibition and fundraising event in which designers turn ordinary bras into works of art that are auctioned off to raise money for women’s health—a cause that became close to her heart after two of her friends were diagnosed with breast cancer.

Despite the progression of ALS, which has left her unable to move most of her body, she often stays up late into the night, asking celebrities and others for fundraising support via social media. Because she can’t move her arms or hands to type, she painstakingly spells out each word, letter by letter, with a glance of her eyes using her eye gaze system. It would be easier to rest, but, she believes, “It’s my purpose to give back.”

Her generous spirit in the face of the most difficult of circumstances inspires everyone she meets, and her Gilchrist team is no exception. In Beth’s honor, the team designed a Wonder Woman-themed work of art for Beth’s latest fundraising event.



Gilchrist hospice patient Beth Tenser during a visit with Gilchrist chaplain Charline Berry, music therapist Emily Mahoney and social worker Karen Feldman.

“Beth loves Wonder Woman and we think she is a ‘wonder woman’ herself,” explains Gilchrist music therapist Emily Mahoney. She and other team members came together on their own time to create the design as a show of their support.

While Beth is focused on helping others, the Gilchrist team is committed to helping her, offering nursing care, personal care assistance, emotional support, music therapy and volunteer support. “Our role is to help her stay positive and focused on what she has accomplished and is continuing to accomplish,” says Karen Feldman, her social worker. “Beth is still very vibrant and involved with life. She is an inspiration to our entire team.”



In honor of ‘Wonder Woman’ patient Beth Tenser, Gilchrist team members Charline Berry, Carson Savage, Emily Mahoney and other team members created a Wonder Woman-themed work of art to be auctioned off at a fundraising event.

Counseling & Support Event Calendar

June 2018 – September 2018

Support Groups

Loss of a Spouse/Life Partner

Thursdays, June 28 – August 2
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Thursdays, Sept. 27 – Nov. 1
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Mondays, Sept. 17 – Oct. 22
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Howard County Office

Healing the Heart through Meditation

Wednesdays, March 14 – April 11
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Writing in Grief: Healing through Words

Learn simple writing tools that help you grieve.

Thursdays, July 5 – August 9
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Remembering Our Parents

Tuesdays, Sept. 25 – Oct. 30
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Mother's Grief Group

For mothers who have lost adult children

Wednesdays, monthly
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
June 20, July 18
Gilchrist Center Towson

Men's Support Group

For men who have lost a spouse or significant other

Saturdays, monthly
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
June 2, July 7, August 4
Gilchrist Howard County Office

Tuesdays, monthly

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
June 26, July 24, August 28
Gilchrist Center Towson

The Journey Continues: Grief Support in the Second Year

Tuesdays, monthly
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
June 5, July 3, August 7
Gilchrist Howard County Office

Saturdays, monthly

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
June 16, July 21, August 18
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Workshops

Grief Pathways – Beginning the Journey Lunch and Learn (lunch provided)

Wednesday, July 25
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Gilchrist Corporate Office

Memory Making: Create a special keepsake in honor of your loved one

Wednesday, June 20
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Center Towson

Special Events

Festival of Trees

Join us as we create ornaments for our Kennedy Krieger tree.

Wednesday, August 8
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Gilchrist Center Towson

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR ALL SUPPORT GROUPS AND WORKSHOPS.

Register online:

gilchristcares.org/grief_registration or
email gilchrist_grief@gilchristcares.org

Register by phone:

For Gilchrist Corporate Office and
Gilchrist Center Towson, call 443.849.8251.

For Gilchrist Howard County Office,
call 443.539.4086.

Addresses:

Gilchrist Corporate Office
11311 McCormick Rd., Ste. 350,
Hunt Valley, MD 21031

Gilchrist Howard County Office
5537 Twin Knolls Rd., Ste. 434,
Columbia, MD 21045

Gilchrist Center Towson
555 W. Towsontown Blvd., Towson, MD 21204

Spring Jazz Brunch

to benefit Gilchrist Center Baltimore

Gilchrist hosted the second Spring Jazz Brunch on Sunday, April 8. Held at the Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Museum in Fell's Point, the brunch was attended by 140 guests and raised \$70,000 for Gilchrist Center Baltimore. It was an enjoyable morning with delicious food and drinks, lively jazz music and presentations about the care that Gilchrist provides in Baltimore City.

At the brunch, Gilchrist President Cathy Hamel presented exciting plans about the future of Gilchrist Center Baltimore. Gilchrist will build a new, state-of-the-art hospice facility at Stadium Place in Baltimore City. With 22 beds—18 for adults and 4 for children—the new Gilchrist Center Baltimore will continue to provide compassionate, end-of-life care to residents of Baltimore City.

For details, visit gilchristcares.org/events/jazz-brunch.



The Ian Sims Jazz Quintet



Gilchrist Hospice Nurse Liaison Manager Beth Brown with Associate Clinical Director of Admissions Nicole Strauss



Event Co-Chair
Dr. Neal Friedlander



Rick Huether, Chair of the Gilchrist Board, and Dr. Tim Doran, Gilchrist Board member, look out over the harbor during brunch.




Associate Clinical Director of Gilchrist Hospice Care Catherine Frome with husband, Heath, and dad, Father Guy Hawtin

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 gilchristcares.org/Wall or call 443.849.8213.



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**Taste of
Howard County**
*Merriment in
Masquerade*

Sunday, October 21, 2018
Turf Valley ♦ 5 p.m.

Join us for *Merriment in Masquerade* at the 2018 Taste of Howard County on Sunday, October 21, at Turf Valley. Featuring the sweet and savory creations of more than 20 Howard County restaurateurs, as well as live and silent auctions, the event will support Gilchrist Center Howard County, our 10-bed acute inpatient center in Columbia.

For tickets, sponsorships and other details, visit gilchristcares.org/Taste or contact Julie Kolankiewicz at 443.849.8245.



The Gilchrist Ball
Saturday, December 1, 2018
Baltimore Marriott Waterfront
7:00 p.m.

The biannual Gilchrist Ball, formerly The Holly Ball, will be held on Saturday, December 1, at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront. Kick off the holiday season at the premier fundraising gala in Baltimore, benefitting Gilchrist Center Towson and featuring fine dining, dancing and mingling with friends. Honorary chairs of the 2018 Gilchrist Ball are Jana and Richard Burch and Lorraine and Mark Schapiro.

For tickets, sponsorships and other details, visit gilchristcares.org/GilchristBall or contact Julie Kolankiewicz at 443.849.8245.