

# Reflections Newsletter

Fall 2021 | 888.823.8880 | [gilchristcares.org](http://gilchristcares.org)

## Together, Caring for Our Communities



### In this Issue...

Gilchrist's new state-of-the-art inpatient center in Baltimore City builds on our commitment to ensuring that everyone who needs care receives it, including the most vulnerable. This center was made possible through the support of our many donors and partners who care as much about our communities as we do.

**Also in this issue:** our annual Year-In-Review, donor spotlight and tips on year-end charitable giving. Plus, touching stories on how a daughter's hospice experience inspired her career as a Gilchrist nurse, and a family member who learned to heal her heart through grief counseling.

Above: Gilchrist Center Baltimore's new location at Stadium Place in Baltimore City.



# The New Gilchrist Center Baltimore:

## *The Next Chapter in Caring for the Underserved in Baltimore City*



Gilchrist Center Baltimore is continuing its legacy of providing compassionate end-of-life care and support to the residents of Baltimore City and their families with a new state-of-the-art center at Stadium Place on East 33rd Street, the former home of Memorial Stadium. The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new center, officially named the "William L. and Victorine Q. Adams Gilchrist Center Baltimore" after two African-American pillars of the local community, was held on September 30. The center will accept its first patients in late October or early November.

The facility will be the new location for Gilchrist's current inpatient hospice center at Eutaw Street—the former Joseph Richey House—which has provided end-of-life care for city residents for more than 30 years. The new two-story center, which contains 18 private adult and four pediatric suites for inpatient residential hospice and respite care, will continue to be the only residential hospice center in Baltimore and house the only pediatric inpatient hospice unit in Maryland.

"Gilchrist Center Baltimore cares for children, adults, as well as the underserved and homeless who would otherwise not have a home to spend their dying days," said Shannon Wollman, Chief Philanthropy Officer of Gilchrist. "When you look at the demographics of Baltimore City, we have such an underserved population. Gilchrist Center Baltimore provides the end-of-life care that everyone deserves, regardless of ability to pay."

The new center is centrally located in a diverse landmark community with a rich history and atmosphere. It is also surrounded by newly built housing for low- to middle-

income seniors. By joining the Stadium Place community, Gilchrist will add to the robust continuum of housing, health and other services for residents. Gilchrist Center Baltimore will also offer clinical counseling support for anyone in the community who has suffered a loss or been impacted by trauma.

The center was designed to reflect the surrounding architecture and incorporates stone and woodwork to match neighboring homes. The home-like interior offers a beautiful and comfortable setting for patients and families, and outside is a charming courtyard filled with trees, flowers and walking paths.

Construction of the new center was funded by a \$15.3 million capital campaign, led by Chair Dr. Timothy F. Doran, Vice Chair William L. Beckford and Gilchrist Chief Philanthropy Officer Shannon Wollman. The campaign received financial support by the State of Maryland and many prominent foundations, including the Women's Hospital Foundation, as well as the full support of Gilchrist's board of directors.

"In order to obtain the permits, land and state funding for this project, we needed to have city-owned, minority-owned and women-owned business construction partners. Participation from all of those entities made the new center possible," said Shannon Wollman. "Gilchrist is very proud of that, and we are thankful to every single person and organization who has invested in the new Gilchrist Center Baltimore since 2017."

**To learn more about Gilchrist Center Baltimore, visit [gilchristcares.org/gilchrist-center-baltimore](https://gilchristcares.org/gilchrist-center-baltimore)**



# Coming Full Circle

*After experiencing hospice with her family, she was inspired to become a hospice nurse.*

In 2009, Amy Enright's father was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and began hospice with Gilchrist. Amy remembers the warmth and compassion her Gilchrist team showed and how they seemed to know exactly what to do. Her family was struggling emotionally with his impending death, and Amy was afraid to have a final conversation with her father. But her social worker encouraged her to talk to him, and she will always be grateful.

"It was a wonderful, beautiful conversation," Amy recalls. "He said he had a good life, that he was proud of his children and his career, and happy to have met his two grandchildren."

As Amy's father was dying, the nurses, doctors and social workers at Gilchrist carried her through. They taught her how to care for him, and they comforted her when she was frightened of what lay ahead. "I don't think I would have been able to get through it without them," she says. "To have strangers come in when you are totally devastated—it is such a gift."

The experience was so meaningful that it inspired her to go to nursing school to become a hospice nurse. But just as she earned her nursing license, her mother was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Amy again went through the hospice experience with Gilchrist, and the staff were just as wonderful as before. They cared for

her mother so tenderly and offered all the support her family needed.

After her mom died, Amy redoubled her efforts to become a hospice nurse. To gain experience, she began working as a cardiac nurse at a nearby hospital. Then, a few months ago, she applied to Gilchrist and was offered a job as a hospice nurse.

***"I feel like I'm doing something that really matters, and it's an honor to help walk people through this experience."***

*— Amy Enright, Gilchrist Hospice Nurse*

She is thrilled to finally be part of the Gilchrist family. Amy visits hospice patients at their homes or residential care facilities as part of the Nights, Evenings and Weekends team. She finds the work every bit as fulfilling as she dreamed.

"There are times that are very, very sad, but I can make it easier on the family and patients and help them find joy in small moments," she explains. "I feel like I'm doing something that really matters, and it's an honor to help walk people through this experience. I've come full circle, and I'm where I'm supposed to be."

**To learn more about hospice careers at Gilchrist, visit [gilchristcares.org/careers](http://gilchristcares.org/careers).**



Amy with her dad, Charlie, and oldest daughter, Grace, on Easter 2007.



Amy at her nursing school graduation with mom, Susie, in December 2014.

# Spotlight on Planned Giving

It's been 21 years since Joel Lapin, 74, lost his wife, Marsha, to cancer. But he has never forgotten the wonderful, compassionate care his late wife received from Gilchrist, nor the counseling that helped him cope with his grief after her death.

A long-time resident of Ellicott City, Joel recalls how supportive the nurses and other staff were, doing "everything and anything" to help. The experience made an enormous impact on Joel and inspired him to become one of Gilchrist's most loyal donors and volunteers over the years. Recently, Joel gave the ultimate gift by making a bequest in his will to Gilchrist.

"I decided that I should pay back the kind deeds that Gilchrist provided," said Joel, who was a professor of sociology for 43 years. "It's important to remember and support those who were there for you... I also want to help people who need Gilchrist's 'divine intervention' just like my late wife and I did."

Joel feels confident that Gilchrist will be a good steward of his gift, having researched the way the organization manages its resources. He said making the planned gift was simple, quick and easy. Even better, his gift will continue to support Gilchrist for many years to come.

In addition to this impactful gift, Joel has been a volunteer for Taste of Howard County for over 30 years and supports Gilchrist's Howard County inpatient center and the Jewish Care and Support program.

Gilchrist is tremendously grateful for the generosity of donors like Joel.

**If you are interested in making a planned gift or want to learn more, please contact Jamie Lynch at 443.849.8241 or visit [gilchristcares.org/give](https://gilchristcares.org/give).**

***"I decided that I should pay back the kind deeds that Gilchrist provided. It's important to remember and support those who were there for you."***

*– Joel Lapin, Planned Giving donor*



Joel Lapin with his late wife, Marsha.



# Tips for Year-end Charitable Giving



**Jerry D. Focas**

Attorney at Law, HASSANI, FOCAS & FIFER, P.A.

Fall is a great time to start thinking about year-end charitable giving. Most nonprofits, like Gilchrist, rely on annual giving to provide essential services and fulfill their missions. Here are some of the most popular ways to support your favorite charities and receive an income tax deduction.

**Cash** – Making a cash gift is the easiest way to give. Funds are immediately available to the charity, and you receive a current income tax deduction.

**Appreciated Assets** – Gifts of appreciated assets such as stocks, funds, ETFs (exchange traded funds) or real estate are another great way to support your favorite charity. You may be entitled to an income tax deduction equal to the fair market value of the appreciated asset, and the charity could liquidate it without taxation.

**Charitable IRA Rollover (QCD)** – If you are over 70 ½, you may give up to \$100K from an IRA to your favorite charities, which counts toward your annual required minimum distributions. The distributions are generally excluded from the donor's and recipient charity's taxable income.

**Matching Gifts** – Many employers match employee contributions to qualifying charities. It is prudent to ask your employer or financial advisor about matching gifts.

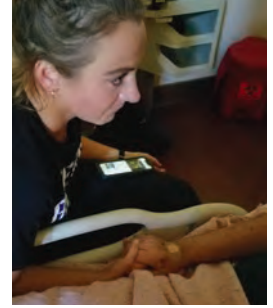
**Bunching Gifts** – In response to the increased standard deduction and SALT (state and local taxes) deduction limit in the 2017 Tax Act, many donors double up on charitable donations in the year they itemize deductions and then take the standard deduction the next.

**Planned Gifts** – Planned gifts can have a transformational impact on your favorite charity. These generally include bequests or distributions in wills or trusts, beneficiary designations on retirement accounts or life insurance, and charitable gift annuities. If you are considering a planned gift, you should discuss with your attorney, tax advisor, or directly with the charity about the income, estate and gift tax benefits of including planned gifts in your estate plan.

*Disclaimer: This information is not intended as specific legal, tax or other professional advice. You should consult with your attorney, CPA or tax advisor regarding your individual circumstances.*

To make a year-end charitable gift to Gilchrist, visit [gilchristcares.org/give](https://gilchristcares.org/give).

# Healing the Heart



Kelly Lekas had just turned 30 when she lost her dad, Mitch, to melanoma. She was extremely close to her dad, having lived with him her entire life, and though Kelly knew his cancer had spread throughout his body, she thought he had years left, not weeks. He was still active, managing his business, going to work every day and playing golf.

So it was a shock when in September 2019, Mitch suffered a seizure that led to a rapid decline. Four days later, he was admitted to Gilchrist Center Towson. In early October, Mitch died. Looking back now, Kelly realizes she was in shock after his death. At home, the house was silent, and she felt a sick, painful feeling in her gut. Her amazing, smart, funny and kind dad was no longer there, and she had never felt so alone.

"I wasn't allowing myself to grieve—I was trying not to think about him because it was extremely painful," Kelly recalls. "It was tearing me up inside and affecting my health."

Grief can be intensely painful, confusing, overwhelming and isolating. Left untended, grief can impact a person's well-being and ability to cope. That's why Gilchrist offers professional counseling services to family members and anyone in the community who has experienced a loss.

Kelly began counseling sessions with Gilchrist clinical counselor Laurel Freeman. Until she met with Laurel, she hadn't spoken much about her grief. She says Laurel helped her "get things out of my brain that were stuck"—things she didn't even realize were there.

Through counseling, Kelly began to feel a semblance of peace. She says coming to terms with the loss of her father was the hardest thing she's ever been through. But she can now, a year and a half later, reflect back on the time she spent with him in his last days and find profound meaning in the experience.

She recalls how Gilchrist Center Towson briefly became their home, as she spent the days by her dad's bedside. Each time she visited, she felt an inner peace.

She was comforted by how the staff took such good care of her dad while the nurses and doctor showed her exceptional kindness and patience. It meant so much that her father was treated with respect and dignity. Even the little things, like bathing and shaving him each day and combing his hair, made a difference.

There are certain moments from that time that are ingrained in her memory—how a chaplain would visit each day to say a blessing, with her father chiming in to say, "Amen." The way a tranquil breeze would fill her dad's room when she opened the doors. How he loved sitting outside on the balcony, listening to the birds

*"I wasn't allowing myself to grieve—I was trying not to think about him because it was extremely painful. It was tearing me up inside and affecting my health."*

— Kelly Lekas, Gilchrist Grief Counseling client

among the peaceful backdrop of greenery and flowers. And the way he reached out his hand to her when he could no longer speak.

Every moment together was imbued with meaning, and she will treasure this bittersweet time always. Kelly is grateful to Gilchrist for the wonderful care her dad received, and the grief support that has been so integral to her life now. In addition to counseling with Laurel, she participated in a Gilchrist grief support group. After the group ended, the members all continued to keep in touch. Kelly says that talking with them has now become a bright spot in her life.

Although she will always feel the loss of her father deeply, she now has the tools and support to help her cope. "I still hold back tears sometimes, but I'm a very happy person," says Kelly, adding, "I'm strong because my dad was strong."

**To learn more about Gilchrist Grief Counseling, visit [gilchristcares.org/grief-counseling](https://gilchristcares.org/grief-counseling).**



# Inspiring Patient Stories

## Bagpipers Surprise Patient Who Founded Their Band 55 Years Ago

Helping patients live life to the fullest is a part of everything we do at Gilchrist. Recently after discovering a patient's love for bagpipes, our Volunteer Services Coordinator reached out to the community to see if anyone would be willing to perform a special tribute. Imagine our surprise when the Baltimore City Pipe Band accepted and shared with us that our patient, Jim Quigg, was their original founder and first Pipe Major. The Baltimore City Pipe Band arrived at Oakcrest Senior Living Facility donned in Scottish kilts and plaid to play for Jim. What an honor it was to reunite Jim with the band and help create this lasting memory.



## Honoring a Hero: The Oldest Living Navy Seal



Charles Gillet served his country as a member of the U.S. Navy during both World War II and the Korean War. As a young man, he was a champion swimmer at Yale. At the time, he was the number three backstroker in the country and an Olympic contender. Unfortunately, the Olympics were canceled in 1940 and 1944. Instead, Charles joined the Navy and volunteered for a new training program, which was the forerunner to the Navy SEALs. Gilchrist recently had the honor of caring for this veteran, who took pride in being the oldest living Navy SEAL at the age of 97. Through Gilchrist's We Honor Veterans program, Charles was honored with a Salute to Service ceremony conducted by Gilchrist volunteers and military veterans, with his family by his bedside. It was a privilege to salute this true hero.

## Former WWII 'Code Girl' Honored for Service, Celebrates 100th Birthday

At the age of 21, Joan Heslin Moore was among the first corps of women to become Navy officers in WWII. In 1943, she began working as a communications officer, or "code girl," stationed in Boston. She was responsible for coding and decoding cables, tracking German U-boats and sending top-secret orders to Navy ships. Today, Joan lives at Mercy Ridge Retirement Community, where Gilchrist recently honored her with a Salute to Service. Joan's family attended the ceremony, and one of her great-granddaughters proudly held the American flag during the Pledge of Allegiance. In August, Joan celebrated her 100th birthday with five of her children and their families at their family farmhouse, with fireworks and a memory reel of photos. Joan blew out all the candles on her cake in one breath. Gilchrist is honored to serve one of the trailblazing women whose contributions made history and helped pave the way for the inclusion of women in the Armed Forces.



To read the full stories of Jim, Charles and Joan, along with other inspiring patient stories, visit the Gilchrist Blog at [gilchristcares.org/thegilchristblog](https://gilchristcares.org/thegilchristblog).



[gilchristcares.org](http://gilchristcares.org)

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## Twilight in the Woods

*Virtual Event*

**December 11, 2021**

**7:00 p.m.**

Come join us the evening of Saturday, December 11th as we light up the night in honor of those we have loved and lost. This virtual event will provide a time of reflection and remembrance in the comfort of your own home.

*Registration ends November 19, 2021.*

[gilchristcares.org/twilight](http://gilchristcares.org/twilight)



## Taste of Howard County has been postponed until February 2022

With the health and safety of our community being our top priority, and under guidance from medical leadership at Gilchrist, the decision has been made to postpone the Taste of Howard County until February 6, 2022.

Get all the latest information at  
[gilchristcares.org/taste](http://gilchristcares.org/taste).

Thank you for your support!