

We Honor Veterans Newsletter



April 2024 Edition

2024 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration



gilchrist

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans

Gilchrist's annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration is a day to honor and thank the men and women in our community who served during the Vietnam War. This Welcome Home celebration honors the veterans in our care as well as all of the veterans and their loved ones in our community. This celebration is one of the many ways Gilchrist recognizes the unique needs of veterans and thanks them for their sacrifice and service to our state and our country.

The 2024 event will be held on Sunday, April 7th beginning at 11:30 AM at Martin's West in Baltimore.

Special guest speakers include Vietnam Veteran and Medal of Honor Recipient Sammy Davis and his wife Dixie Davis.

[Gilchrist's Welcome Home Celebration for Vietnam Veterans](#)

Register for Free Today!

Music Therapy and Support for Veterans

In 2023 Gilchrist veteran volunteers and staff conducted several hundred Salute to Service Tributes to honor veterans under hospice care. At many of these tributes there were music therapists who play and sing the National Anthem and God Bless America

as well as patriotic and military songs. These music therapists make these tributes extra special for the veterans and their family members.

Each year the music therapy team conducts a fundraiser to support the important services they provide for Gilchrist patients, including veterans. We invite you to come celebrate their annual fundraiser to support the Gilchrist Music Therapy program. They will once again return to the stage, in person, to bring you an amazing afternoon of music inspired by patients and their families.

Gilchrist's very own music therapy team will be featured along with guest performers including The Bel Air Community Band Jazz Ensemble, in this special concert. The afternoon will also include a dessert reception, door prizes and raffles. This link will take you to the Gilchrist website where you can learn more about this special event and to register. Hope to see you there.

[Music Therapy Event - All You Need is Love | Gilchrist \(gilchristcares.org\)](https://gilchristcares.org)



Army Veteran Wayne Kocher

Wayne Kocher proudly served in the Army for six years and spent 13 months deployed in Korea with the Quartermaster Corps. Wayne was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute by Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. Wayne was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a handmade patriotic blanket, a handmade thank-you card from a school student, and a door plaque for his room letting anyone entering the room know that a proud veteran lives there.

A Gilchrist music therapist attended and encouraged everyone to join in the singing of the National Anthem, the Army song, and God Bless America. At the conclusion of the tribute, the military veterans presented Army veteran Wayne Kocher with an honor salute to thank him for his service to our country.



Korean War Veteran Charles Anderson

Charles William Anderson, Jr. served in the Army during the Korean War. Charles was the recipient of the Bronze Service Star and the United Nation's Service Medal. Charles served his country from 1951 to 1953. After leaving the military, Charles became one of the original developers of the software used by Medicare.

Charles was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute by Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. He was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a handmade patriotic blanket, a handmade thank-you card from a school student, and a door plaque for his room letting anyone entering the room know that a proud veteran lives there. At the conclusion of the tribute, the military veterans presented Army veteran Charles Anderson with an honor salute to thank him for his service to our country.

The photo below shows four generations of the Anderson family. Charles with his daughter, granddaughter, and great granddaughter.



Four Generations of the Anderson Family

WWII Army Medic Robert Russell

Robert "Bob" Russell was born on Easter Sunday 1925, in Binghamton, New York. He grew up just outside of Binghamton and graduated from Binghamton North High School in January, 1943.

After graduation, Bob enlisted in the Army and was sent to Fort Dix, New Jersey in April, 1944. Following training at Lawson Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, Bob served as a Med Tech in England, France, Italy, and Germany with the 254th General Hospital.

After the war, Bob was assigned to Camp Atterbury in Indiana. In 1946, he signed up for another three years at Camp Atterbury and was then honorably discharged in May 1949 at the rank of Corporal.

After discharge from the Army, Bob returned home to Binghamton and secured a job at a local drugstore. The owners were so impressed with him that they offered to pay his way through five years of Pharmacy School at the Albany College of Pharmacy in Albany, NY. Bob hitchhiked between Albany and Binghamton on the weekends to continue working at the drugstore. He never forgot the kindness of his employer. After

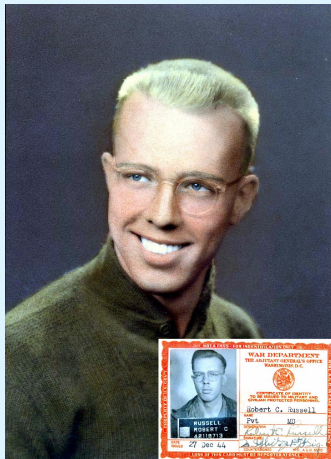
graduating, he continued working for the same owners, who by then had several stores in the area. Bob also became a Pharmacology instructor at Broome Community College in Binghamton.

Bob met his wife Connie in 1957 in one of those drug stores when she went to pick up a prescription for a mutual friend. At the time, Bob was 32 and a confirmed bachelor, but he said to the clerk in the pharmacy after Connie had left, "I'm going to marry that girl!", and he immediately got on the phone to the mutual friend, and asked, "Who was that? You have to set us up!" The rest is history. Bob and Connie were married in 1958 in her hometown of Glendora, California. They soon welcomed their daughter, Nancy and a few years later, their son Christopher and lived in Binghamton, NY for their entire married life. They were very active volunteers in the community and enjoyed dancing, traveling, and entertaining.

Bob purchased his own pharmacy in 1964 and owned it for a little over 20 years before retiring in 1985. He then went to work as a pharmacist at the Binghamton Psychiatric Center for a few years.

In 1991, after 32 years of marriage, the love of his life passed away, and Bob became involved with several volunteer organizations in the Binghamton area to keep himself busy. In 2001, he moved to Cockeysville, Maryland, to be near his daughter and her family.

Army medic Bob Russell was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by Gilchrist military veteran volunteers and staff. The tribute included an opening prayer, singing of the National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Bob was presented with a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a certificate from Gilchrist, a handmade patriotic lap blanket, and a handmade thank-you card from a Cub Scout. The Gilchrist music therapist sang patriotic music including the Army song. The tribute concluded with a formal salute and a closing prayer. Following the tribute, one of the military veteran volunteers commented that it was a true honor to salute a WWII veteran.



Robert Russell in the Army



Robert Russell with Gilchrist Veteran Volunteers

B-29 Tail Gunner John Angel

John E. Angel was born in Catonsville, Maryland on January 18, 1926, the son of Raymond and Lula Angel. The family survived the Great Depression on a small chicken farm his father owned in Catonsville on Bloomsbury Ave.

John graduated from Catonsville Senior High School. After high school, he worked in a defense manufacturing plant in Baltimore. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, many of John's friends were drafted or enlisted. John had a job deemed critical to the war effort but chose to enlist in the Army Air Force. After his training, he was assigned to a B-29 bomber squadron based on the Island of Tinian. He served as a tail gunner on 34

missions in the South Pacific Theater including bombing raids over Japan. John still recalls seeing the Enola Gay depart from Tinian, although it was later he learned that the plane was carrying atomic bombs.

During his time in the USAAF, John earned the Air Medal with 3 OLC, the WWII Victory Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the American Theater Ribbon, the Asian Pacific Theater Ribbon with 3 Bronze Stars, and the Good Conduct Medal. John Angel was discharged from the military in November of 1945 at the rank of Staff Sergeant.

After the war ended, John started a successful contracting firm constructing residential homes in the Catonsville and Arbutus area. He became a pilot himself, owning several small airplanes that he loved to fly. John became friends with other business associates and pilots in Catonsville and they would travel to many different destinations, including Ocean City, Frederick, Miami, and even Havana, Cuba (before travel to Cuba was banned).

John married Charlotte Marguerite Cashmeyer in Jessup, Maryland. They met as she was a bookkeeper at one of the builder supply houses located in Catonsville. She became his partner and bookkeeper, and together, they developed properties and constructed hundreds of homes in the Catonsville and Arbutus area.

John and Charlotte loved traveling. They made multiple trips to Puerto Rico, where they spent their honeymoon, and took frequent trips Ocean City.

When John and Charlotte Angel discovered they could not have children of their own, they adopted two sons. John Lincoln Angel born in 1963 and William Larsen Angel born in 1964. Both boys were adopted as infants.

Their life was a storybook marriage, until Charlotte developed cancer in 1968 and resultantly passed away. After her death, John shut down his contracting firm and dedicated his time to raising his two boys.

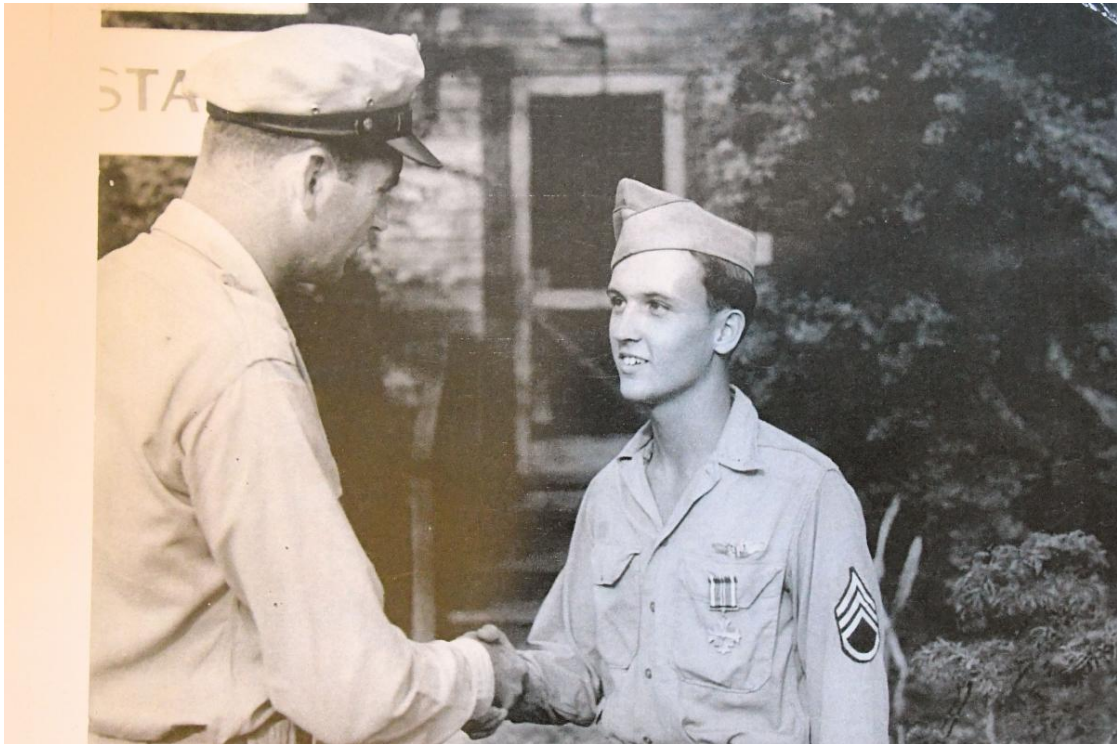
Through his steadfast faith in Jesus Christ, John took one of the worst of all possible situations, and turned it for good. He raised his two boys as a single father and never remarried. John hand built a camper and a conversion van. He traveled with the boys on a shoe-string budget whenever there were school breaks or summer breaks... almost any chance he could get. Together, they went skiing, fishing, hunting, camping, swimming, scuba diving, climbing... a storybook life for two young men.

Even after the boys had grown and married, John was there for his sons, advising, helping, fathering. He continued to travel, many times on his own, spending summers in his beloved Catonsville and winters skiing in Utah, well into his 80's. John still resides in Catonsville and at 98 years old enjoys visits from friends and family members, particularly his boys, his grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

John Angel was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by Gilchrist veteran volunteers. The tribute included an opening prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and several patriotic readings. John was presented the We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration. John also received a certificate from Gilchrist and a handmade patriotic blanket. The tribute concluded with an honor salute by the military veterans and the singing of God Bless America. John Angel proudly returned the salute.



John Angel (2nd row – 3rd from right) with his flight crew in front of their B-29



John Angel being recognized by Brigadier General Davies



John Angel proudly saluting Gilchrist volunteers (L-R) John Gonnella, Ed Kaplan, and Don Kyle

Navy Veteran Joe Ciesla

Joe Ciesla was born on March 6, 1954, in Baltimore Maryland to Benign and Martha Ciesla. Joe graduated from Dundalk Senior High in 1972 and in 1974 enlisted in the United States Navy. Joe served his entire enlistment on the Aircraft Carrier USS Independence CV 62 as a Boatswains Mate.

While in the Navy, Joe married his high school sweetheart, Margie Auten on May 8, 1976.

Joe was honorably discharged from the Navy April 14, 1980. In civilian life he worked for the Army Corp of Engineers as a Mail Clerk for over 40 years before retiring in November of 2022.

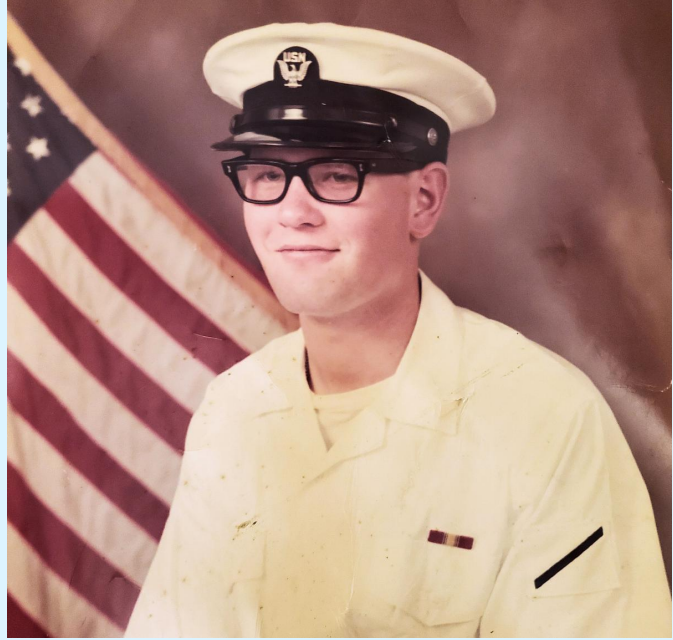
Joe and Margie had two children. Their son Phillip and their daughter Katrina. Joe also had three grandchildren Evelyn, Sean, and Elliana. Joe also had two younger sisters Barbara Ciesla and Margie Carricco, and a younger brother Eric Ciesla.

Joe enjoyed watching sports, particularly golf and loved rooting for the Orioles and Ravens. He also enjoyed going on day trips to various parks in the state and going on outings with his children and grandchildren.

Joe was a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 965 in Edgemere, MD and he was also a 48-year member of The Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

Joe loved serving others and was a Gilchrist veteran volunteer. As a volunteer, he joined with other veterans to honor veterans under hospice care. As soon as Joe was placed under hospice himself, he requested a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by his team. While his team members were emotional during the tribute, Joe smiled, thanked his friends, and proudly returned their final salute.

Joe Ciesla in Uniform



Joe Ciesla with Gilchrist Team



Joe Ciesla Saluting Brother Veterans

Wreaths Across America Radio

Wreaths Across America Radio, a 24/7 internet radio station that airs podcasts and radio shows aimed at educating and entertaining Veterans, has made a major expansion to its programming lineup. With a commitment to providing diverse and engaging content, the web-based platform now offers more than 50 shows, including seven new Veteran-themed programs.

“As Wreaths Across America Radio continues to expand our programming, we are honored to partner with shows that honor Veterans and support the military community,” said Jeff Pierce, director of broadcast and media partnerships at [Wreaths Across America Radio](#). “We are dedicated to continually providing a platform for Veterans, military families and our volunteers to share their stories and support.”

The lineup additions underscore Wreaths Across America Radio’s dedication to its mission to “Remember, Honor, Teach.” The new shows include [1 Mile 1 Veteran](#) with Danny Mayberry; [Bulletproof](#) podcast with Ace; [Connect First](#) with Command Sgt. Maj. Shawn Carns; the America’s First Corps [PHIner Life Show](#) from the Mu Beta Phi Military Fraternity, Inc.; [Transacting Value](#); and [True War Stories](#). The seventh show, [Modern MilSpouse](#), is produced by WAA Radio in partnership with Armed Forces Insurance and features military spouses of the year as hosts.

The new programming focuses on Veteran and active-duty information and support, mental health issues, military life and stories of everyday life as a military spouse. These and other programs aired by WAA Radio support the mission of its Maine-based parent organization, [Wreaths Across America](#), to remember fallen Veterans, honor those who have served and teach future generations the value of freedom.

If you’re a Veteran or host a Veteran-centric podcast and would like to be considered for a time slot on Wreaths Across America Radio, please e-mail Jeff Pierce at jpierce@wreathsassamerica.org.

Uniform Smiles

A little boy was staring in wonder at the names on a plaque in an old church. The

pastor noticed him and asked, "What are you looking at, my son?"

The boy replied, "All those names up there. Who are they?"

The pastor smiled and said, "Why they are the names of people from this congregation who died in the service."

The little boy thought for a moment and then asked very quietly, "Which one? The 9:00 or the 11:00 service?"

Please Share

If you enjoyed reading this edition, please forward a copy to other veterans that you know so that they can also enjoy the newsletter. If you are reading a shared copy and would like to receive your own copy of future editions, please send an email with your request to kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.

Looking For a Few Good Volunteers

Would you like to be a Gilchrist volunteer? We are always looking for volunteers – especially those who have military experience. Our military veteran volunteers are involved in Salute to Service Tributes for veterans under hospice care, visiting public schools to talk about military service, meeting with veterans to talk about their military service, supporting our annual Welcome Home event for Vietnam Veterans, and many other activities.

If you would like to learn how to become a volunteer, contact Gilchrist at kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.

Gilchrist Cares

You may know Gilchrist best for the care we provide people near the end of life. But we offer so much more than hospice. Today's Gilchrist extends services to individuals with serious illness who need our care and support well in advance of hospice care. We also provide counseling and support before and after the loss of a loved one. Please visit the Gilchrist website to learn more.

[Gilchrist providing care at every stage of serious illness \(gilchristcares.org\)](http://gilchristcares.org)

We Want Your Input

If you have suggestions for content you would like to see in future issues of the Gilchrist We Honor Veterans Newsletter, please contact us at kmcdonnell@gilchristcares.org.



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