

Reflections *Newsletter*

Fall 2024

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Healing and Hope

In this Issue...

Discover how a family, guided by Gilchrist's compassionate care, found resilience and strength after loss.

Also in this issue: Meet the Silver Lining Sisters, a group whose shared support turns grief into healing; new board members at Gilchrist; our integration with Hospice of Washington County; charitable tax benefits; celebrating our 30th year; and more.

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30 *Years*
Living Every Moment

The Strength of a Family: Facing Loss with Gilchrist's Support

In the autumn of 1982, Marie and Steven Pedri's love story began, marking the beginning of a relationship that would span over forty years. Their profound commitment and shared dreams evolved into a marriage enriched by the birth of two sons and countless cherished moments.

Gilchrist provided that essential care, making her final days as comfortable as possible. "It really came down to quality versus quantity. Of course, I wanted Marie to be around for many more years, but it was about a quality life for her," Steven recalls, praising the Gilchrist team as "undercover angels."

Despite being on hospice, Marie's determination never wavered. She insisted on attending her son's wedding, a goal she achieved, creating a memory that would be treasured by all who witnessed her strength that day. Marie passed away peacefully on August 7, 2023, in Steven's arms at home. Tragically, later that year, the family faced the loss of Marie's father, Jerome R. Beck, on December 26, 2023, at Gilchrist Center Towson.

Marie's generosity extended well beyond her family. She worked part-time at two retirement communities, where she was more than just an employee; she was a beloved figure whose enthusiasm and empathy significantly enhanced the lives of many residents. These qualities were fundamental to her career and shone through in her roles as a wife and mother, reflecting her natural inclination to uplift those around her.

In 2021, the Pedris suffered the loss of two close family members. Marie's sister, Deborah Ann Beck, passed away in January under the care of Gilchrist, followed by the unexpected death of her mother, Marie Beck. The following year, Marie herself began experiencing abdominal pains, leading to a devastating diagnosis of advanced liver cancer. Known as their pillar of strength, the news shocked her family. Despite facing numerous setbacks from complications that intermittently halted her treatment, Marie tackled the disease head-on with hope and determination.

By August 2023, as her health declined, Marie chose to receive end-of-life care at home, surrounded by familiar faces and memories.

The loss of a spouse or a loved one profoundly transforms life. For Steven, Marie's death began a deeply personal grief journey. He found solace in Gilchrist's grief services, starting with sessions with Laurel Freeman, a grief counselor. He also joined a spousal support grief group, finding comfort in shared experiences and maintaining Marie's memory by talking about her. "If I stop talking about Marie, it feels as if she no longer exists," he explains. In June, the Pedri family, including Marie's sister, Barbie, and Steven's son, Matthew, attended Gilchrist's 9th Annual Steps of Hope Tribute Walk at Cromwell Valley Park in Parkville to honor Marie Pedri, Deborah Beck, Marie Beck, and Jerome Beck.

Steven's journey reminds us of the power of support, the importance of shared memories, and the enduring love that transcends death. With Gilchrist's compassionate support, Steven is finding the strength to move forward, keeping Marie's spirit alive in his daily actions.

Explore Gilchrist's grief support options at gilchristcares.org/grief-support.



The Silver Lining Sisters: Finding Hope and Healing Through Shared Grief

Grief often leaves individuals feeling isolated and overwhelmed. However, for a special group of women who met in a six-week session support group through Gilchrist, their journey through parental loss has been transformed by the power of community and mutual support. **These women, who call themselves “The Silver Lining Sisters,” have been meeting monthly for two years, providing each other with comfort and understanding as they navigate the complexities of grief.**



The Beginning of a Supportive Journey

Gilchrist’s support groups encourage mutual support and understanding by providing an environment where participants can discuss grief-related topics, explore their feelings, and learn coping strategies. The Silver Lining Sisters met for the first time virtually through the 6-session grief support group *Remembering Our Parents*.

The group’s meetings were a safe space for members to express their emotions, share memories, and receive and offer support. Jenna, who lost both her mother and grandmother within a short period, found solace in the group. “I was dealing with a lot and seeing a grief counselor, but it wasn’t enough. The counselor suggested joining a group. I was hesitant at first, but I’m so thankful I did,” she shares. “Even if you just act as an observer, you’ll see that others are going through the same thing. It can be incredibly comforting,” says Diane.

Gilchrist Grief Support Groups are open to anyone in the community. For Cathy, the journey to the group was somewhat serendipitous. “My mom wasn’t in Gilchrist or hospice when she died. A cousin connected me to

Gilchrist, and I got the most amazing counselor who connected me to other Gilchrist resources, and that’s how I met these wonderful ladies,” she recalls. A deep bond formed as the women shared their stories and supported one another. “We all felt like six weeks wasn’t long enough, so we decided to continue,” Cathy explains.

A Lifeline During Difficult Times

For many in the group, the monthly meetings have become a lifeline, providing a consistent source of comfort and understanding. Cathy describes the group’s impact on her first Mother’s Day without her mom. “That first Mother’s Day caught me off guard, so I reached out to the group. Just knowing they understood exactly how I felt was incredibly comforting,” she recounts.

The group has shared not only their grief but also their joys and milestones, such as birthdays, anniversaries, and other significant dates. Tiny, who came up with the group name, explains, “At the absolute worst time of our lives, we found each other. Even when we’re feeling sad, someone can make us smile, laugh, or say an encouraging word. We are each other’s silver lining to that dark cloud.”

“Even if you just act as an observer, you’ll see that others are going through the same thing. It can be incredibly comforting.”

- Diane, a Silver Lining Sister

A Message of Hope

The Silver Lining Sisters offer a message of hope to anyone experiencing grief. “Hopefully, we can inspire even just one person to take that leap and join a group. There are powerful benefits,” Jenna says.

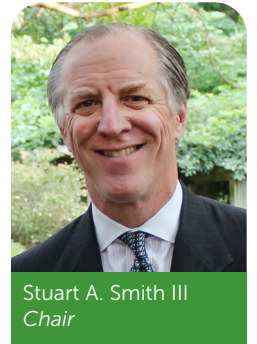
The Silver Lining Sisters remind us that even in the darkest times, there is a silver lining.

To read more about the Silver Lining Sisters and Gilchrist’s support groups, visit gilchristcares.org/the-silver-lining-sisters.

Welcome, New Board Members!

Gilchrist is pleased to welcome several new members to its Board of Directors and to announce longtime member Stuart Smith III as the 2024-2026 Chairman of the Board. The Board plays a crucial role in the governance, oversight, and strategic leadership at Gilchrist. The board members' responsibilities ensure that the organization remains aligned with Gilchrist's mission, vision and values.

We'd also like to honor and thank outgoing members Rick Huether, John Mangione, and Redonda G. Miller, M.D., for their dedication and commitment to our organization and their community.



To see the full list of board members, visit gilchristcares.org/about/leadership/board-of-directors.

Gilchrist Joins Forces with Hospice of Washington County and Franklin Hospice



Gilchrist has announced an affiliation agreement with Hospice of Washington County and its affiliate, Franklin Hospice. This partnership will unite two of Maryland's oldest and most experienced nonprofit organizations, together boasting nearly 70 years of service to their communities. By combining resources and expertise, we will build upon each other's capabilities, enhancing access to care through geographic expansion and scope of services for patients, families, and communities across Maryland and into Pennsylvania. This strategic affiliation will strengthen our ability to offer compassionate care to more patients and families throughout Central and Southern Maryland, as well as Washington and Frederick Counties and South-Central Pennsylvania.

To learn more about this landmark affiliation agreement, visit gilchristcares.org/gilchrist-and-hospice-of-washington-county.

Make a Difference Today and Save on Taxes

It's possible when you support Gilchrist through your IRA.

A Special Opportunity for Those 70½ Years Old and Older

You can give any amount (up to a maximum of \$105,000) per year from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as Gilchrist without having to pay income taxes on the money. Gifts of any value \$105,000 or less are eligible for this benefit and you can feel good knowing that you are making a difference. This popular gift option is commonly called the IRA charitable rollover, but you may also see it referred to as a qualified charitable distribution, or QCD for short.

Benefits of Charitable IRA Rollovers:

- Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.
- Beginning in the year you turn 73, you can use your gift to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution (RMD).
- You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.
- Since the gift doesn't count as income, it can reduce your annual income level. This may help lower your Medicare premiums and decrease the amount of Social Security that is subject to tax.



As always, we recommend you consult your trusted financial adviser. To learn more about the IRA Charitable Rollover, the potential advantages of charitable estate planning, and donor recognition through membership in The Gilchrist Legacy Society, please contact the Gilchrist Philanthropy Team at 443-849-8330. Gilchrist is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization (EIN: 52-1851251).

To make a year-end charitable gift to Gilchrist, visit gilchristcares.org/give.

Take Your Donations Further

Many employers offer a matching gift program that can double or even triple the impact of your donation to Gilchrist! Contributions from employees' spouses and retirees may also be eligible for matching.

To see if your company participates in a matching gift program, visit gilchristcares.org/matching-gifts.

If eligible, click the "Go To Matching Gift Form" button to access and find instructions for how to submit your company's matching gift form. By doing so, you can maximize the impact of your generosity!



Double the Donation
matching gifts made easy

Recent Gilchrist Events

On Sunday, April 28, 2024, Gilchrist held its annual "All You Need Is Love... And Music Therapy" event. This celebration raises important funds for Gilchrist's Music Therapy Program and features songs to commemorate the lives of our patients and their families.

To learn more about Gilchrist's Music Therapy program, visit gilchristcares.org/music-therapy.



On Sunday, June 9, 2024, Gilchrist hosted its 9th Annual Steps of Hope: A Tribute Walk at Cromwell Valley Park.

This touching event welcomed over 500 attendees to honor their loved ones and find solace in the beauty of nature.

To learn more about Gilchrist's Grief Counseling program, visit gilchristcares.org/grief-counseling.



Gilchrist Celebrates Its 30th Year





gilchristcares.org

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Gilchrist provides services without regard to race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, ability to pay or national origin.

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Catherine Y. Hamel	President
Shannon Wollman	Chief Philanthropy & Marketing Officer
Rachel Taylor	Director of Marketing
Lauren Brock	Digital Marketing Manager
Kathleen Fine	Content Manager
Gregg Harrow	Creative Manager



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Twilight
An Evening of Remembrance

Virtual Event
December 14, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Join us 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. To enhance your experience, we suggest you have a candle on hand during the event.

Register today at
gilchristcares.org/twilight

Registration closes on
Friday, November 29, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.



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Welcome Home
Vietnam Veterans

March 30, 2025

Gilchrist's 7th Annual
**Welcome Home
Vietnam Veterans Day
Celebration**

[gilchristcares.org/
welcome-home-celebration](http://gilchristcares.org/welcome-home-celebration)

Event in-person starting
at 12:00 p.m. at Martin's West