

We Honor Veterans Newsletter



March 2025

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Celebration 2025

Gilchrist's 7th annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration is on Sunday, March 30, 2025, at Martin's West. The celebration begins at 12:00 noon.

The Keynote Speaker will be Captain Charlie Plumb.

Captain Charlie Plumb served as a Navy Fighter Pilot and was a Vietnam War POW. He is also an author and a top motivational speaker. During his nearly six years of captivity, Captain Charlie Plumb distinguished himself among his fellow prisoners as a professional in underground communications and served for two of those years as the Chaplain in his camp. Since his return home, more than 4,000 audiences in nearly every industry have been spellbound as Captain Plumb draws parallels between his P.O.W. experience and the challenges of everyday life.

Here is a brief video of Charlie Plumb talking about his parachute. This will give you a great reason to attend this event and see him in person:

[Capt. Charlie Plumb's Parachute Packer Story \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Here are comments from those who have attended this welcome home celebration in the past:

"It's a wonderful service that Gilchrist offers ...and everything you do is professional and caring."

"Every volunteer, staff person and participant were knowledgeable, warm, and dedicated to the Vietnam veteran."

"It is a good event for me to open-up about my experiences. I have found that those who didn't go to Vietnam don't typically understand."

We need your help! Please spread the word about this event. We would like to reach as many Vietnam veterans as possible.

Registration will begin in early February. Check the following page for the "Registration" link in February. Then register! We hope to see you there!

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

This **free event** is supported 100% by community donations. If you know of someone who would like to become a sponsor or if you would like to donate, please visit the Gilchrist website link above and click on the link that reads: Donate to the 2025 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration.

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans.

Music Therapy & Supporting Veterans

Gilchrist, the leading nonprofit provider of serious illness and end-of-life care in Maryland, will host its annual "All You Need Is Love... And Music Therapy" concert on **Sunday, April 27, 2025**, at 2:30 p.m. at St. Joseph's Monastery, 3801 Old Frederick Road, Baltimore, MD 21229 with a new reduced ticket price of \$25.

This special event will raise awareness and funds for Gilchrist's music therapy program, which brings comfort and peace to hospice patients and their families through the healing power of music. This year's concert will feature **The Bel Air Community Band Jazz Ensemble** and showcase the impact of Gilchrist's board-certified music therapy team.

The performance will include a **special musical tribute to our We Honor Veterans program**, recognizing the veterans in attendance. Guests will also enjoy a delightful dessert reception featuring an assortment of sweet treats, hot and cold refreshments, and exciting door prizes and raffles.

How to Attend or Support the Event

Community members are encouraged to attend this uplifting event and support Gilchrist's music therapy program. \$25 tickets and additional details are available at <https://GilchristMusic.givesmart.com>

For more information about Gilchrist's music therapy services or to make a donation, please visit gilchristcares.org.

Army Veteran Jack Histon

John "Jack" Histon was born on February 16, 1933, in Washington, DC. Jack entered the Army in March of 1950. Following boot camp, Jack was trained as a tractor driver and assigned to the 552nd AAA Gun Battalion stationed in Germany.

The 552nd Army AAA Gun Battalion was a unit of the 552nd Field Artillery Battalion. It had three gun batteries: A, B, and C Battery. One of their weapons was the enormous, American-made 240 mm Howitzer Cannon that would shoot a 365-pound projectile within a twenty-mile range, using eighty-five pounds of gunpowder per shot.

Jack was discharged from the Army in March of 1953.

After leaving the Army, Jack became a meat cutter for Department of Defense (DOD) at Bolling Air Force Base as well as the Walter Reed Medical Annex in Washington, DC.

Jack had a strong work ethic, working two jobs (the DOD during the day and Safeway in the evenings) for nearly 30 years.

Jack met his future wife Dolores in Washington. They would have two sons: Steve and Michael.

Jack was an active member of the American Legion and VFW in Wheaton, Maryland. Jack also loved playing Santa Claus and did so for many years.

Jack Histon was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by Gilchrist staff and a team of veteran volunteers. The tribute included an opening prayer, the singing of the National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Jack was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a handmade thank-you card from a school student, and a patriotic blanket made by a Gilchrist volunteer. The tribute included singing of patriotic songs as well as the Army song, an honor salute presented by the military veterans, and a closing prayer. The tribute concluded with the singing of God Bless America.

The tribute meant a lot to Jack as seen by the smile on his face in a photo with the Gilchrist team.



Jack Histon in Uniform



Emblem of the 552nd AAA Gun Battalion



Jack Histon with the Gilchrist Team

Army Major Bruce Gill

Bruce L. Gill was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1932 and graduated from Sumner High School in the city in 1950. He attended Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on a football scholarship. While at Southern, he pledged Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, was President of the Student Body, and was in the Army ROTC entering military service after graduating in 1956.

Bruce was an Army infantry officer who over the years was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington; Korea; Berlin, Germany; Vietnam; Virginia State University ROTC department; Fort Ord, California; and Fort Dix, New Jersey. He was an infantry officer in Vietnam from September 10, 1965, to September 5, 1966, as a military advisor for Vietnamese troops. He completed a second tour in Vietnam from August 16, 1969, to August 15, 1970, in a combat zone that took him into Cambodia for which he received a bronze star.

Bruce Gill's decorations, medals, badges, commendations, citations and campaign ribbons awarded or authorized as listed on his DD14 form include: BSM 3D OLC, MSM, ARCM 1st OLC, CIB, AOM (Germany), AFEM (Berlin), VSM, RVNMC w/60 DEV, AFRM, 4 O/S SVC BARS, RVNGC W/PALM.

Bruce's last duty station was Fort Dix. At Fort Dix he organized logistical systems and supervised and assessed their implementation.

Major Gill was honorably discharged from Fort Dix, New Jersey after 20 years one month and seven days of active duty on December 31, 1976.

Following his first tour of duty in Vietnam, Bruce was assigned to ROTC duty at Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia. While there as a Professor of Military Science, in 1966 Bruce met and dated Wanda Waples who he married in 1968 after Wanda completed graduate school at the University of Cincinnati. The couple has two children,

Candace E. Gill born in 1969 and Kimberly L. Gill born in 1973. Candace is a high school teacher and Kimberly is a manager with Catholic Charities. Granddaughter Skye E. Gill is a sophomore political science major at her grandfather's alma mater, Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

After a brief stint as a Metropolitan Life insurance agent in 1976, Bruce secured a position as a procurement manager in the Washington, D.C. General Services Administration office. Bruce retired from the GSA in 1998.

Bruce enjoyed watching and playing sports throughout his life. He taught his children to play tennis and join him and his friends for touch football games on Sunday afternoons. He often volunteered for his children's school camping weekends setting up tents and completing volunteer assignments.

An avid football fan, Bruce enjoyed season tickets for Redskins games when FedEx Field opened enabling new fan support of the team.

Retired Army Major Bruce Gill was recently honored with a Salute to Service Tribute conducted by a team of Gilchrist volunteers. The tribute included an opening prayer, the singing of the National Anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Bruce was presented a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans pin from the Veterans Administration, a Vietnam Veteran pin also from the Veterans Administration, and a patriotic lap blanket handmade by a Gilchrist volunteer. Wanda Gill was presented a patriotic scarf and a Proud Wife of a Veteran pin. The tribute concluded with a formal salute presented by the Gilchrist military veteran volunteers. Major Gill proudly returned the salute.



2nd Lieutenant Bruce Gill



Major Bruce Gill with the Gilchrist Team

WWII Marine Laura Mianulli

Laura Mianulli is a 103-year-old Marine. Laura joined the United States Marine Corps in 1943.

A team of Gilchrist military volunteers recently honored Laura. She was wearing her USMC cap and had a smile that lit up the room. Upon seeing the team, her immediate response was to salute. Laura's 1943 drill instructors would be very proud of her extremely sharp salute.

The tribute was held in a large room at her senior living facility. The room was filled with facility residents there to see Laura being honored for her service to our country.

The tribute included an opening prayer, singing of the national anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance. Laura was presented with a certificate from Gilchrist, a We Honor Veterans Pin from the Veterans Administration, and a handmade patriotic lap blanket made by a Gilchrist volunteer. The military volunteers presented Laura with a formal salute – which she proudly returned. The tribute concluded with a prayer and the singing of God Bless America.



Laura Mianulli with Gilchrist Volunteer Tim Price (Army/Vietnam Veteran)



Laura Mianulli with the Gilchrist Team

2025 Veteran Benefits Guide Now Available

As part of their commitment to provide world-class care and benefits to those who have served our nation, the VA is pleased to present the [“2025 VA Federal Benefits Guide for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers.”](#)

Have you applied for VA care, benefits and services? Unsure what else you may be eligible for? Don't miss out on what you've earned—check out this handy reference guide to learn more.

The handbook contains a comprehensive listing of VA programs, including phone numbers and websites for easy reference. The annual Federal Benefits Guide hosts a wealth of information on most VA benefits and services, including:

- Compensation.
- Life insurance.
- Pension and fiduciary services.
- Education benefits.
- Economic development and employment.
- Home loan guaranty programs and housing assistance.
- Mental health resources.

Click on the link above and download your copy of this essential guide today.

Uniform Smiles

Sergeant: Private, I didn't see you at camouflage training this morning.

Private: Thank you, sir!

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.



gilchristcares.org • 888.823.8880

Gilchrist | 11311 McCormick Rd. Suite 350 | Hunt Valley, MD 21031 US

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