



paint.
your own picture

2015 year in review

Gilchrist
HOSPICE CARE 

Guiding the way.



our mission Guiding the way: Providing the finest care through the end of life.

our vision Foster hope, healing and respect through an unwavering commitment to what we do, through the education of our patients, families and the community, and through our interdisciplinary teamwork.



Hospice can be a frightening concept for those who have never experienced its life-affirming care. But once enveloped in the warm embrace of their Gilchrist Hospice Care team, patients and families soon realize that, with a little thought and imagination, they can still dream and experience. They can still create lasting memories. They can even fly.

On the following pages are the stories of five amazing Gilchrist patients, ranging in age from 4 to 80, who, with the help of their hospice team, are enriching their own lives and the lives of others.

When every moment counts...

paint.
your own *picture*
2015 year in review



“i conquered the world that day.”

Pictures this page: Martha Ferrara takes us on her skydiving adventure. Picture on following page: (l to r) Maureen Hulse, Gilchrist social worker, Martha and Gilchrist nurse Jodi Gilmore discuss Martha's care at home.



into the wild *blue yonder*

Martha Ferrara's walk may have slowed, her body weakened from the cancer growing within, but she could still fly.

And so it was that on a beautiful, sunny day in April, Martha, accompanied by her younger son and her great niece, strapped on a parachute and boarded a small airplane. It would be her first time skydiving – at the age of 79.

“It felt like I was flying. I don't know why I never did it before,” she said, her voice still carrying the lilt of her native Brazil. “It was such a good feeling.”

For Martha, a former realtor, that day would become just one of many memories made during her months under hospice care. With the support of her Gilchrist team nurse Jodi Gilmore and social worker Maureen Hulse, to help manage her pain and raise her spirits,

Martha was able to travel to Florida in March; celebrate her 80th birthday and say goodbye to 40 of her closest friends and family in June; and visit her sister in Virginia in July.

“Jodi takes such good care of me and talks to me, which is good. She is so soothing and she listens,” Martha said. “I call Maureen my sunshine. She's so full of life.”

She continues to dream of new places to visit and people to see, although she has been content, of late, to enjoy the company of her sisters visiting from Brazil. And if money were no object, she said she wouldn't hesitate to go skydiving again: “It was an adventure. It's good to have adventures.”

with a *mentorship* program

Maravene Loeschke had been feeling ill and tired, but there was little evidence of that on this day.

She was preparing to launch what turned out to be the final program in her decades-long and storied career in academics – a mentorship program that pairs Blakehurst Retirement Community residents with Towson University students.

Maravene, whose cancer forced her retirement as president of Towson last year, had lined up a pre-eminent Blakehurst resident to talk with a handful of physics students about her work on the Manhattan Project, which produced the first nuclear weapons during World War II.

By the end of the hour-long session, Maravene was tired – but happy: “I wasn’t supposed to have this much time. I want my days to be meaningful for as long as I feel well,” she said.

Decades spent creating and enhancing university programs were interrupted last year by her illness. As the months passed and her energy waned, she would focus her remaining time on the mentorship program, relying on her Gilchrist Hospice team to help manage her pain and symptoms so she could focus her energy on helping others.

“Gilchrist helps me give back – to continue to make a difference,” she said.

Maravene Loeschke died June 25 at Gilchrist Center Towson.

Through the efforts of Blakehurst and Towson University staff, the mentorship program she created will continue.

Top: Maravene Loeschke with one student in the mentorship program. Bottom: (l to r) Gilchrist nurse, Jennifer Powers, Gilchrist social worker, Wendy Kobb, Maravene and Gilchrist nurse, Andrea Katz.



at a *beloved job*

For Sally Palmbaum, the little things – working at a beloved job and spending time with friends – bring the most joy.

It’s why she chose hospice over invasive treatments for her severe anemia and pulmonary hypertension. What she wanted most was freedom to walk the halls of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, the synagogue where she had served as the executive director’s assistant since 2000 – and not want to spend her life receiving constant infusions and transfusions.

“It’s a comfort for me to be here every day. I might have to stop and catch my breath every few steps, but I do it. I love helping people,” she said. “I live each day as I want, and I’m happiest when I can be at work.”

However, she grew weaker through the spring, and by July, she had decided that full-time work was too much. Instead, she would continue to work at the synagogue as a volunteer with the help of hospice. She has often turned to Gilchrist nurse Chris Carver to help her find ways to conserve her energy.

“It offers peace of mind knowing my hospice team is available to me when I need them. It’s very comforting to know that Chris will come every week to help me focus on me – and ways I can remain connected to my community,” she said. “He’s better than therapy.”

Above: Sally Palmbaum is pictured with her Gilchrist nurse, Chris Carver



This page: (clockwise from top) Daniel taking a behind the scenes museum tour; riding in a helicopter; throwing out the first pitch at a Frederick Keys baseball game; enjoying a ride down a giant slide; “piloting” an airplane; laughing at Piglet on one of his trips to Disney World. Following page: (l to r) Gilchrist Kids nurse, Natalie Coleman with Dan, Susan and Daniel Sullivan.



with new adventures

All Daniel Sullivan’s family wanted, at first, was to have a chance to enjoy simple pleasures of a carefree childhood.

After learning that he suffered from a rare, genetic, degenerative, neurometabolic disorder, they came up with a series of fun things to do while he could still enjoy them – the little things, like making a mud pie.

But once the community got word of Daniel’s terminal diagnosis – infantile metachromatic leukodystrophy (MLD) – the doors figuratively “opened” for Daniel and his parents, Dan and Susan. People offered one-of-a-kind experiences, like behind the scenes museum tours and a chance to throw out the first pitch at a Frederick Keys baseball game. Others contributed money to pay for trips and other adventures.

As the months passed and Daniel’s condition progressed, his parents’ ideas for the experiences they wanted him to have grew. And so, in the past year, Daniel, now 4, has taken a helicopter ride, twice. He’s been to Disney World multiple times. He’s ridden a superfast roller coaster. He’s seen Niagara Falls. He’s attended his older sister’s prom.

“Taking Daniel on adventures gives us something to look forward to. They’re fun things for Daniel, but they’re memories for us,” said Dan. “We get to see Daniel laugh and smile.”

Knowing their time with Daniel is limited strengthens their resolve to pack a lifetime into a few years, they said. That’s why they called *Gilchrist Kids*. Their pediatric nurse, Natalie Coleman, coordinates his care, works with his pediatrician and troubleshoots when Daniel is not feeling well.

“A lot of families facing MLD were hesitant to involve hospice care,” said Susan. “We wanted to keep Daniel at home and enjoying life as much as possible. Gilchrist is a tremendous help in making sure all of our needs are met.”

in a *blaze*
of camaraderie



What John Gochnauer Jr. craved most was the love of family, laughter of friends and comfort of pets.

As a professional firefighter, he had spent decades training emergency responders and later, worked to help manage the disaster response at Ground Zero and other sites. In the twilight of his life, his heart remained with the Lutherville Volunteer Fire Company, where he had once served as president and which had become his second home.

As his cancer progressed, the visits of his firefighter friends, who now came to see him, offered valuable support.

“The fire department is family,” said John. “I could ask any of these guys to give me a hand at the house and two more would volunteer.”

His terminal diagnosis came as a bit of a shock, so the support of his hospice team, RN Don Palughi and social worker Maureen Hulse, was crucial for John and his wife Dee. Don counseled Dee on how to care for John without “walking on eggshells” while Maureen helped Dee work through her emotions and provided valuable contacts and resources.

“They’re always concerned about me, and that’s so special,” said Dee. “It seems the longer we’re on hospice, the stronger I get.”

John Gochnauer Jr. died August 9 at home, surrounded by his family.



Top: Gilchrist nurse, Don Palughi with John Gochnauer. Bottom (l to r): Lutherville firefighters James Cahn, Lew Wolf, John, Mark Goodwin and James Donovan.



to help more
patients

I once wrote my own eulogy as part of a seminar designed to teach an important life lesson: that we should live our lives *now* the way we want to be remembered when we’re gone.

I share this anecdote because the message it offers – that we should experience life fully and with an eye toward making an impact on the world – is one that we, at Gilchrist Hospice Care, stress to our patients by asking a simple question: What do you want to do with the time that remains?

However, by the time we meet most of our patients, their energy is limited, which raises another question: Why does the health care system wait so long to encourage people to live their lives to the fullest?

In an attempt to answer that question, we have created Gilchrist Services. Through this new entity, which is described on the following pages, we are broadening our reach so that we may provide comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate care with a goal of maximizing quality of life to patients earlier in their medical journeys. The core of Gilchrist Services will, of course, remain Gilchrist Hospice Care, with its rich history and extraordinary care.

As always, I would like to offer a heartfelt thanks to you, our dedicated donors, whose steadfast support has allowed us to grow and expand – and to dream of new ways of better serving patients throughout Central Maryland.

Sincerely yours,

Cathy Hamel
Gilchrist Executive Director

in the past year

we expanded hospice care



Last fall, we added residential inpatient hospice care through our partnership with Joseph Richey Hospice. We now offer this important component of end of life care at Gilchrist Center Baltimore – Joseph Richey House, a 19-bed “home” for hospice patients located in Baltimore City.

and established a new organization



We are taking our expansion one step further this year with the launch of Gilchrist Services, an organization with a goal to ensure that all patients with advanced illness, not just those who are terminally ill, are able to receive comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate care that is centered around their individual wants and needs.



The Gilchrist Services continuum of health care programs includes:

Gilchrist Greater Living, a geriatric and palliative medicine physician practice for older adults with chronic and serious illnesses

Support Our Elders, a nurse practitioner-led, home care program for older individuals with advanced illnesses or conditions

Gilchrist Palliative Care, a hospital-based medical and psychosocial program for seriously ill individuals who may or may not be eligible for hospice

Gilchrist Transitions for patients who are not yet eligible for or have been discharged from hospice care due to stable health

Gilchrist Hospice Care, a national award-winning hospice and the largest end of life care organization in Maryland, which includes Gilchrist Kids, our pediatric hospice program.

Gilchrist Grief and Volunteer Support for caregivers and family members who have experienced a recent loss or for families who need volunteer assistance.

Gilchrist's Global Partnership, with Nkoaranga Lutheran Hospital's Hospice and Palliative Care program in Tanzania, which allows us to share information and raise funds to support our partner's basic needs.



thank you for your continued support

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