

Marc Taylor Memorial Service June 24, 2012

Comments by: Ira Mickenberg, M.D., Partner, Southbury Medical Associates

Good afternoon. This event is very difficult for me as I'm sure it is for each of you. Marc and I brought internal medical care to the greater Southbury area. We worked with each other every day from 1970-1997. Practicing primary care internal medicine and sustaining a group practice consumed 100% of our time and interest. Marc retired from the practice in 1997. He used his skills to pursue new careers. I practiced for another 12 years before retiring. Our friendship endured and we continued to consult and support each other about life events, with respect and admiration.

Marc was a dreamer, a generator of ideas. Dreams stimulate creativity and with appropriate support can lead to change. Marc has lived many dreams, dreams that have affected the lives of each of us here today. He used all of his resources to make his dreams a reality. He also had the knack of picking allies who facilitated bringing those dreams to fruition.

I was introduced to Marc as I was in my last year of medical residency in 1970. I came to Yale after training on the west coast and in Wash DC with vague notions about setting up a medical practice somewhere. He was on the faculty at the Yale affiliated West Haven VA. At that time most of the faculty was moving to Waterbury Hospital to set up a major teaching program. There were few physicians and certainly no internists in the Southbury area, which was a farm community. The area was growing, however, because Heritage Village and route 84 were being built. Marc presented me with the concept of setting up a group practice in the rural Southbury community to utilize and support a Yale affiliated teaching Waterbury Hospital. Our first introduction to Southbury was a car ride from New Haven on a snowy night to a businessmen's association meeting. They were trying to encourage physicians to come to town. I thought that we had come through a snow storm from civilization in the New Haven area, to the middle of nowhere. Before the meeting Marc had memorized everyone's name, a result of his Dale Carnegie course. After the meeting the businessmen were our allies, on the pathway to the fulfillment of Marc's dream.

There were problems setting up this practice, but there also were solutions – solutions which involved taking risks but which led to opportunities. No office space was available in Southbury, so we were forced to buy a 1740 farmhouse, now Leo's restaurant, and fix it up ourselves, that is with our own hands and a shoestring budget. Marc has always loved fixing things. In this very rural setting we developed a professional credo, fine medical care with full physicals, house calls, hospital rounds and later teaching residents in hospital clinics and then in our office.

Marc also got involved in patient's personal lives, attending birthday parties, funerals and the like.

Within 6 months he was admitting only selected patients to his oversubscribed practice. He became a doctor's doctor and was one of the first to be noted by Connecticut Magazine as a best doctor in Connecticut. With his sonorous voice and complementary outlook he wooed patients and staff. On one occasion early in our practice he was supposed to fire a secretary. After he spoke to her he went back into his room, mission completed. She, however, was all smiles. When I asked her what had transpired she thought that all of his praise meant that she had gotten a raise. After that someone else handled personnel.

After three of decades of exploding professional success the focus of the balance of his personal and professional lives began to shift. He wanted to spend more time with his wife Jan and their daughters Ann and Regina. He retired from the practice but maintained a vibrant medical presence as River Glen's medical director. With the extra time of a retiree, he began to dream again, getting his creative juices flowing. Influenced by his love of the area and by his daughter Anne and her husband Tim's love of rivers and the environment he embarked on a new career, river conservation, using his interpersonal and intellectual skills again for the benefit of others.

In the last few years Marc and I met monthly for breakfast. We reviewed problems encountered and resolved in our lifetimes. We reviewed our life decisions. His comments always were, with a self satisfied wink, that he failed retirement. His plans to use his woodworking shop, to travel, to stay at home and relax remained unexecuted dreams. Other dreams had morphed into successful and successive careers. His environmental endeavors, as his medical endeavors were recognized and rewarded with multiple awards. Awards which were thank you's from organizations, who were the focus of his dreams.

Each of us has been the object of Marc's focused attention at some time. That attention had a reassuring aura of approval and encouragement. This sense of approval was Marc's genius. He brought out the best in each of us so that today we honor him, thank him and acknowledge our love for him and his supportive family.