

## Member Spotlight

by Linda Kriger

**D**r. Marc Newman, a longtime member of GJC and its former hazzan (cantor) on the High Holidays, is on a mission to heal the broken American medical system, one physician at a time. In January, he opened a new, retainer-fee practice, Personal Family Care, in Chestnut Hill, to provide a unique kind of health care to the community.

Marc, 47, was born in Youngstown, Ohio, a city of 150,000 that once thrived on steel production and was home to five synagogues. His love of Judaism came from his rich Jewish upbringing and its central importance in his family. His father, Sol, who died in January, 2007, was an ardent Zionist and also charmed congregants with his mastery of Hebrew and chanting of P'sukei D'zimra every Shabbos. His mother, Beebs, who died this past June, was a prolific artist and professor of art at Youngstown State University. Her striking paintings line the walls of his lovely, new office at Willow Grove and Germantown Avenues. Marc's sister, Steffi, an art therapist, died tragically twenty-five years ago at age 27 from an unexpected and unusually rare and devastating illness of sudden onset that innocently followed a cold. "She was an exceptionally beautiful person, and I loved her dearly," he says.

Marc's connection to Judaism is rooted in enduring family and childhood experiences, his deeply felt spirituality, and his singing and davening. "As a child, I loved going to synagogue with my family on Friday nights," he says. "I was always so entranced by the awe and beauty of the cantor's plaintive singing. His voice would soar and fill the vastness of the sanctuary." As a child, Marc led services in junior congregation and eventually, regularly davened and chanted Haftarat and Torah readings in his synagogue as a teen and young adult.

When he arrived in Philadelphia 15 years ago, Marc became an active member of GJC, frequently leading Kabbalat Shabbat services and also Dorshei Derekh on Shabbat morning. For seven years, with his deep, mellifluous voice, Marc served as Hazzan in the Charry Sanctuary at the year's most sacred time, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. "I love davening. It connects me to generations

of family I love so dearly and stirs within me a very deep and special place. There could have been no greater privilege than leading services as cantor in the Charry," he says. Beginning last year, Rabbi Adam Zeff, assistant Rabbi, who also has a beautiful voice, took over that role.

In his professional life, with his new practice, Marc is trying to create a special kind of care that bucks what he believes is the current trend of medicine. "Concerns can hardly be adequately addressed within the typically narrow, rushed 15-minute office visit, which leaves both patients and doctors equally frustrated and dissatisfied," he says. "This situation is unfortunately the result of poor reimbursement from insurance companies to primary care physicians, which makes it very difficult to practice good medicine. Accordingly, the decision to start my own practice seemed like a virtual imperative. I wanted to create a setting that would enable me to practice good medicine and to be a good family doctor."

Before this venture, Marc spent his entire career in academic medicine. He graduated from a 6-year B.S./M.D program at Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, completed his family medicine residency training, and went on to do a fellowship in Humanism in Medicine at the University of Louisville. He came to Philadelphia in 1994 to join the faculty at the Medical College of Pennsylvania (now the Drexel University School of Medicine) where he enjoyed teaching medical students and caring for patients for 14 years. Marc left his position one year ago to fulfill his long-held dreams and create his solo private practice, Personal Family Care.

Marc uses a biopsychosocial approach to health care. "For me, the relationship is everything. It's all about the relationship. I want to focus on the importance of relationship to people's health," he says. "I want to give people time and attention and focus on the role that family, events of daily life, and past and family medical problems play in their wellbeing." Marc takes his time with every patient, typically spending no less than one hour per visit. He also enjoys working with families and exploring patients' beliefs, feelings, and concerns about their health.

Personal Family Care accepts no insur-



Dr. Marc Newman

ance. Instead, patients pay an annual fee to receive health care with exclusive personal attention, same-day appointments, and 24/7 direct phone access in a warm, welcoming atmosphere. "I designed this space purposely –to be open and full of life, soothing color, and light–so that when people arrive, they can immediately feel a sense of joy, pleasure, comfort, and security about being here," he says. Marc invites the Germantown Jewish Centre community to come visit his office, say hello, and see his dreams come to life.



### Join the Ner Tamid Society by Making a Planned Gift

Please consider making a planned gift to the Germantown Jewish Centre's endowment fund. Planned gifts come in many forms, including, for example, charitable gift annuities, life insurance, trusts, or even a bequest in your will.

Recent changes in the tax laws allow those over 70½ years of age to make tax-free distributions to charities from their IRAs through 2007.

(Consult your tax advisor for details.)

For more information about how you can join the Ner Tamid Society, call either

Dan Bacine (215-963-0600) or  
Joan N. Stern (215-569-5526),  
Co-Chairs of the Development Committee.