

JRS: a vital place called home

Special to The Chronicle

Nathan, a 48-year-old single Jewish man lived at Woodville State Hospital for 30 years, diagnosed with schizophrenia.

A few months ago, his social worker asked him where he would like to live when Woodville closed and he was discharged. He suggested an apartment in Squirrel Hill, where he had lived long ago, but he was frightened of independent living.

The day he learned the date of discharge, Nathan walked in front of a passing truck and was instantly killed. If Nathan had been offered a home in a supervised supportive setting, would he be alive today?

Unfortunately there are many Jewish people who suffer with mental illness and who have no welcoming

UJF to list Honor Roll donors

The United Jewish Federation will again publish an honor roll in its 1992 Annual Report.

The Honor Roll recognizes donors who contribute \$1,000 or more to the 1992 Annual Campaign.

All contributors at that level or above are encouraged to list their names. Those eligible who have not returned donor listing request cards to the UJF are encouraged to call Essie Garfinkel at 681-8000. The deadline for the 1992 Annual Report is June 19.

home, no secure place where they can learn to cope with the outside world. Jewish Residential Services (JRS) plans to fill this void by providing supervised housing in an environment enriched culturally and religiously by its Jewish neighborhood.

JRS has acquired an apartment building on Wenderover Street which will be renovated to accommodate eight residents.

The building will be named the Leonard Staisey House in honor of the late judge and county commissioner whose own blindness never stopped him from achieving his highest goals, and who was committed to improving life for other handicapped people.

Kathy Hurwitz, JRS president, said the target date for opening Leonard Staisey House is late 1992.

Toward that end, JRS will hold a family meeting Tuesday, June 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center. Relatives of people with mental illness are invited to attend and help plan an effective program. Ruth Drescher, associate director of Jewish Family and Children's Service and a board member of JRS, will moderate.

Squirrel Hill was chosen as the location for Staisey House because of its proximity to synagogues and the



BUILDING chosen as the site for the first Jewish Residential Services home, the Leonard Staisey House.

Jewish Community Center, its access to cultural events and ethnic food shops.

Similar programs in Seattle, Detroit and elsewhere have shown that when Jewish residents leave the psychiatric institutions where they have been for years, living in a Jewish environment enhances treatment and makes the transition to the general community more successful.

Although Staisey House will be a Jewish home, admission will be nonsectarian. It will have a flexible program to serve the needs of a multi-cultural community.

Living arrangements provide for double-occupancy apartments, each with a bath and kitchen. In addition, there will be a communal kosher kitchen/dining room for Shabbat meals and special occasions, and a lounge for recreation.

Professional staff will be on duty 24 hours a day.

They will encourage the re-learning of lost socialization skills and useful patterns for every day living. For many residents, this will be a chance to transcend the isolation and loneliness they have experienced in previous living situations.

JRS will impose no time limit on occupancy. "Staisey House will not be a half-way house," said Deborah Dizard, JRS executive director. "For some residents, it may be a permanent home. For others, it will be a vital step toward independent living."

Eligibility for the JRS program will follow these guidelines: Residents must be at least 18 years old, with a diagnosis of serious mental illness and who need the support of a full-time staff. They must also be able to live with others and meet behavioral standards established by a professional admissions committee.

"Mental illness is not

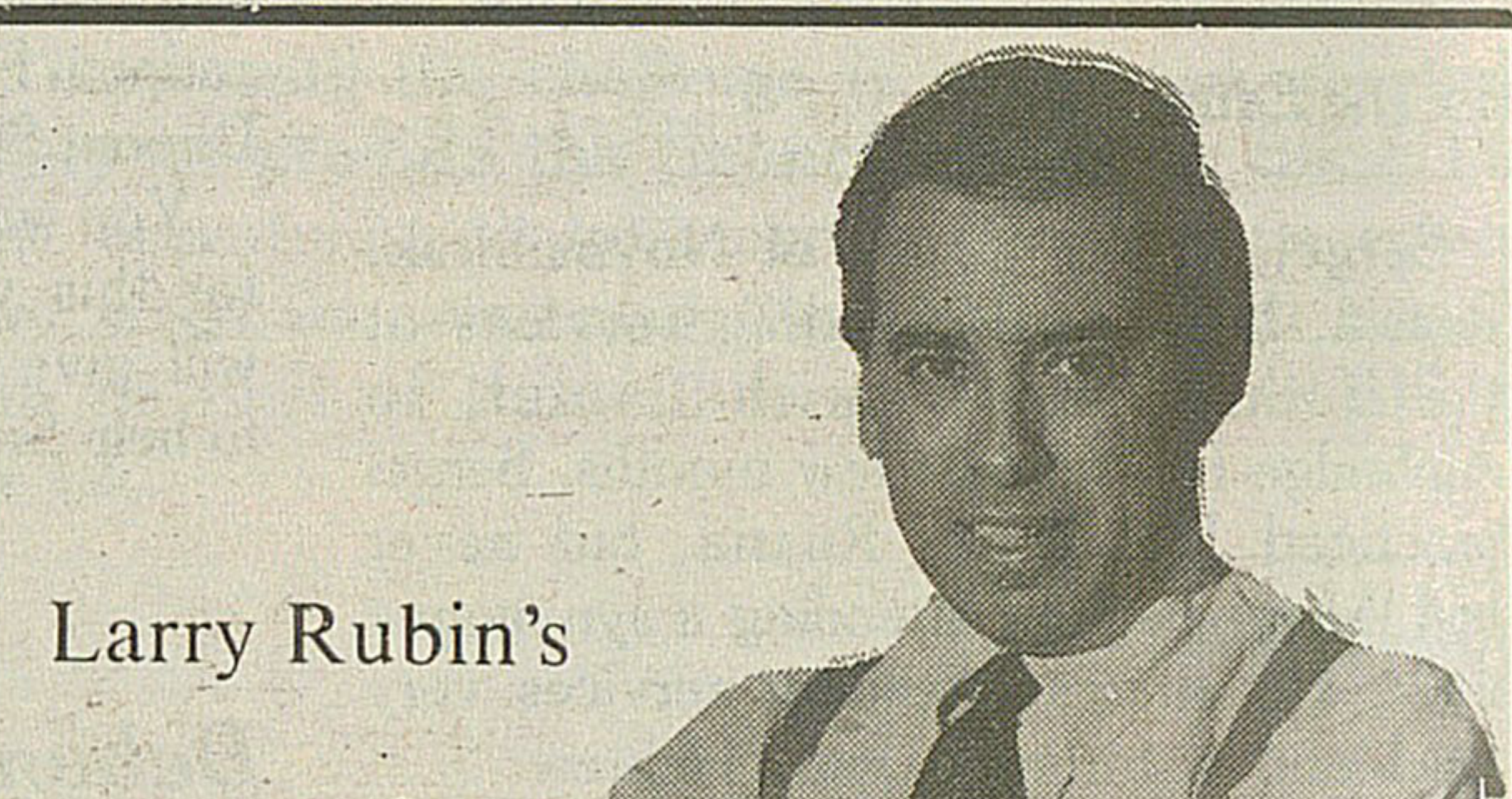
curable, but it is treatable," Kathy Hurwitz noted. "The gap between hospitalization and traditional living situations has never before been addressed by our community. Staisey House will offer the best hope for living in the real world."

Staisey House has received generous support from several Pittsburgh foundations, charitable trusts, organizations and committed individuals, as well as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

For more information about JRS, call 422-5560.



GATHERED at the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh recently for the Great American Traditions Award reception honoring Mayor Sophie Masloff are B'nai B'rith leaders. Seated from left: Sherman Shrager, first vice president of B'nai B'rith District Three; Mayor Masloff; and Dr. Steven Smiga, annual campaign chairman for District Three. Standing, from left: Rick Karp, Western Pennsylvania Council president; Lloyd Klein, Gateway Lodge president, and third vice president of Pittsburgh Council; Curt Levi, Israel-Herman Fineberg Lodge president and assistant secretary of Pittsburgh Council; Alan Hausman, Pittsburgh Council president; Irving Elbling, District Three past president; and Marc Fargotstein, Pittsburgh Council second vice president. Proceeds from the reception benefitted the B'nai B'rith Youth Services Appeal.



Larry Rubin's

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