

# National Capital Area Chapter Newsletter

August-September 1989

## Washington Area Community Gives Generously to The NAMES Project

Through the generous support of the Washington area community, the message of the AIDS Memorial Quilt and The NAMES Project accelerates forward. Recently the National Capital Area Chapter received two grants totalling \$18,325 from the Meyer Foundation and the Glen Eagles Foundation. In addition, proceeds totalling \$17,000 from several local fundraising events were also donated to the Chapter. The spirit of the Washington community exemplifies the "Keep the Love Alive" theme of this October's national display of the Quilt.

## Two Grants to National Capital Area Chapter

The NAMES Project Chapter of the National Capital Area recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Meyer Foundation and an \$8,325 grant from Glen Eagles Foundation. The National Capital Area Chapter is the first NAMES Project chapter to receive such grants.

According to Michael Cover, chair of the chapter's board of the directors, "The grants will enable us to educate those who normally would not have ready access to understanding about AIDS and the tragedy of this epidemic."

The local chapter has hired Albert Cunningham to oversee outreach efforts targeted to several area groups: students, church and synagogue groups, people of color, and drug rehab groups. He will be assisted by an advisory committee of community leaders who will help to ensure that programs are focused and effective.

The Meyer Foundation, established by Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer, serves as the National Community AIDS Partnership

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## Thousands of Dollars Raised at Local Events

"We're overwhelmed by the heartfelt support we've received from the business community and the enthusiastic participants who have made our fundraising efforts such a tremendous success," beams Bruce Forchheimer, a National Capital Area Chapter board member and fundraising organizer.

Over the past three months, approximately \$17,000 has been raised through local events to provide vital funds for the Columbus Day weekend display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt.

The National Capital Area Chapter would like to thank everyone who attended, helped organized, and worked at these past events, as well as those who will be part of the exciting upcoming events.

Over \$10,000 was raised at the first event where NAMES Project founder Cleve Jones spoke passionately about the Quilt. He also introduced Rep. Barney Frank, who spoke about AIDS-related issues and the strength of the Washington community.

see Dollars, page 3

## Join us on the Ellipse October 6, 7, 8

Although sections of the Quilt will continue to tour, this October's display will be the final display of the Quilt in its entirety. We need your help to bring the Quilt and its powerful message to our nation's leaders.

1. *Write to your elected officials.* Tell them what the Quilt means to you. Tell them that you think it's important for them to join us in October. Send us a copy of your letter.

2. *Support The NAMES Project financially.* The Quilt now weighs over 16 tons and requires a support system to match. We depend entirely on donations and profits from the sale of merchandise.

3. *Become part of the National Capital Area Chapter.* Join the people of our community who are already planning for the Quilt's return. We need your ideas!

4. *Join us on the Ellipse.* Nothing will make a stronger statement than your presence on the Ellipse. We need thousands of volunteers to help with everything from monitoring the Quilt to loading the truck. We need you on October 6, 7, and 8. Call Carol Kain, volunteer intake coordinator for the

National Capital Area Chapter at (202) 232-5141. Deaf volunteers should call Tom Kane at (202) 265-1466 (TDD).





Inspired by the national NAMES Project, Washington, DC resident Tom Kane organized an effort to discover the names of deaf persons who had died from complications related to AIDS and who were not yet represented on the Quilt.

Tom found 62 names and worked with out-of-town and local volunteers, including members of the local chapter's quilting bees, to create 26 new panels for deaf people and sign language interpreters.

The individual panels were first displayed on the Washington, DC campus of Gallaudet University during the mid-July Deaf Way Conference and Festival which featured 5,700 registrants from 76 countries.

During the display, volunteers and interpreters answered questions and offered emotional support to the international visitors. Many paused to write the names of other deaf persons who have died on signature panels and others offered comments, in English, French, Japanese, and several other languages in the exhibit's guestbook.

One visitor wrote, "One does not need to Deaf or gay to feel the impact of loss! Rather, one needs to appreciate the specialness of all people ..." Another commented, "My hands are silent, but my heart and eyes are touched." And another said, "It hurts to see so many die innocently. These quilts make me feel I should contribute something and I am going to ..."

After a late-July display at the national Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf convention in Cleveland, the panels were sent to San Francisco to be incorporated into the Quilt for the October national display.

## Touch-Tours of the National Display for Blind and Deaf-Blind Visitors

Helen Keller said, "The best and the most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."

The Metropolitan Washington Ear, Inc., Programs in Adult and Continuing Education at Gallaudet University, and The NAMES Project Chapter of the National Capital Area will co-sponsor a unique series of audio description touch-tours of the Quilt for blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind visitors during the national display on October 6, 7, and 8, 1989. Daily tours for blind and visually impaired persons are scheduled at 2 p.m., and interpreted tours for deaf-blind persons are offered at 3:30 p.m. each afternoon.

Trained volunteers, who regularly provide descriptions for theatre and television productions, will lead the 1-hour walking tours among the panels of the quilt. The describer will use a microphone, and each tour member or sign language interpreter for deaf-blind visitors will wear a wireless earphone so that descriptions can be heard easily outdoors.

"We are pleased that our audio description volunteers can lend their unique skills to help make the experience of visiting the Quilt accessible to a wider audience," comments Margaret R. Pfanstiehl, founder and president of the Metropolitan Washington Ear.

Char Laba of Programs in Adult and Continuing Education at Gallaudet University adds, "After the interest generated by the display of Quilt panels during the recent international Deaf Way festival, we are happy to be part of bringing the entire Quilt to deaf-blind persons in the Washington area."

Bill Patterson, principal co-chair of the Outreach Committee of the National Capital Area Chapter, is coordinating the chapter's accessibility efforts for the national display. Robert Hahn and Char Laba will organize the volunteer tactile interpreters for deaf-blind individuals.

Blind and visually impaired persons may request an audio cassette of background information about The NAMES Project or register for the 2 p.m. audio description tours by calling the Metropolitan Washington Ear, Inc., weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at (301) 681-6636. Large print or braille information and registration for the 3:30 p.m. interpreted tours are available by calling Char Laba with Programs in Adult and Continuing Education at Gallaudet University, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at (202) 651-5044.

## Volunteer Sign Language Interpreters Needed for October National Display

Volunteer sign language interpreters are needed for the national display of the Quilt on October 6 and 7 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on October 8 from 2:30 to 5 p.m.

Interpreters will work in shifts to fingerspell names while volunteers read the names of people who are memorialized on the Quilt, voice for

deaf name-readers, and/or interpret audio description touch-tours for deaf-blind visitors. People who sign but are not comfortable interpreting can help with logistics and emotional support for interpreters.

To register as an interpreter or assistant, call Robert Hahn, Interpreter Coordinator, at (202) 667-1559.

### TDD Numbers for Deaf Persons

Deaf persons who wish to volunteer should call Tom Kane at (202) 265-1466 TDD. Deaf persons who wish to contact the NAMES Project Chapter of the National Capital Area for other reasons may call Bill Patterson at (301) 649-3508 (voice/TDD). If your call is answered by the voice-only answering machine, please call again.

## Need a Speaker? We're Available!

We need your help to secure speaking engagements for our volunteers. Our speakers come with videotapes, panels from the Quilt, and their own personal stories to share. If your organization, school, or church group is interested in scheduling a speaker, please call Jeff Daniel at 883-1875.

## Telephone Numbers

The NAMES Project	833-1196
Chapter of the National Capital Area Deaf persons TDD/V	649-3508
Audio Description Tours	681-6636 or 651-5044
Community Outreach	649-3508 or 234-7779
Fundraising Events	547-2044
Panel Making	530-8266 or 265-1886
Speakers's Bureau	883-1875
Volunteers	232-5141
Deaf volunteers TDD	265-1466
Sign Interpreters	667-1559

## Grants, from page 1

Convener for the Washington area. NCAP conveners, in cooperation with the Ford Foundation, provide matching funds to educate people about AIDS as well as provide direct services to people living with AIDS. The Glen Eagles Foundation is a Washington philanthropic organization dedicated to providing funds to benefit the local community.

## Dollars, from page 1

Another \$7,000 was raised at special events at La Cage aux Follies, Tracks, Chesapeake House, and Lost and Found. Special thanks to all the employees who helped.

Upcoming events include a Tap Dance Contest at Friend's Piano Bar on Wednesday, August 16, a 3-day Labor Day weekend beach party at The Strand in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and a spectacular show at Rascals on Thursday, September 12.

## Faces of AIDS at University of Maryland Gallery

*Faces of AIDS*, a photographic exhibition conceived and created by award-winning photographer Jim Wigler, will be on display at the Parents Association Gallery at the University of Maryland from September 11 through October 8. The exhibit will also include sections of The NAMES Project Quilt.

The photo collection consists of 101 larger-than-life black and white portraits of individuals with AIDS or ARC. The pictures are captioned with their names and ages as well as a quotation from each person.

Wigler's objective during the creative process was to replace cold and harsh statistics with the faces of real people with AIDS. For Wigler, this project began very personally. After taking a photo for a friend's obituary, Wigler was so moved by the photograph that he was inspired to create a series of portraits.

Wigler spent hours with each person in his studio, a process that Wigler describes as "an incredible and very powerful experience." The photos and statements come from a wide representation of women, men, and children from all races and backgrounds.

Nancy Meyer, acting director of the Parents Association Gallery, says, "We now have faces to go with the names of people with AIDS. The quotation that is included with each portrait furthers the realization that these people are our families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Looking upon these faces makes one conclusion clear—AIDS affects everyone."

The Parents Association Gallery, in the lobby of the Stamp Student Union on the College Park campus, is open Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 12 to 5 p.m., and Sunday, October 8, from 12 to 5 p.m. For further information call 454-4754.

## Calendar Corner

Aug. 15 General Meeting, 7:00 pm at Friend's Meeting House 2111 Florida Ave, NW

Aug. 16 Tap Dance Contest fundraiser at Friends Piano Bar, 2122 P St., NW

Aug. 20 Quilting Bee, 3:30-6:30 pm at Friend's Meeting House 2111 Florida Ave, NW

Sept. 2-4 Fundraiser at The Strand, Rehoboth Beach, DE

Sept. 11- Oct. 8 *Faces of AIDS* Exhibit, Parents Association Art Gallery, University of Maryland

Sept. 12 Fundraiser Show, Rascals, 1520 Connecticut Ave., NW

Sept. 17 Quilting Bee, 3:30-6:30 pm at Friend's Meeting House 2111 Florida Ave, NW

Sept. 19 General Meeting, 7:00 pm at Friend's Meeting House 2111 Florida Ave, NW

Oct. 6-8 Display of the Quilt on the Ellipse, 10 am-6 pm

Oct. 6 "AIDS & Politics: Transformations of Our Movement," a town meeting

Oct. 6 *Life of the Party*, a play by Theatre Rhinoceros, Kennedy Center

Oct. 7 Candlelight March Against AIDS from the Ellipse to the Lincoln Memorial, sponsored by Whitman-Walker Clinic

Oct. 7 6th Annual Dinner for Human Rights Campaign Fund

Oct. 9 "Congressional Update: The Status of Federal AIDS Legislation"

*All events subject to change.*

## Thank You!

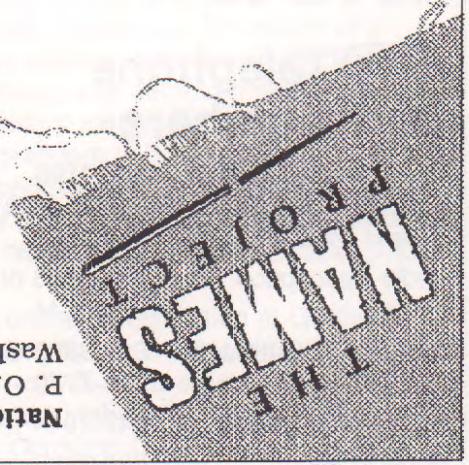
A big thank you to the people who, with nimble fingers and words of encouragement, helped to make our quilting bees so successful: Buddy Clark, Maya Key, Renate Maille-Moskowitz, Rumi Matsuyama, Sharon McDonald, John Meyer, and Bonnie Ogram.

—Mireille Key & Doug Reese



August-September 1989 Newsletter  
 Will you help spread the word about The NAMES Project Chapter of the National Capital Area? Please share the information in this newsletter with your friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, and organizations. Pass along the newsletter, or mention its news in conversations or announcements, or reprint its stories in your own publications.

National Capital Area Chapter  
 P.O. Box 19614  
 Washington, DC 20036



## The Joys of Volunteering

by Mireille Key, Co-Chair,  
*Panel Making Committee*

He called me on July 18. "My name is Ernest Suesbury. My friend died several months ago, and I promised to make him a panel for the October display." There was very little time left before the August 1 deadline.

"Let me have your phone number, and I'll see what I can do." "Is that your number at work?" I asked. "I'm sick," he replied, "and am home a lot." We said goodbye. I hung up the receiver, wondering how I was going to finish five panels and one for Ernest as well.

I called my friend, Renate—perhaps she would be able to make a panel for him. Still, it seemed like a lot for the two of us to get done by August 1. Not more than five minutes after I talked with her, the phone rang.

"Hi, my name is Jim Cummins, and I'd like to get involved in panel making." And that is how Jim became a "gift from heaven." I told him about Ernest and without hesitation, he offered to make the friend's panel for him.

I called Ernest this morning. He wasn't feeling well, but he was overjoyed and touched that his friend's wish would come true.

Thank you, Jim.

## From Our Quilting Bees

by Susan Woollen,  
*panel making volunteer*

For several months, the National Capital Area Chapter held quilting bees at the Friends Meeting House. Among piles of donated fabrics stacked on tables, friends and family members gathered to work on their panels with the help of volunteers.

Mixed emotions seemed to pervade the room. A quiet sadness hung gray and cool in the air, but there was also laughter and hugging, and a determined drive to complete the panels in time to be included in the national display.

Ruth Eshmont, whose son Bob Phillips died nearly a year ago, remarked that the quilting bees provided her with a sense of peace, friendship, and safety during a time that remains very difficult.

For Tom McRoberts, the quilting bees made it possible to sew a panel in memory of his dear friend Alexander, who died not only before The NAMES Project was conceived but also before support for people with AIDS and their significant others existed.

Such were the hours we spent, all while the drone of sewing machines and the soft sounds of giggles and tears encircled the room, somehow making everything seem just a little better.