

weeks before U.S. elections, when the spotlight was on the Presidential and Congressional elections. The Quilt served to ensure that AIDS and its awful cost is remembered as a top priority on the American agenda.

As you can imagine, the planning and coordination that's needed for an event of the Washington display's magnitude is staggering - transportation ... volunteers ... event management ... merchandising ... publicity ... the list goes on and on.

It took a caravan of ten 18-wheel trucks to transport the Quilt to Washington! We needed 15,000 volunteers to manage this massive undertaking, and as you can imagine, the cost was significant.

The fact that October's display was 25 times larger than it was in 1987 is a terrible tragedy. When the Quilt was laid out in our nation's capital, it covered the entire Mall from the Capitol to the Washington Monument - and the impact was felt in Washington and all across America.

Because of the importance of this largest AIDS awareness event ever, there was unprecedented sponsorship of the display from American Express, United Airlines, Stadtlanders Pharmacy and Poz, The Advocate and Out magazines.

But we still need thousands of people like you - who truly care about stopping this deadly epidemic - to join us in making our mission of AIDS awareness happen.

That's why I'm writing to ask you to become a FRIEND OF THE QUILT. By supporting the NAMES Project, you will enable us to bring the Quilt and its message of hope to hundreds of communities all across the country, just as we did in Washington D.C.

Our current schedule calls for displaying the Quilt in more than 200 cities during 1997 - another massive undertaking, but well worth the effort and expense.

As the Quilt hangs in classrooms, in offices, in shopping malls and houses of worship, it will take on the vital role of educating people about the disease and preventing more lives from being lost.

The Quilt not only raises awareness about AIDS, it works a kind of magic, truly touching the hearts and minds of millions of Americans who might otherwise not see the humanity behind the grim death toll.