

Just news



NAMES project begins assembling national "AIDS Quilt"

A massive fabric tribute to Americans killed by the AIDS epidemic.

Hundreds of cloth panels, each bearing the name of a single person lost to AIDS, are being collected in San Francisco and sewn into one vast quilt of names. Organizers of the Project expect the quilt to eventually cover several city blocks and include thousands of individually created fabric panels.

Persons wishing to participate in the NAMES Project are urged to design and create panels of any light-weight, durable fabric measuring six feet by three feet (6' x 3') held horizontally or vertically.

The quilt will be displayed across the Capitol Mall in Washington, DC on the morning of Sunday, October 11, 1987, the day of the National March for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

Project Director Cleve Jones has asked participants in the memorial to complete their panels well before the September 15th deadline. "We need to allow one month to six weeks to sew the pieces

together and additional time for travel and public displays," said Jones.

Completed panels have been received in a large variety of styles and materials. According to production coordinator Joseph Durant, no two have been alike. "We've been really impressed with the quality of the work we're seeing," said Durant. "Even the panels done with simple techniques show real thought and loving care."

Project organizers have received several inquiries concerning duplication of names. Jones and Durant do not consider duplication a problem and will use all panels received, even if some individuals are remembered in more than one panel.

Tax-deductible donations toward production and transportation costs can be sent to The NAMES Project at P.O. Box 14573, San Francisco, CA 94114. For more information call Mike Smith at 415/863-0767.

Insurance company refuses AIDS payments; complaints filed in 14 states

National Gay Rights Advocates has filed unfair practices complaints with fourteen state insurance departments against the American Service Life Insurance Company (ASLIC). In its complaint, NGRA charges the Texas-based health insurer with refusing to pay for AIDS-related medical expenses. NGRA cited as evidence ASLIC's promotional materials, which declare in small print that the company will not pay for expenses rising out of "any disease which was sexually transmitted."

Benjamin Schatz, Director of NGRA's AIDS Civil Rights Project, declared: "Insurance companies cover medical expenses for cancer, heart disease and other life-threatening illnesses. They must not

be allowed to carve out a special exception for AIDS. For insurance companies to shirk their responsibility to pay for AIDS-related medical expenses is to undercut the very purpose of health insurance."

NGRA Executive Director Jean O'Leary said, "Last winter, NGRA was instrumental in persuading fourteen state insurance departments to declare that insurers may not exclude coverage for AIDS. By filing complaints in all fourteen states, NGRA intends to let insurers know that these policies will be enforced around the nation."

NGRA filed its complaints with insurance departments in Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota and Tennessee. NGRA had helped to convince departments in these states to forbid insurers to exclude AIDS through a national insurance survey conducted in the winter of 1986.

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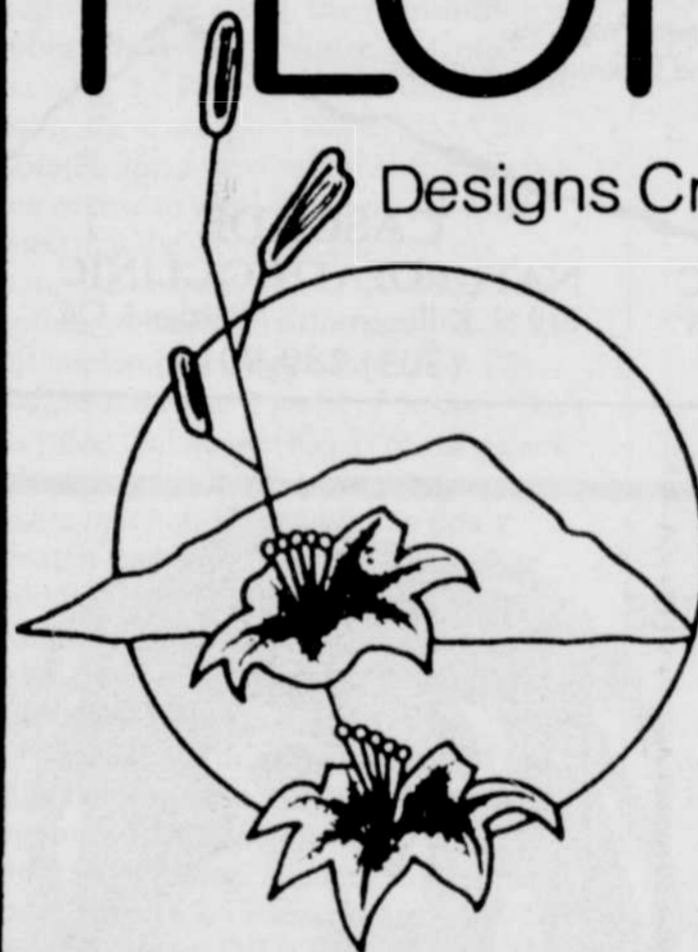
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