



folks turned out for the 1996 "Best Friends Walk for Friends" benefit dog walk, held July 27 at Laurelhurst Park in Southeast Portland. Baker estimates \$12,000 was raised via the event.

"We've had more involvement than ever before, even doubling the number of participants over last year. We are thrilled," says the retired state employee, who established the organization a few years back after suffering a heart attack—a dire circumstance that prompted Baker to take a closer look at his life.

Baker ultimately concluded he wanted to help people in need, specifically those living with HIV/AIDS.

According to Baker, the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation relies on grants and its two annual fund-raisers—the benefit dog walk (hosted by the irrepressible Darcelle

The dog days of summer

Best friends help friends of people with AIDS

by Inga Sorensen * photos by Linda Kliewer

"I think we raised about \$50 at our first walk three years ago," says Corey Baker, founder of the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation, a nonprofit organization that assists people with HIV/AIDS with their everyday and emergency needs.

Coupled with their canine chums, roughly 250

XV) held each July, and an October luncheon auction.

The money raised supports a variety of foundation funds, including a travel fund, which is designed to cover the expenses involved in bringing family and loved ones to visit those living out their final days; a cremation fund, to help pay for cremation services for people who have died of AIDS complications; an emergency food fund, which provides emergency food baskets to those in need; a fund geared toward the care of pets owned by people with HIV/AIDS (who may be living on a limited budget); and an entertainment fund, which allows the organization to sponsor a

Thanksgiving dinner, as well as purchase Easter baskets and Christmas toys for children.

"What makes me the most happy is knowing the money is being used to really help people."

—Corey Baker

Not only is Baker giddy about the growing success of the benefit dog walk, he's also delighted his organization was recently tapped as a Fabric of Life Foundation grant recipient.

The nonprofit organization, which generates money for local social service agencies and organizations that deal specifically with people living with AIDS, provided \$25,000 to nourish the Friends of People with AIDS Foundation's travel and entertainment funds.

"What makes me the most happy is knowing the money is being used to really help people," says Baker. "That's what really counts."

The Friends of People with AIDS Foundation will hold its other annual fund-raiser, a luncheon auction at Darcelle XV, 208 NW Third Ave. in Portland, on Oct. 6. For further information, call Baker at 245-7428.

