AIDS quilt going on display at USL

A four-day display of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, an international memorial to those who have died of AIDS, opens April 25 at the USL Student Union Ballroom.

It is part of an awareness week entitled, “Our Common Threads: Understanding AIDS,” sponsored by the Union Program Council.

Opening ceremonies for the quilt begin April 25 at 5 p.m. The display will remain open until 10 p.m. at the USL Student Union Ballroom. The quilt display will also be open April 26-28 from 10 a.m. until 10 p.m.

Other activities for the awareness week include an art exhibit and film showings all week, a student theatrical presentation on Monday night, a safer sex presentation called “Hot, Sexy, and Safer” on Tuesday night and a panel discussion, healing service, and candlelight vigil on Wednesday night.

The USL Quilt display features 350 three-foot by six-foot panels, each commemorating the life of someone who has died of AIDS. Panels are made by friends, family members and lovers, and include a wide variety of material, from letters to favorite t-shirts to photographs to teddy bears.

The panels are just a portion of the 20,000 panels that make up the entire AIDS Memorial Quilt. The opening ceremony will feature teams of volunteers who will unfold the quilt while local residents read aloud the names of some of those lost to AIDS.

The quilt was begun in San Francisco by Cleve Jones as a protest to the AIDS epidemic, and a way to help people understand the loss and frustration associated with it. The quilt continues today as a powerful symbol that includes panels from all 50 states and 26 foreign countries.

Admission is free, but donations will be accepted by Lafayette CARES, which provides funds and assistar.ce to people living with HIV and AIDS, and their loved ones.

For more information, call the Union Program Office at (318) 231-6128 or 231-6945. The fax number is 231-6123.