

Library week kicks off

Jared McCoy
Staff Writer
jmccoy@una.edu

Collier Library kicked off special events Monday as part of National Library Week.

The week's purpose is to promote a general interest in the library by the campus as well as the community, said Doris McDaniel, librarian at Collier Library.

"We hope it makes more people aware that the library's not just full of books," McDaniel said.

Attractions featured book talks from authors Robert Steele and Daphne Simpkins and continue Thursday night with a campus ghost tour led by author Deborah Glass.

Simpkins, a writer who has focused on life in the South, spoke Tuesday about her new novel "Cloverdale," the first part in a series following Mildred Budge, a fictional Southern church woman.

"In a culture where Southern church women often are still invisible and silent, I wanted to give voice to a character who has purely heroic qualities," Simpkins said.

Her main readers are probably the parents of most students, she said, but she

does hope to encourage younger writers, especially those who want to use their talents and experiences to write professionally.

"I started my writing career primarily writing essays, and these essays were published all over the country, most often in the Chicago Tribune," Simpkins said. "When my father became ill with Alzheimer's, I took some of the essays that I had written about him and wrote a memoir called 'The Long Good Night.'"

Students with overdue books and late fees need not be discouraged from attending the library's events. From National Library Week until the semester's end, students can take advantage of a book amnesty program, said Collier Library Circulation Supervisor Grace Simpson.

"We're taking canned foods instead of library fees," Simpson said. "The food that we get will go to the new UNA food bank that they're establishing."

Participating in the nationwide event for a third year, the library's staff said they hope to keep building student interest in the library over time.

"I think the students who have come to book talks and things like that really enjoyed it," Simpson said.