

Library

Readers Bring Cheer to Shut-ins

Each Thursday at 3:30 p.m., Lindsay Cook loads her car with books and heads for Hillhaven Extended Care Home. There, a group of elderly patients eagerly await the words of romance, mystery and humor she brings.

Cook is one of the volunteer readers at the Santa Cruz Library who donate time and energy to bring books and companionship to shut-ins and the elderly. It's a toss-up as to which is the most important, the books or the companionship, says Judy Sulsona, the library's outreach specialist.

Sometimes the volunteers just deliver reading materials and stop to talk to the people.

"Many of these people have been reading all their lives and have stopped because they don't have the materials available," says Sulsona. "Sometimes they've been reading old books and magazines."

The new library outreach service started in July, after the Monterey Bay Area Cooperative Library System received a \$50,000 government grant to develop services for homebound persons. It's called the RIC Project, which stands for reading, information and companionship.

The program has enjoyed such success with shut-ins that more volunteers are needed, says Sulsona. To volunteer or to get a reader to come to your home, call the Santa Cruz Library, 429-3533.

3/11/82



Perched on a desk is Lindsay Cook, a volunteer reader with the Santa Cruz Library. Each week, she reads to patients at the Hillhaven Extended Care

Home, bringing companionship and caring along with her books.