

# Library backers to wait and see

*Libraries-1980-1989*

By Richard Palmer

Members of the Ben Lomond Town Association agreed to make every effort to keep the town's library open, but declined to say they would run the library themselves should its closure become imminent.

Meeting in the library annex last Thursday evening, the group voted to continue lobbying to keep the library open and operating under the Santa Cruz city-county library system.

The Ben Lomond library was one of several in the city-county system recently scheduled for closure when the county—which provides over half the system's funds was confronted with a multi-million dollar budget deficit brought on by Prop. 13.

In response to protests from library supporters, officials have mapped tentative plans to let volunteers run the libraries, or completely turn them over to community groups.

While the Ben Lomond Town Association has apparently recruited enough volunteers to run the library, the group declined to reveal its ace-in-the-hole for fear the county would lose whatever incentive it has to keep the library open.

Town association member Dr. Bill Anderson said the group shouldn't agree to take over the library if worst comes to worst, because the worst would probably happen.

"I think it would hurt our bargaining position in our efforts to keep the library open," Anderson said.

If the group's bid to maintain the library's status quo fails, members said the next best option would be to run the library with volunteers, but keep it in the city, county system.

Barring that, the only other alternative to closing the library would be withdrawing the branch from the system and turning it over—lock, stock, and barrel—to the community group. County and library officials have been making plans in this direction, and have said they see no

(Continued on Page 2)

## Laundromat robbed by armed thief

A shaggy-haired man armed with a knife robbed a laundromat in Boulder Creek of more than \$1,000 after tying up a clerk who was putting the money into a wall safe Sunday evening.

According to sheriff's deputies, the man came up behind Carolyn Elaine Davis as she was cleaning the Village Wash and Dry about 9:30 p.m. Sunday.

Davis was just preparing to put five metal cash boxes—each containing more than \$200—in a large wall safe when the suspect grabbed her by the neck.

Armed with a knife, he bound and gagged her before stuffing the cash boxes in a duffel bag and leaving.

The suspect said nothing during the entire incident, according to sheriff's reports.

Davis could not untie herself but managed to scream when two men walked by the laundromat 20 minutes later.

They untied Davis and called sheriff's deputies.

The suspect was described as between 27 and 32 years old, of medium height, with long hair tied back in a ponytail, a mustache, and glasses.

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# ✓ *Library fate in air*

(Continued from Page 1)

problem in doing so.

City-county head librarian Charles Atkins announced last week that two libraries facing closure are ready to be taken over by volunteers.

Library staff members have worked with La Selva Beach volunteers so the branch will remain in the system, but be run by volunteers, Atkins said. The Soquel branch will be pulled out of the system and operated by the Soquel Porter Memorial Library Committee.

While the Ben Lomond Town Association's second choice would be to go the La Selva Beach route—where the library system would still be responsible for the branch—there may be a problem, Atkins said.

There are laws against replacing paid library staff with volunteers, he said. Since La Selva had no permanent staff, the use of volunteers was acceptable. But the Ben Lomond library is run by a permanent librarian, and the law might prohibit volunteers from taking over.

That would leave the town association faced with its least desirable option—to run the library independently of the city-county system.

Town association members will meet with Supervisor Pat Liberty Wednesday, Feb. 13 to discuss the situation. According to the chairperson of the association's library committee, Faye Ellis, the 10 persons who have volunteered to work at the library will get together just before the meeting with Mrs. Liberty.

Mrs. Ellis said her 10 volunteers could run the library five, and possibly six days a week. Most have worked in libraries and have experience, she noted.

Association president Paul Ellis said library use would increase if it were taken over by the association, since the library is presently open just three days a week.

And, he added, the community's attitude towards the library might change.

"The reason we've gotten disenchanted with this library is because the city-county system has continually rebuffed our assistance," Ellis said, referring to the system's past reluctance to use volunteers or accept donations of reading material.