

Librarian Opposes Change Of Book Donation Policy

Libraries 1970-1979

By BILL NEUBAUER

Sentinel Staff Writer

A bagful of books — including the popular "Chesapeake" by James Michener — was shown to the Library Board this morning as a sample of the free books the city-county library system can get if it will change its policy on book donations.

Harlane Roome told trustees the system could have the books, and many more, if they would agree to house the books permanently in the LaSelva Beach branch. The books could be loaned to other branches after LaSelva residents had had the chance to read them, Roome said, but the books would then have to be returned to the LaSelva shelves.

The offer came at a time when Aptos resident Barbara Moser was asking trustees to return to the system's former use of the McNaughton Rental System through which such sought-after fiction as "Chesapeake" was made available for readers far more promptly than now.

Librarian Charles Atkins told trustees it is actually cheaper by some 38 percent for the system to buy a book than to use the rental system. He said the cutback in the number of

books ordered was due to the cut made this year in the system's book budget.

Atkins came out strongly against a change in the system policy that requires all donated books to be made part of the total collection for distribution anywhere and at any time. He said it would be detrimental even to the patrons of a little branch for such a change to be made.

"To assign a book permanently to a particular branch would be a dangerous precedent," Atkins elaborated. "In time, it would destroy for the branch the advantage of being part of the library system."

Atkins also opposed a call for a core library to be placed in each branch, saying, "I don't believe in them for libraries with only 7,000 or 8,000 volumes because in time their collections will be inferior."

Trustees scheduled the matter for more discussion in June after Atkins concluded, "It would be detrimental to limit the free flow of books back and forth and not make available to everyone the full resources of the system."

Atkins said thousands of books are donated annually under the conditions of the trustees' current policy.