

8/8/90

Photo by Gary Smith

## on for boaters

... and Kevin Looney bring in their boat at Hallowing Point boat ramp across the Patuxent River bridge near Benedict. Many use the two ramps in the summer.

## Trailer

...ident Mu-  
...ified against  
... but the planning  
... on sided with Ball, with  
... ation that the mobile home  
... ved within two years.

... while, said Ball, "What  
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... he well" (a \$7,000 deep  
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... n with Jones, as the two  
... owing the grass on their re-  
... properties. The Monday  
... protest from Jones and  
... It was a shock to me, all

# New system helps keep track of books

By JOHN D. JOHNSTON  
Special to the Independent

A computer-based cataloging system to keep better track of library materials will be introduced next month in public libraries in Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's counties.

The computerized system, which would replace the libraries' antiquated card cataloging system, would involve cataloging all library materials — books, magazines, records, videotapes — on a central database at the Southern Maryland Regional Library at Charlotte Hall.

Each item would be marked with a bar code, similar to the codes used in supermarkets, representing its file number in the database. Users' library cards would

also have bar codes. Items would be checked out by running a light pen across the bar code.

"We hope to start registering patrons next month," said Kitty Hurrey, director of the regional library. Current library users would have bar codes put on their cards when they checked out books, and pre-coded cards would eventually be issued to new patrons or to current patrons having their cards renewed, Hurrey said.

Materials in the libraries are being registered on the system right now, and the current card catalog will be closed out Sept. 1, Hurrey said. By fall or winter, three-fourths of the materials should be registered, Hurrey said.

The new system will be "much more efficient and a lot less labor intensive," Hurrey said. "It will save employees from doing much

of the paperwork and allow them to do their job of helping the patrons."

Currently, the libraries use filing cards to keep track of their materials, and tracking down books which have been checked out requires searching through a large amount of cards, said Lynne Redmond, chair of the county board of library trustees. "Due to the volume (of materials), we have no control over past-due books," Redmond said.

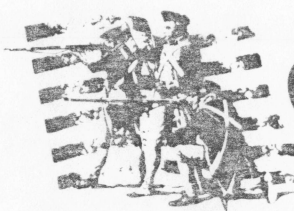
The libraries "are sometimes several months behind in tracking overdue books," Hurrey added. Before, it has been impossible to take a physical inventory of the materials in the libraries. "We might find that we won't be losing things by people not returning books," Hurrey said.

Permission to purchase an auto-

mated cataloging system, a long-time goal of the libraries in the three counties, was granted two years ago when county governments granted funding for the necessary start-up costs. Last year the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association accepted an offer to lease for six years a cataloging system serving the tri-county area, purchasing the system at the end of the lease.

One problem the libraries face with implementation of the system is the shortage of funds for the lease payments. Each county's share of the fiscal 1991 lease payment is between \$54,000 and \$58,000, Hurrey said, but the St. Mary's county commissioners only granted about \$47,500 in their fiscal 1991 budget for the county's share of the lease payment. The shortfall was made up with interest from the Local Government Investment Pool, Hurrey said.

# Summer ranchise!



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