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Broward County Commission Libraries Division Presents

First Library in America to Receive a Moon Rock for Public Display

News Conference Planned for Moon Rock Donor and a Former Astronaut

BROWARD COUNTY, FL – A thin piece of the moon encased in Lucite will be unveiled at a press conference scheduled for 4 p.m. on Tuesday, October 23, 2007 at the Broward County Main Library (6th floor). On the following day, October 24, the moon rock will be on permanent display for free, public viewing. Broward County Library, located at 100 South Andrews Avenue in Fort Lauderdale, is the *only* library in the nation to have an exhibit of a real moon rock. This precious material is typically exhibited at science museums and schools.

The Broward County Commission will proclaim Tuesday, October 23 as Moon Rock Day in Broward County during the Good and Welfare portion of their 2 p.m. meeting at the Governmental Center, 115 South Andrews Avenue in Fort Lauderdale.

Attending the commission meeting and the moon rock unveiling is the wife of former Apollo 7 astronaut Donn F. Eisele who died in 1987. This moon rock is an Ambassador of Exploration Award given by NASA to Susan Eisele Black on behalf of her husband. She, in turn, has selected Broward County Library as the location for the gift.

“Since Donn and I lived in Fort Lauderdale, I chose to place the moon rock in the Main Library in downtown Fort Lauderdale,” she said. “This location gives more people the opportunity to see it. The moon rock is an important part of our history.” Mrs. Eisele-Black is a longtime member of the Broward Public Library Foundation. Also attending the press conference and the Library Foundation’s private reception following is Apollo 7’s lunar module pilot, Walter Cunningham.

“This is a great day for Broward County,” said Broward County Mayor Josephus Eggelletion, Jr. “This generous donation is an outstanding piece of America's history and we are more than fortunate to be able to showcase a specimen that came from the moon in our Broward County

library. I want to thank the Eisele family for supporting our community. We are proud the Eiseles chose to make Broward County their home."

On October 11, 1968, Donn F. Eisele occupied the command module pilot seat for the 11-day flight of Apollo 7, sharing the adventure with spacecraft commander Walter M. Schirra, Jr. and Walter Cunningham. Apollo 7 was the first manned mission in the Apollo program to be launched. It was an 11-day earth-orbital mission, the first manned launch of the Saturn IB launch vehicle, and the first 3-man American space mission. A video of Apollo 7's contributions to the space race can be viewed near the moon rock's exhibit case.

NASA is giving the Ambassador of Exploration Award to the first generation of explorers in the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo space programs for realizing America's vision of going to the moon. NASA also is recognizing several other key individuals who played significant roles in the early space programs.

The moon rock award will serve as an inspiration to a new generation of explorers who will help us return humans to the moon and eventually on to Mars and beyond. The award is part of the 842 pounds of samples collected during the six Apollo lunar expeditions from 1969 to 1972.

As a recipient of the Award, Broward County Library will help NASA communicate the benefits of space exploration and work to inspire careers in science, mathematics and engineering. There are plans for a year of library programming featuring space themes, and emphasis on library collections featuring science fact and fiction. These programs will be funded by the Broward Public Library Foundation.

The award-winning Broward County Library Division, www.broward.org/library, was founded in 1974 and provides essential quality of life community service as well as outstanding customer service throughout Broward County. The library consists of 37 branches, three million items for public use, over 2,000 computers for public use, award-winning after school, literacy, youth and teen programs, as well as free online reference and information databases for all age groups, located at www.broward.org/library, accessed by 300,000 customers online monthly. The Broward County Library is the ninth largest library system in the United States serving over nine million walk-in customers annually.

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