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Broward County Commission Libraries Division Presents
The Mysteries of the Dead Sea Scrolls on November 20

BROWARD COUNTY, FL – The Dead Sea Scrolls have been called the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times. The Scrolls -- some 100,000 fragments and some complete and stretching as long as 30 feet -- contain more than 800 documents and date from about 200 B.C to 135 A.D. The contents of the Scrolls are both biblical and non-biblical in nature, and some content has yet to be seen. On November 20 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Regional/BCC Library, explore with speaker Eli Kayon what has been discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls as it pertains to ancient Judaism and early Christianity and the current interpretations of how the two are linked.

Though scholars agree the Scrolls are significant, they disagree as to who actually produced the Scrolls. A widely held theory is that the Scrolls were the library of a Jewish sect and that the library was hidden in the caves at the start of the First Jewish Revolt (A.D. 66-70) when the Roman army advanced against the rebel Jews. We do know that the Scrolls were found about two thousand years later, between the years of 1947-1956, in caves along the Dead Sea, located in Israel and Jordan, about 15 miles east of Jerusalem and about 1,300 feet below sea level. Additional scrolls were also found in the 1960s and years later at other locations. There is a wealth of information found in the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as mysteries that translators, scholars, scientists, and specialists are still working on solving.

As to its biblical nature, among other things, the Dead Sea Scrolls contain a copy of the oldest Bible in existence – one thousand years older than what had previously been the oldest Hebrew text of the Bible. The Bible text in the Scrolls has much similarity and some differences to the current Hebrew text of the Bible. The Scrolls show us a different Judaism -- a more diverse

Judaism. The Scrolls have prophecies that are not found in the Bible as well as never-before-seen psalms and previously unknown stories about biblical figures.

“Exploration” of the Dead Sea Scrolls continues -- both in the existing available writings and in the unseen, unrolled Scrolls. A Diamond Light Source (DLS) may be the tool that provides access to the unseen Scrolls. DLS generates a high-energy light, 100 billion times brighter than what is used in hospital x-rays, and scientists are developing a way to use the beam to read rolled-up parchments that are too fragile to be unfolded. Professor Tim Wess, whose team is developing the technique at the University of Cardiff in Britain has said, "I think there are discoveries to be made in terms of trying to understand the whole picture of the history of the people who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls and why they moved into that area of the Dead Sea...I understand there's information about a battle between light and dark."

Till the undiscovered is discovered, the available contents of the Scrolls provide much for current discussion and thought.

The South Regional/BCC Library is located at 7300 Pines Boulevard in Pembroke Pines. For more information, please call 954-201-8825.

The award-winning Broward County Libraries Division, founded in 1974, provides essential quality-of-life community service as well as outstanding customer service throughout Broward County. The Library consists of 37 branches that provide three million items and more than 2,000 computers for public use, and after-school literacy, youth, and teen programs. Its website, www.broward.org/library, includes free online reference and information databases in addition to access about library services, locations, and events that customers access on average 300,000 times a month. 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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