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**“AMERICA READS THE CONSTITUTION”
AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER
IN CELEBRATION OF CONSTITUTION DAY 2005**

Philadelphia, PA (August 30, 2005) – Now an annual, national ritual at the National Constitution Center, Americans can join in a live, public reading of the U.S. Constitution from “We the People” to the final words of the 27th Amendment, headlined with Governor Ed Rendell and an Army Captain who won a Purple Heart for her heroism in an Easter Sunday attack in Baghdad. The event will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Grand Hall Lobby, and admission is FREE. To reserve a space in the reading, contact constitutionday@constitutioncenter.org.

“Constitution Day is an important celebration for the United States, and all the more important because of new federal legislation requiring schools and federal agencies to conduct programs on the Constitution,” says National Constitution Center President and CEO Richard Stengel. “We are working to make ‘America Reads the Constitution’ one of the most popular programs schools, federal agencies and institutions around the nation can use to fulfill the vision of the Byrd law. By reading the Constitution aloud, we can celebrate and learn more about the document that ensures liberty and freedom for all Americans.”

“America Reads the Constitution” will include an array of local and national figures from all walks of life, including Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell and First Lady Marjorie Rendell, CBS 3 News Anchor Larry Mendte, and representatives of “We the People,” including Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, Philadelphia police and fire officials, dancers, singers, and more! Other exciting appearances will be made by Benjamin Franklin, Elvis Presley, and a zoo handler with a surprise animal.

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ADD ONE/AMERICA READS THE CONSTITUTION

A highlight will be a reading by decorated Iraqi War hero Captain Tamara Montgomery. Captain Tamara Montgomery has been a member of the United States Army Reserve for 21 years. She is a member of the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade. She was deployed to Iraq in February 2003. On April 11, 2004, Easter Sunday, her convoy was attacked. The driver, sitting 6 feet in front of her, was killed. Cpt. Montgomery exchanged fire with the insurgents and was shot in the arm (severing an artery) and the leg.

Following emergency surgery at a hospital in Baghdad, Cpt. Montgomery was transferred to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Maryland, where she spent two weeks recuperating, before returning home to Philadelphia. Cpt. Montgomery received a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star for Valor, for her efforts in Iraq.

The reading is part of the National Constitution Center's celebration of Constitution Day 2005, which honors the historic signing of the Constitution on September 17, 1787. The festivities will last all week long, featuring a variety of programs and events that provide children and adults with a better understanding of the continued significance of the Constitution.

Located at 525 Arch Street on Philadelphia's historic Independence Mall, the National Constitution Center is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance to Americans' daily lives. Opened on July 4, 2003, the museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". From June 10 through November 4, the museum is also featuring its first new traveling exhibition, *Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War*. The Center is open seven days a week, and admission is \$9 for adults and \$7 for seniors ages 62 and up, children ages 4-12, and active military personnel. Children ages 3 and under are free.

The National Constitution Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education and debates, and as a home for visiting scholars. Also, serving as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional debate, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6600 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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