

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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DAVID HOWARD TRACES THE TRUE-LIFE DETECTIVE STORY OF A STOLEN AMERICAN RELIC AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

Philadelphia, PA (June 9, 2010) – Author **David Howard** will join the National Constitution Center on Tuesday, June 29 at 6:30 p.m. to trace the true-life detective story of North Carolina's original copy of the Bill of Rights, as told in his new book, *Lost Rights: The Misadventures of a Stolen American Relic*. Howard will retell the riveting story of the disappearance of one of America's most historic documents, and the colorful chain-of-events that led to its recovery, including the critical role the Center played in the FBI's plot to recover the missing document. **Dr. Steve Frank**, the Center's Vice President of Education and Exhibitions, will moderate. Admission is free, but reservations are required and can be made by calling 215.409.6700.

Near the close of the Civil War, an unknown soldier in General Sherman's army rifled through the North Carolina state house in search of some simple Confederate mementos, but he wound up discovering something far more valuable: one of the fourteen original copies of the Bill of Rights. In *Lost Rights*, Howard tells the remarkable 138-year journey of this priceless document, following every twist in that epic passage, from the Indiana businessman who purchased the looted parchment for five dollars to the high-end antiques dealer who, in 2003, tried to sell it to the National Constitution Center under false pretenses for \$5 million. That dubious offer triggered an unlikely series of events that climaxed with a dramatic FBI sting on the 32nd floor of a Philadelphia office tower.

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David Howard is a freelance journalist and writer whose work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Outside*, *Men's Journal*, *Backpacker*, *Travel + Leisure*, *National Geographic Adventure*, and *Business 2.0*, among other publications. He is the executive editor of *Bicycling* magazine.

Dr. Steve Frank is the Center's Vice President of Education and Exhibitions. A member of the Center's staff since 2001, he played a leadership role on the project team that created its award-winning main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*. He continues to oversee the Center's exhibition programs and educational outreach.

A book sale and signing will follow the program, courtesy of Joseph Fox Bookshop.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. 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." The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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