

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER EXPLORES FRANKLIN'S LEGACY IN THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATIONS *As part of the Benjamin Franklin Legacy Series*

Philadelphia, PA (February 23, 2006) – Imagine Benjamin Franklin today: sitting in Starbucks, surfing the web on his wireless laptop, his BlackBerry beeping, listening to an iPod, ignoring his continuously ringing cell phone. If he were still alive, might Franklin have invented these innovative communication devices himself? In his own time, Franklin was, among many other roles, an innovator in the way we communicate.

On March 14, 2006 at 6:30 p.m., the National Constitution Center, as part of a program funded in part by the *Institute of Museum and Library Services*, will explore Franklin's legacy in the world of communications in an event titled *From Poor Richard's Almanac to Podcasting: The Next New, New Things in Communications*. The program features, among other guests, the blogger who revealed the inaccuracies in James Frey's book and the manager of Howard Dean's presidential campaign, who revolutionized the Internet's use in political campaigns. Tickets are free, but reservations are required and can be made by calling 215.409.6700.

This state-of-the-art panel of guests includes **John Aravosis**, writer and pioneer in using blogs for political advocacy; **William Bastone**, editor of *The Smoking Gun* and investigative journalist for *The Village Voice*; **Madison Bond**, executive vice president of programming for Comcast Cable; **Steven Levy**, technology columnist for *Newsweek* and author of *The Perfect Thing*; and **Joe Trippi**, Howard Dean's campaign manager and author of *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Democracy, the Internet, and the Overthrow of Everything*.

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ADD ONE/NEW, NEW THING

The program will be moderated by **John Palfrey**, Clinical Professor of Law and Executive Director of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School.

John Aravosis is a Washington veteran. It was his blog that exposed the man who snuck his way into The White House press corps. As a lawyer, writer and political strategist, he has provided counsel on political, technological, and legal issues to the federal government, non-profit organizations, the media and private industry. Aravosis' website can be found at <http://americablog.blogspot.com/>.

William Bastone is the editor of The Smoking Gun website and has recently gained attention for breaking the story on James Frey's discrepancies in his novel *A Million Pieces*. During his tenure at *The Village Voice*, Bastone was a member of the paper's investigative reporting team, covering City Hall, criminal justice issues and, for more than a decade, writing regularly about New York's five Mafia families. Bastone's blog can be found at www.thesmokinggun.com, which is now owned by Court TV.

Madison "Matt" Bond of Philadelphia serves as executive vice president of programming for Comcast. Bond is a pioneer in developing the technology of video on demand. Before joining Comcast, Bond served as executive vice president of distribution for the Yankees Entertainment & Sports Network and was also executive vice president of programming at AT&T Broadband, and president of Satellite Services, Inc.

Steven Levy is a journalist who has written several books on computers, technology, cryptography, the Internet, cyber security and privacy. His latest is *The Perfect Thing: How the iPod is Shuffling Commerce, Culture, and Coolness*. Levy is a senior editor and chief technology writer for *Newsweek*, writing mainly for the "Science & Technology" section, and the regular column "Random Access" in the monthly feature "Focus On Technology". He also contributes to *Wired*, and has had articles published on *Harper's*, *Macworld*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Premiere*, and *Rolling Stone*.

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ADD TWO/NEW, NEW THING

Joe Trippi most recently served as campaign manager for presidential candidate Howard Dean. Trippi's innovations in the way he used the web in the Dean campaign made a new day in politics, both in the way candidates raise money and communicate with voters. In particular, he was largely responsible for the creation of an official campaign blog, and the use of Meetup.com and other social networking technologies to connect supporters.

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. Opened on July 4, 2003, the Constitution Center is 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 and debates, and is a partner of NPR's "Justice Talking," a program of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. Also, serving as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, 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.

Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World, a blockbuster exhibition celebrating Franklin's 300th birthday, makes its world premiere at the National Constitution Center from December 15, 2005, through April 30, 2006. Created by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, this exhibition is being hosted locally by CBS 3. Tickets for the exhibition, which also include regular museum admission, are \$14 for adults; \$12 for children ages 4-12, seniors, and college students; and \$8.50 for groups of 20 or more. For advance tickets, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.gophila.com/ben.

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