



NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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**VISITORS TO THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER ON BILL OF RIGHTS DAY,
DECEMBER 15, CAN SEE THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT AND JOIN A DOZEN ACTIVITIES**

**Exhibition, Public Reading, Book Festival, Reduced Admission, and Lesson Plans Honor the
223th Anniversary of the Ratification of the First 10 Amendments to the U.S. Constitution**

Philadelphia (December 8, 2014) – Special events and museum programming, including a new exhibition featuring one of 12 surviving copies of the U.S. Constitution’s Bill of Rights sent to the states by George Washington and acquired by The New York Public Library in 1896, a public reading, and a first-time book festival, will be part of the Bill of Rights Day celebration on Monday, December 15, 2014, at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. More than a dozen activities are planned, including a ribbon cutting ceremony at 9:45 a.m. with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett to open the exhibition, *Constituting Liberty: From the Declaration to the Bill of Rights*. Bill of Rights Day events will focus on how the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution have protected Americans’ way of life for more than 200 years. Lesson plans, activities and games for the classroom, offered on the National Constitution Center’s website for student, teachers and people of all ages, constitutioncenter.org/learn, also honor the 223rd anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights on December 15, 1791. Admission to the National Constitution Center on Bill of Rights Day is discounted to \$5, courtesy of Macy’s. The first-time book festival is a ticketed event and admission is \$5 for each of four programs or \$15 for all four events. Museum admission is not required to attend the book festival.

“Bill of Rights Day on December 15 is a perfect time to celebrate our freedoms and to explore the relationship between our core founding documents,” said Jeffrey Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center. “On Bill of Rights Day, we are excited to unveil our new exhibition featuring rare copies of our nation’s three founding documents, including the Bill of Rights, and to present a full day of programming, including the Constitution Center’s first ever Bill of Rights book festival.”

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Bill of Rights Day/page 2 of 6

Bill of Rights Day will begin at 9:30 a.m. with a **Public Reading of the Bill of Rights**, hosted by James Madison (actor), in the National Constitution Center's Grand Hall Overlook. Then, at 9:45 a.m., students and visitors will join in a ribbon cutting with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett, Citizens Bank President Dan Fitzpatrick, and National Constitution Center and community leaders to unveil ***Constituting Liberty: From the Declaration to the Bill of Rights***, an exhibition that features rare copies of America's three founding documents. For the next three years, the exhibition will display a first edition Stone Engraving of the Declaration of Independence, a copy of the first public printing of the U.S. Constitution, and one of 12 surviving copies of the Bill of Rights in the Center's new George H.W. Bush Gallery. This particular copy of the Bill of Rights was acquired by The New York Public Library in 1896. Through an historic agreement between the Library and Pennsylvania, the document will be alternatively displayed to the public in both New York and Pennsylvania for the next 100 years.

In addition, the Citizens Bank Foundation will present a check for \$75,000. The grant will provide 1,400 students from Philadelphia-area Title I schools with free admission to the museum and a special onsite Bill of Rights-themed education program during the new exhibition's run.

The first-time **Bill of Rights Day Book Festival** takes place from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., gathering together eight acclaimed authors and scholars for four hour-long discussions. First Amendment lawyer Lee Levine, veteran Supreme Court reporter Stephen Wermiel, conservative intellectual Yuval Levin, constitutional scholars Kermit Roosevelt and Timothy Sandefur, award-winning author Harlow Giles Unger, Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge David Wecht, and the National Constitution Center's Jeffrey Rosen will all participate.

More details on the book festival, featured events, a list of additional activities, and an outline of resources for the classroom follows.

Bill of Rights Day Book Festival

The Bill of Rights Day Book Festival takes place in the Constitution Center's F.M. Kirby Auditorium. Admission is \$5 per program or \$15 for all four discussions. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling 215-409-6700 or by visiting constitutioncenter.org. Authors' books will be available for sale in the Museum Store.

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“Justice Brennan’s Fight to Preserve the Legacy of *New York Times v. Sullivan*”

(10:00 – 11:00 a.m.)

New York Times Co. v. Sullivan, the case that changed the First Amendment, has protected the freedom of expression for the past 50 years. Join First Amendment lawyer **Lee Levine** and veteran Supreme Court reporter **Stephen Wermiel**, authors of “The Progeny: Justice William J. Brennan’s Fight to Preserve the Legacy of *New York Times v. Sullivan*” as they tell the story of Justice Brennan’s struggle to stop efforts to overturn this landmark case. Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge **David Wecht** will moderate.

“Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of the Left and Right”

(11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.)

Conservative intellectual **Yuval Levin**, author of “The Great Debate: Edmund Burke, Thomas Paine, and the Birth of Right and Left,” and the National Constitution Center’s **Jeffrey Rosen** explore the origins of the left/right divide by examining the views of the men who best represented each side of that debate at its outset: Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine. Levin and Rosen will bring the conversation to today’s political discourse—on issues ranging from abortion to welfare, education, economics, and beyond.

“The Conscience of the Constitution”

(1:15 - 2:15 p.m.)

Is liberty or democracy the primary constitutional value? Join constitutional scholars **Kermit Roosevelt** and **Timothy Sandefur** for a conversation exploring this compelling question—the basis for Sandefur’s most recent book, “The Conscience of the Constitution: The Declaration of Independence and the Right to Liberty.” The Constitution Center’s **Jeffrey Rosen** will moderate.

“John Marshall: The Chief Justice Who Saved the Nation”

(2:30 - 3:30 p.m.)

Harlow Giles Unger, author of “John Marshall: The Chief Justice Who Saved the Nation” reveals how Marshall emerged from the Revolutionary War’s bloodiest battlefields to become one of the nation’s most important Founding Fathers. As the longest-serving Chief Justice in American history, Marshall transformed the Supreme Court from an irrelevant appeals court into the powerful and controversial branch of government that Americans today either revere or revile. Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge **David Wecht** will moderate.

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Bill of Rights Day/page 4 of 6

Featured Events

A Piece of History: The Story of the Bill of Rights

10:30 a.m., Freedom Classroom

Constitutional scholar **Carol Berkin** will discuss the origins of the Bill of Rights. Attendees will learn why the Bill of Rights was needed and how James Madison pushed these amendments as the best way to ratify the Constitution.

Is the First Amendment Alive in Your School?

11:30 a.m., Freedom Classroom

In this lively and informative workshop, featuring **Marjorie Rendell**, a federal judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and a former First Lady of Pennsylvania, students will deliberate on the issues connected to the First Amendment. Through the use of court cases and school policy, students will be able to define student expression rights and then evaluate the necessity and constitutionality of censoring and reprimanding student expression in schools.

Kids Town Hall: The Bill of Rights Story

Noon, Grand Hall Overlook

Students will join in the conversation and debate around the Bill of Rights. Founding Fathers of the past will tell stories and answer questions about why we needed a Bill of Rights and how it affects everyone's lives today.

More Bill of Rights Day Events and Programs

Founding Fathers, Founding Documents Exhibition Tour

9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Signers' Hall and George H.W. Bush Gallery

Visitors will join the museum's education team for tours of the *Constituting Liberty: From the Declaration to the Bill of Rights* exhibition. Guests will revisit the Revolutionary period to meet the people who founded our nation and to learn about the documents they helped create.

Bill of Rights Day Partners

9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Grand Hall Lobby

The National Constitution Center will host several partner organizations to help celebrate Bill of Rights Day.

I Ratified the Bill of Rights!

9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Grand Hall Lobby

Visitors to the Constitution Center can sign their names to a giant version of the Bill of Rights.

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Bill of Rights Day/page 5 of 6

Activity Tables

9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Grand Hall Lobby

Students will join in hands-on activities for all ages to celebrate and learn about the Bill of Rights, such as making an Amendment Cootie Catcher, a Preamble Scramble puzzle, or a Bill of Rights Bingo card!

Living News

10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., Bank of America Theater

Today's headlines are brought to life in this dynamic, 25-minute performance incorporating video, contemporary music, and current news broadcasts. Featuring three engaging actors who play multiple roles, Living News introduces controversial constitutional issues and encourages students to explore their own points of view. Following the performance, students engage in dialogue about these timely issues along with the museum's education staff.

Bill of Rights Show

10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m., Grand Hall Overlook

Who wants to be a "Bill-ionaire?" In the Center's fast-paced game show, students face off in a fun competition testing their Bill of Rights knowledge while the show's host reveals the real deal about our amendments and freedoms.

Separation of Powers

10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., Grand Hall Overlook

This high-energy show teaches the three branches of government and examines how our Constitution limits government by separating powers—a truly revolutionary idea! Students take part in an educational tug-of-war game between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches while they learn about checks and balances.

Educators and Members Open House

4:00 - 7:00 p.m., Entire Museum

Reservations are requested for a complimentary Educator and Member Open House with a special evening viewing of the *Constituting Liberty* exhibition.

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Bill of Rights Day/page 6 of 6

For the Classroom

Lesson plans for kids in kindergarten through 12th grade, and information on replicating some of the Bill of Rights Day museum activities in the classroom, are featured on the National Constitution Center's website at constitutioncenter.org/learn. Online visitors can also participate in live chats about the Bill of Rights, from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., December 8 - 19, 2014. This free, fun, Telly Award-winning video lesson and live chat series explores the compelling story of our Constitution's first 10 amendments, from James Madison's efforts to compile a list of essential freedoms, through the years when the document's provisions were seldom applied, to present-day court cases that impact all Americans.

Bill of Rights Day/page 6 of 6

The National Constitution Center is located at 525 Arch Street on Philadelphia's Independence Mall. The Center is open 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, until 6 p.m. on Saturday and from Noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. General admission is \$14.50 for adults, \$13 for seniors, students with ID, and youth (ages 13-18), \$8 for children (ages 4-12), and is free for active military. Admission on Bill of Rights Day is \$5, courtesy of Macy's. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

About the National Constitution Center

The [National Constitution Center](http://constitutioncenter.org) in Philadelphia is the Museum of We the People, America's Town Hall, and a Headquarters for Civic Education. As the **Museum of We the People**, the National Constitution Center brings the United States Constitution to life for visitors of all ages and inspires active citizenship by celebrating the American constitutional tradition. The museum features interactive exhibitions, engaging theatrical performances, and original documents of freedom. As the only institution established by Congress to "disseminate information about the United States Constitution on a non-partisan basis," the National Constitution Center serves as a **Headquarters for Civic Education**—offering cutting-edge learning resources including the premier online Interactive Constitution. As **America's Town Hall**, the National Constitution Center hosts timely constitutional conversations uniting distinguished leaders, scholars, authors, and journalists from across the political spectrum. For more information, call 215-409-6700 or visit constitutioncenter.org.

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Editor's Note: In a separate release today, the National Constitution Center announced the three-year exhibition, *Constituting Liberty: From the Declaration to the Bill of Rights*.