

**NEWS RELEASE**

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***GOVERNOR RENDELL PROCLAIMS PENNSYLVANIA HERITAGE WEEK,  
CHARTER DAY  
ONCE-A-YEAR OPPORTUNITY TO SEE ORIGINAL 1681 PA CHARTER***

**Harrisburg, PA** – Citing founding father William Penn’s vision for a “land of peace, justice, equality and freedom for all men and women,” Governor Edward G. Rendell has proclaimed March 6 -15 as Heritage Week and March 8 as Charter Day in Pennsylvania.

“William Penn’s belief in a government ‘where laws rule, and people are a party to those laws’ has become a national tradition,” Governor Rendell said. “We must recognize and take seriously our responsibility to protect these rights and to ensure that they are preserved for all generations.”

On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of Great Britain gave William Penn the charter for the land that became Pennsylvania. As part of its mission, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission annually celebrates Heritage Week and Charter Day at The State Museum in Harrisburg and at various state historical sites across the state.

“A priceless document cared for by the State Archives, the charter possesses so much meaning to the commonwealth and its residents,” said Barbara Franco, PHMC executive director. “The fragile historical parchment is exhibited in a special protective Plexiglas case with low light and temperature levels.”

The charter will be on display at The State Museum in Harrisburg from March 6 – 15.

On Sunday, March 8, Family Heritage Day, admission is free to The State Museum’s Curiosity Connection – a play area for children seven years old and younger – and the planetarium. Also, no admission will be charged at participating PHMC historic sites.

Also featured will be presentations by William Penn re-enactor William Kashatus and “Pennsylvania Jack,” who will share historic tales about Pennsylvania.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania is one of 25 historic sites and museums on the Pennsylvania Trails of History®, which is administered by PHMC. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

General admission is free. Individuals who need special assistance should call (717) 787-6778 or, for individuals with hearing-related disabilities, the Pennsylvania TDD relay service at (800) 654-5984. For more information on other exhibitions, events and programs at The State Museum, visit [www.statemuseumpa.org](http://www.statemuseumpa.org).

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EDITOR’S NOTE: Below is a copy of the Governor’s proclamation marking March 6 – 15 as Heritage Days and March 8 as Charter Day in the commonwealth:

#### PROCLAMATION

#### HERITAGE DAYS

March 6-15, 2009

#### CHARTER DAY

March 8, 2009

WHEREAS, On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted William Penn a Charter for land in the New World; and

WHEREAS, with this land, Penn founded “Penn’s Woods” or “Pennsylvania” based on his vision of a place of peace, justice, and freedom for all men and women, and his belief in a government “where law rules, and people are party to those laws”; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania became a shining beacon of democracy in the New World and a model for other governments including our own national government, Penn being called by Thomas Jefferson the “greatest law giver the world has known”; and

WHEREAS, Penn’s Charter marks the formal beginnings of the colony and Commonwealth

of Pennsylvania, and we as its citizens benefit from and recognize our responsibility to protect for ourselves and future generations those rights and principles established by William Penn.

THEREFORE, I, Edward G. Rendell, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim March 6-15, 2009 as HERITAGE DAYS and March 8, 2009 as CHARTER DAY in Pennsylvania and encourage all citizens to celebrate the three hundred and twenty-eighth anniversary of the Charter, and honor the principles set forth by our founder William Penn.

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the city of Harrisburg, on this twentieth day of February in the year of our Lord two thousand and nine, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and thirty-third.

EDWARD G. RENDELL

Governor