

Constitution Week

Illinois State Organization
2025

Welcome to a carefully curated listing of possible Constitution Week celebration ideas. Many ideas have originated from the Constitution Week pages on dar.org but have been captured here to make your idea shopping easier. Do not forget to check out the Daughters Online Community as well. Our DAR sisters are most creative!

The Constitution of the United States is more than just an old document; it's the bedrock of our nation, a living testament to the enduring principles of liberty, justice, and self-governance. Studying and remembering its contents isn't merely an academic exercise; it's a patriotic duty that empowers us to understand our rights and responsibilities, ensuring that the freedoms secured by generations past continue to flourish for generations to come. By engaging with this foundational text, we honor the wisdom of its framers and equip ourselves to safeguard the republic, ensuring that the promise of America endures.

Our State Regent's State Theme, **Education Rings the Bell for Liberty**, reflects this effort on our parts to promote knowledge and understanding of the Constitution. We are charged with the following by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution:

The Aims of the Constitution Week Celebration are to:

- Emphasize citizens' responsibilities for protecting and defending the Constitution.
- Inform people that the Constitution is the basis for America's great heritage and the foundation for our way of life.
- Encourage the study of the historical events which led to the framing of the Constitution in September 1787.
- Constitution Week is a great time to learn more about this important document and celebrate the freedoms it gave us

To help us understand the origins of this charge, the History of Constitution Week is as follows:

In 2025, we recognize the 70th anniversary of Constitution Week. The Constitution of the United States is the binding document that has held our country together since it was conceived and designed in 1787 and made official through ratification by nine states June 21, 1788. Without it, we would not be celebrating 250 years of these UNITED States in 2026.

NSDAR Past President General Gertrude S. Carraway was responsible for the annual designation of September 17-23 as Constitution Week. The DAR made its own resolution for Constitution Week, which was adopted on April 21, 1955.

Members of the United States Congress received the DAR resolution and on June 7, 1955, the resolution was discussed in the Senate. The first resolution to observe Constitution Week was made on June 14, 1955, by Senator William F. Knowland of California. Following the passage of the resolution by both Houses of Congress, President Eisenhower issued his proclamation on August 19, 1955.

The first observance of Constitution Week was so successful that on January 5, 1956, Senator Knowland introduced a Senate Joint Resolution to have the President designate September 17-23 annually as Constitution Week. The resolution was adopted on July 23, 1956, and signed into Public Law 915 on August 2, 1956.

For his patriotic aid and interest, Senator Knowland received an Award of Commendation from the NSDAR Continental Congress in April 1956.

Daughters have been tasked to publicly celebrate and promote the Constitution since a resolution to do so was signed into law by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1956.

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

For over two centuries the Constitution has remained in force because its framers successfully separated and balanced governmental powers to safeguard the interests of majority rule and minority rights, of liberty and equality, and of the federal and state governments. More a concise statement of national principles than a detailed plan of governmental operation, the Constitution has evolved to meet the changing needs of a modern society profoundly different from the eighteenth-century world in which its creators lived. To date, the Constitution has been amended 27 times, most recently in 1992. The first ten amendments constitute the Bill of Rights.

May God Bless you and May God Bless America in this important task!

Susie Wurth, Constitution Week Chairperson, Illinois State Organization

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Begin with the end in mind

As you consider what your options are for celebrating Constitution Week with your Chapter, your Schools and your Community, let these Questions from the Chapter Master Report guide you in your planning:

- 1) Did your chapter participate in “Bells Across America”?
- 2) Contact a Mayor to ask for a proclamation? How many were presented or issued?
- 3) Have a Constitution Week minute or recite the Preamble at each meeting?
- 4) Contact State Senators and Representatives?
- 5) Schedule and present a new Constitution Week program, Invite a Judge, Political Science Professor or Constitution Attorney to speak
- 6) Create a program on the founding documents, Founding Fathers or ratification process?
- 7) Participate in the Constitution Week Poster Contest?
 - a. If yes, how many posters were received?
- 8) Schools:
 - a. Contact Schools about Constitution Week? How many?
 - b. Classrooms visited about Constitution Week? How many?
 - c. Constitution Week kits distributed to schools? How many?
- 9) Displays (including table top) in libraries, schools, city hall built for Constitution Week? How many?
- 10) Total number of Constitution Week posters distributed/displayed?
- 11) Outdoor displays:
 - a. Number of billboard/marques displays?
 - b. Number of yard signs?
 - c. Number of garden flags?
- 12) Events held for Constitution Week? How many?
 - a. Assist youth volunteers (C.A.R.; Junior American Citizens) to host Constitution Week events?
 - b. Contact local scouts and church groups?
 - c. Contact local libraries to host an event?
- 13) Media contacts for Constitution Week:
 - a. Number of newspaper, magazine and newsletter articles submitted?
 - b. Number of hours of local cable news television time coverage?
 - c. Number of radio stations that were sent spot announcements or recorded messages; Podcasts?
- 14) Social Media:
 - a. Do members participate in Daughters Online Community (DOC)-Constitution Week?
 - b. Do members use social media (Outside DAR) to promote Constitution Week? If so, please list.

15) Using Resources:

- a. Did you use ideas/resources found on the Constitution Week Committee webpage?
 - b. If the ideas/resources found on the Constitution Week Committee Webpage were used, please indicate what was most helpful.
 - c. Are there things that you wish were included? Please list.
 - d. Did you use other public internet resources you wish to share with the Constitution Week committee? If yes, please list.
- 16) Please add additional information you wish to report:
- 17) If your chapter had a special activity or project please describe here.
- 18) If your chapter had a special activity or project and would like to be considered for possible recognition, please send a complete report to the State Chair electronically.
- 19) Did you forward any additional material to the State Committee Chair?

Dates to Remember:

- Constitution Week September 17-23
- Constitution Day September 17
- Poster Deadlines:
 - January 1 - Entries must be received by chapter chairs
 - January 15 - Chapter winners must be received by the state chair
- Chapter Master Report – on or before January 31, 2026

Chapter Chairs
CONSTITUTION WEEK / SEPTEMBER

- Host Constitution Week poster contests and place last year's winning poster (available from the DAR store) wherever people gather (libraries, stores, churches, city halls, or schools.)
- Participate in Bells Across America, September 17 at 4:00 EST, to join our national celebration with one minute of simultaneous bell ringing across the land, followed by reciting the Preamble to the Constitution. Involve Daughters, friends, schoolchildren, churches, veterans, C.A.R., or JAC.
- Schedule and present a U.S. Constitution program at a school, library, or chapter meeting.
- Request/receive local, city, and county Constitution Week proclamation(s) and share them on social media.
- Create Constitution Week displays in libraries, schools, civic centers, and other public places.
- Participate in local Constitution Week events.
- Obtain print, broadcast, and/or social media coverage to commemorate Constitution Week.

ALL YEAR ROUND

- Recite the Preamble to the Constitution at monthly chapter meetings and special events.
- Share "Constitution Minutes" at meetings or in chapter newsletters.
- Adopt a classroom to teach children about the founding of our Nation, particularly about our founding documents. Have children memorize the Preamble to the Constitution, perhaps using hand motions.
- Make a concerted effort to study the Constitution; read about or take an online course to understand the history behind the need for, and the writing of, the Constitution.
- Commemorate the 233rd anniversary of the Bill of Rights - Amendments 1-10 (December)

Federal Mandate for Schools

Constitution Day - September 17

Reference Public Law 108-447 - Section 111 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2005 (Public Law 108-447): Any institution of higher education that receives any Federal funding for a fiscal year must hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on September 17 of such year for students served by the institution. A provision in the federal-spending bill maintains that this applies to colleges as well as secondary and elementary schools receiving federal dollars.

Working With Schools

Guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Education direct all education institutions that received federal dollars to offer students instruction on the U.S. Constitution each September 17. However, these guidelines stop short of requiring a specific curriculum. Instead, the department's notice, published in the May 24, 2005, Federal Register, points educators to Internet resources for information, including the Library of Congress and the National Archives websites.

If September 17 falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, then schools and colleges must schedule an educational program in the preceding or following week, according to the guidelines. A written statement by Senator Byrd said that he was pleased that the guidelines "did not impose a particular view of the Constitution," and he hoped, "that schools will develop many different creative ways to enable students to learn about one of our country's most important historic documents."

Activities

Activity: Bells Across America!

Chapters and individual Daughters are encouraged to contact churches, schools, courthouses, fire houses, veterans' homes and organizations, and city governments, requesting them to ring bells on September 17. This should occur for one minute at 4:00 EST so that bells are heard simultaneously from coast to coast. It is acceptable if your chapter is having a celebration and you choose a different time, or if any aforementioned group must adjust their time. The important goal is to ring bells! Bell ringing was often used to announce the presentation of some significant information. Announcing that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention had reached agreement and a Constitution for the new Nation was the result, certainly would have been heralded with the ringing of bells.

School Activities

Educate, Commemorate, and Celebrate! We must take advantage of this opportunity to work with local schools by offering support and assistance for an education program for Constitution Day. Using the suggestions below, consider what your chapter can do:

- Adopt a classroom, grade, or a school to receive your focus.
- Provide educational supplies, (Constitution Week Kits, posters books, etc). which will help to tell the story / remind students of the importance of our Constitution, the Preamble, and the Bill of Rights.
- Present a program on the Constitution, the anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights, or any of the events related to the implementation of the Constitution.
- Coordinate with the junior/high school art department, music director, and history teachers to develop displays, (see poster contest), and present programs.
- Work with elementary teacher to have children memorize and understand the meaning of the Preamble.
- Make ["A More Perfect Union" DVD](#) available to middle schools and high schools.

Community Activities

- Offer a **PROGRAM** to your local schools and youth groups. Let teachers know that you've created a special program on the Constitution. Provide pocket-size Constitution booklets or Constitution Week Goodie Bags for the students.
- Arrange Constitution Week **DISPLAYS**– Have a public display in a library, school, city hall, county and/or state fair, store front, or other public places promoting Constitution Week.
- Post **YARD SIGNS** and **GARDEN FLAGS**.

- Post **BANNER** on booth, on a float, on a fence.
- Ask governors, mayors, and city or county officials to sign a Constitution Week **PROCLAMATION**-
 - Sample Proclamations have been provided for your use. You might request that the city or county provide each employee with a copy of the Constitution, which either the city or county could fund, or you might get the local Chamber of Commerce, realtors association, or merchants to fund.
 - Encourage “photo op” presentations, i.e. present CW poster to the mayor when receiving proclamations.

Constitution Week Poster Contest

All DAR members and non-DAR members, **ALL AGES**, are invited to participate in the Constitution Week Poster Contest for 2025. The winning poster will be printed in the spring of 2026 and offered for sale at the DAR store. The poster should illustrate/celebrate the spirit or meaning of the U.S. Constitution.

Deadlines:

- January 1 - Entries must be received by chapter chairs
- January 15 - Chapter winners must be received by the state chair
- February 25 - Winning state entry must be received by Division Vice Chair
- March 15 - Division winning entry must be received by the National Committee Chair

The following resources are available online at dar.org in the Constitution Week Committee webpages:

- Goodie bag content suggestions
- Sample Constitution Week proclamations for download
- Webpages and additional resources:

[Getting Ready for Constitution Week](#)

[President Eisenhower's Constitution Week Proclamation](#)

[Recommended Reading](#)

[Celebrate Bill of Rights Day: The Story of the Bill of Rights](#)

[Oak Hill Publishing \(Constitution Books and other activities\)](#)

[The Articles of Confederation Short History and Timeline](#)

[Constitution Week Kit Content Ideas](#)

[Constitution Week Banner \(Large\)](#)

[Cooking Up A New Nation: Colonial Foods and Ratification of The U.S. Constitution](#)

[Special Constitution Newsletter](#)

[History Belle](#)

[National Archives](#)

[National Constitution Center](#)

[James Madison's Montpelier](#)
[Pennsylvania Bar Association Celebrate the Constitution \(Students\)](#)
[Pennsylvania Bar Association - Preamble Hand Signs](#)
[Delegates of the Continental Congress Who Signed the United States Constitution](#)
[The Constitution Quest \(game\)](#)
[Books about the Constitution for Young Readers](#)
[Constitution Week Children's Proclamation](#)
[Constitution Week Older Student Proclamation](#)
[NSDAR Community Classroom - Educational Resources Lesson Plans](#)
[Patriot Chest](#)
[Preamble - ASL](#)
[Complete text of the United States Constitution including the Amendments.](#)
[Journal of the American Revolution](#)

MATERIALS FOR CONSTITUTION WEEK

- [Constitution Facts Bookmarks](#)
- [Constitution Week DAR Website QR Code Bookmark](#)
- [Constitution Facts Bookmarks - Flag](#)
- [Constitution Week Bookmarks - Elementary](#)
- [Preamble Bookmarks](#)
- [Restaurant Table Cards - Version 1](#)
- [Restaurant Table Cards - Version 2](#)
- [Restaurant Table Cards - Version 3](#)
- [Elementary Constitution Word Search](#)
- [Elementary Constitution Word Search Answer Key](#)
- [Middle School Word Search](#)
- [Middle School Word Search Answer Key](#)
- [Preamble Scramble](#)
- [Preamble Scramble Answer Key](#)
- [Preamble Hand Motions](#)

MATERIALS IN SPANISH

- [Constitution Facts Bookmarks - Spanish](#)
- [Constitution Facts Bookmarks - Spanish](#)
- [Constitution Week Bookmarks - Elementary - Spanish](#)
- [Preamble Bookmarks - Spanish](#)
- [Interesting Facts About the Constitution - Spanish](#)
- [Elementary Constitution Word Search - Spanish](#)
- [Elementary constitution Word Search Answer Key - Spanish](#)
- [Middle School Word Search - Spanish](#)
- [Middle School Word Search Answer Key - Spanish](#)

- [Preamble Scramble - Spanish](#)
- [Preamble Scramble Answer Key - Spanish](#)

Brainstorm with your chapter or a team or passionate chapter members and record your ideas and plan here: