

Electoral College—Y2K

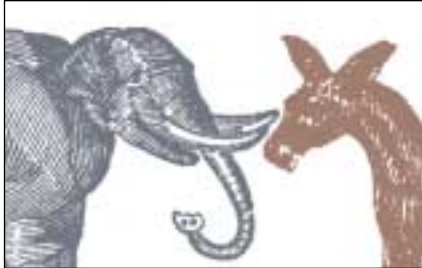
THIS ISSUE'S PUZZLES

1. Electoral College. Whether you're a donkey or an elephant, you may have fun with these puzzles. Following the four puzzles posed is a statement of assumptions and a list of websites supplying useful information.

a) What is the fewest number of states than can result in a win? a tie? What is the most number of states a candidate can win but still lose? tie? Is a combination resulting in a tie possible for every number of states between the answers for "fewest" and "most" from the preceding questions?

b) If electoral votes were tallied by State in alphabetical order, in an unbroken string of wins which State would put a candidate over?

c) If electoral votes were tallied by State in order of gaining statehood, in an unbroken string which State would put a



candidate over?

d) At a time when Florida was "too close to call," if results for Election 2000 had been governed by electoral vote distribution under 1980 census (instead of the current distribution dictated by the 1990 census), would the candidates have fared differently?

Assume there are only two candidates and all electoral votes in a state go to one candidate. The District of Columbia is referred to as a "state"; voting status was

provided by the 23rd amendment. An electoral vote calculator is provided in website www.avagara.com/e_c/ec_calc.htm; the order of statehood is in website www.usmint.gov/mint_programs/50sq_program/index.cfm?action=schedule; and the change in electoral vote distribution resulting from the 1990 census is in website www.fec.gov/pages/elevote.htm.

2. Y2K. The budget provided funds to designate four new national parks to be located among three regions—Florida and other southeastern states (F), eastern states, including New York (E), and western states including California (W). States in those regions vote in a block (one vote for each region) for one of three plans: Plan (a) provides 1 park each in F and E and 2 in W. Plan (b) calls for 3 parks in F and 1 in W. Plan (c) has 2 parks in both F and E. When the 3 blocks voted, there was 1 vote for each plan—a Y2K glitch that needed resolution. It was then decided to vote on 2 plans selected at random and then vote on the winner against the plan left off the first ballot. Assuming that each region wants as many of the new parks as possible and there is no coalition among regions, what is the result if Plan (a) is left off the first ballot? Plan (b)? Plan (c)? Is strategy involved?

ANSWERS TO LAST ISSUE'S PUZZLES

1. Paints 'R Us. A Junior Achievement activity, Paints 'R Us (PRU), needs your guidance. They mix and sell paint. Their paint inventory consists of 60 quarts of blue (B), 40 quarts of red (R) and 30 yellow (Y). They mix equal parts of B and R yielding purple (P), R and Y forming orange (O), and B and Y resulting in green (G). A quart of P sells for \$6, O for the premium price of \$20, and G for \$9. They're permitted to sell only these mixed paints. Further, there is a penalty for any of the primary colors not used; the charge per quart is the same for any leftover B, R or Y. Help PRU determine the number of quarts of P, O and G they should mix

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