

Constitution still stirs debate

How did 39 men create a new model of government in just 100 days?

Our founders were idealists who were willing to compromise. That miracle has lasted 235 years.

They signed that noble work Sept. 17, 1787. It's now observed as Constitution & Citizenship Day.

"Let our government be like that of the solar system. Let the general government be like the sun and the states the planets, repelled yet attracted, and the whole moving regularly and harmoniously in several orbits.

—John Dickinson, Delaware delegate, 1787

James Madison, main Constitution author, designed a government as inefficient as possible to protect both the new nation and its citizens' future.

The founders created three branches:

The President leads the **Executive Branch**, which oversees federal actions and employees, including the military.

The **Legislative Branch** includes two groups who write rules and determine our nation's spending and priorities.

The Senate, with two members from each state, protects smaller and rural states. *The House of Representatives* divides power based on population.

The first census in 1790 counted 4 million people. Only white men could vote.

Today, we number 333 million people stretching well beyond North America's coasts. Full citizens vote after turning 18.

Part 3 is the **Judicial Branch**. It resolves disagreements and corrects wrongdoing.

Bill of Rights.

Americans yearned for individual liberty. The



founders responded with the Bill of Rights, Ten amendments ensured freedom of religion, speech, assembly, public trials, and more. Later amendments ensured all citizens the right to vote regardless of their race or sex.

The Electoral College

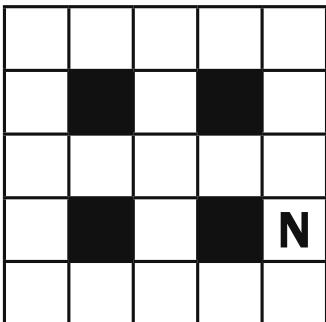
The founders faced slow, clumsy messaging. The Constitution created a body of decision-makers equaling each state's House and Senate delegation to form an Electoral College. Each delegation votes their state's majority pick for President.

State election officials now count the Presidential popular vote. But votes for President are awarded, winner-take-all, based on the state's electors.

That's why winning a state by only a few votes is as good as winning a state by many votes in a presidential election.

In 1888, the Electoral College boosted Benjamin Harrison over Grover Cleveland despite Cleveland topping the popular vote. Decisions went against the popular vote winner again in 2000 and 2016.

"Seems like the debate on protecting both the small and the mighty continues," says Kid Robin Read. "Keep reading."



Cross Five

Place these six words in the crossword grid: Gates, Right, River, Roses, Turns, Voter



CHALLENGE: Circle ads or stories in your newspaper on the Nov. 8, 2022 elections.