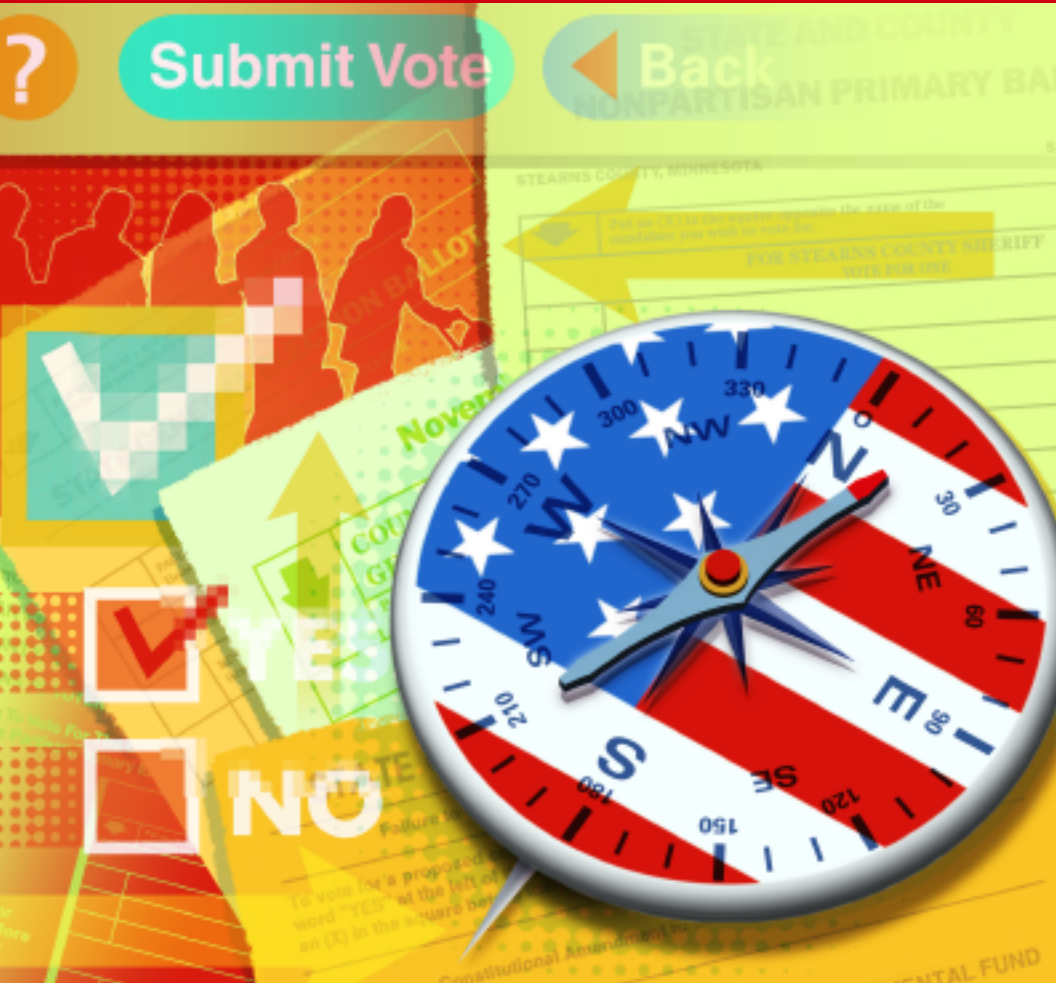


SECOND EDITION

NAVIGATING ELECTION DAY

What Every Voter Needs to Know



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Bob Guldin, author

Shirley Tabata Ponomareff, editor

NAVIGATING ELECTION DAY

What Every Voter Needs to Know

**A Complete Guide for New and Not-So-New Voters,
Including How to Register, How to Vote,
and How to Evaluate Candidates and Issues**

SECOND EDITION

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
EDUCATION FUND**

Our Mission

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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Foreword



When the League of Women Voters was founded in 1920, women in America had just won the right to vote—a right they had been working to achieve for over 70 years. In fact, the League was born out of that votes-for-women movement.

But that didn't mean women were actually *ready* to vote. As the League said then, many women were “prejudiced against voting” or “fearful of going to register.” So the League's first job was convincing these new voters that voting was a good idea, and then explaining how to do it.

More than 80 years later, we're still at it. The League of Women Voters is still helping people vote, educating voters about the issues and trying to make sure that everyone can take part in elections. The League has no ties to any political party. Our goal is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

The League also tries to help the public understand major policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters Education Fund, publisher of this booklet, focuses on research and educating citizens. Its DemocracyNet (www.dnet.org) is a nationwide online voter education resource. It offers interactive, in-depth candidate debates that focus on the issues.

Navigating Election Day is another League resource, and we hope it will reach young Americans and new U.S. citizens with the message: **VOTING IS SOMETHING YOU REALLY CAN DO!**

Putting the 2002 first edition together and preparing this second edition have taken the work of many people, including LWVUS Executive Director Nancy Tate, who conceived this project, and staff members Kelly Ceballos, Lloyd Leonard, Cheryl Graeve, Zaida Arguedas, and Jeanette Senecal. The Ford Foundation provided support for the first edition, and outside readers provided invaluable assistance: Robert Bisi, outreach director, Youth Service America; Alvaro Fernandez, Florida regional director, Southwest Voter Registration Education Project; Donald Green, director of the Institution for Social & Policy Studies and A. Whitney Griswold professor of political science, Yale University; Susan A. MacManus, distinguished university professor of public administration & political science, University of South Florida, Tampa; Robert S. Montjoy, assistant vice president for outreach and professor of political science, Auburn University; Emily Smith (Texas A & M University), communications and development intern, Youth Vote; and Beth I. Weinberger, Civic Engagement Project, Institution for Social & Policy Studies, Yale University. We regret we were not able to incorporate all of their good ideas; any omissions are our responsibility.

Kay J. Maxwell
LWVUS President
January 2004



Why This Booklet?



This booklet is made for you if you're interested in voting – or if you're just thinking about voting. Our goal was to make it easy to understand. If you've never voted before, if it's been a while since you voted, if you've moved, or even if you have been voting for years, *Navigating Election Day* will explain the whole process from A to Z.

THAT INCLUDES:

- **Why voting is important;**
- **How you register to vote, and why you need to;**
- **How you know who or what to vote for;**
- **What you do on election day; and**
- **What you can do after the election.**

Navigating Election Day is written to answer any questions you might have, so that voting will be smooth and easy—maybe even fun.