Every four years, America's political parties hope that their "ticket" -- the presidential and vice presidential candidates -- will capture enough electoral votes to win the presidency.

In That’s the Ticket: A Parade of Presidential Elections, we highlight the leaders, issues, scandals and final outcomes of 39 presidential elections in an online exhibit.

The issues in our nation’s political history such as war, taxes, recession, healthcare, immigration and the environment -- as well as judgments about the character and experience of candidates -- have played themselves out many times up to the present day.

How the exhibit is organized

The exhibit starts with the 1856 presidential election and proceeds chronologically through 2008. We start in the year 1856 because it was the first year the Democratic Party faced off against the newly formed Republican Party, which was founded in Ripon, Wisconsin, in 1854.

Slate of Candidates: Each party’s presidential and vice presidential candidates (tickets) are listed along with election results in both popular and electoral votes. Only tickets that won electoral votes are listed.

Election Facts: Campaign and election facts summarize some of the economic, social and political issues that affected the course of the election.

Electoral Map: A full color map of the United States gives a visual representation of how America voted. You can see which states voted for which tickets.

Wisconsin’s Choice: A special map of Wisconsin documents how our citizens voted.

Historic Photos: Images feature the national candidates. Many were taken during campaign stops in Wisconsin, demonstrating a unique Wisconsin perspective. Others document the campaign conventions and inaugurations. Photos were selected from the rich collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society. Modern photographs were provided in partnership with the Wisconsin State Journal and The Capital Times.

That’s the Ticket! A Parade of Presidential Elections was first presented as a physical exhibit at the Wisconsin Historical Museum during the 2008 presidential campaign. If you have questions or comments about this online exhibit, please contact Paul Bourier.

Suggested Reading
Voices and Votes: How Democracy Works in Wisconsin. Available through the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. Images and graphics from this book were used in the Museum field trip curriculum for the physical exhibit.