

Political Idol

Dear Tim:

Why can't we use the same format to elect a President as we do to choose the next *American Idol*? Seems like a great way to avoid the countless ads, the endless campaigning, and those pointless, boring conventions. You have a televised open competition over a set number of weeks. During each show, the candidates get up to perform (i.e., express themselves and their positions), and one by one we vote them off until there's only one left standing. It would shorten the process considerably, make it more engaging and entertaining and even cut out the waiting in line at the polls. And judging by the ratings they get for *American Idol*, it might actually improve voter turnout. Of course, like *American Idol*, you could wind up with the occasional Taylor Hicks in the White House, but that can't be that much worse than what we have now. What do you think?

-Reformer on Regency

Dear Reformer:

First of all, be careful what you say about Taylor Hicks. I



DEAR TIM

think he's a very underrated *Idol* winner, and I don't think his true legacy will be known until long after he's left the stage. Second, I think you just might be on to something. I'm with you about this whole process taking way too long and quickly losing its appeal. And I think we'd actually find out more about the candidates under the pressure of a performance than in any of these "town hall" meetings, debates or ads. Of course, if you thought voter fraud was a possibility before, a phone-in vote could usher in a whole new era. But that's just details. I'd

say get this idea in front of the board of elections right away so we can get this in effect as soon as possible. And if you're looking to take care of more business over the phone, remember that we take phone orders every day and can deliver them right to your door. And that's no campaign promise. That's a fact.

Dear Tim:

How long do we have to call you Grand Marshal?

-Parade-goer on Patricia

Dear Parade-goer:

It has a nice ring to it, so I don't mind if you want to continue using it. Incidentally, thank you to everyone who was so gracious to me over the Fourth. It was truly an honor to be Grand Marshal of our famed community parade and have the chance to see and meet so many people. As a former Marine and Vietnam veteran, it was like the homecoming parade I never had, so thank you to everyone involved in the festivities and everyone who came out to celebrate. It's something I'll truly never forget.

Dear Tim is presented as a public service by Tim Huffman, owner of Huffman's Market. Write to him in care of Huffman's Market, 2140 Tremont Center, Upper Arlington, Ohio, 43221, stop by and say hi, or visit www.huffmansmarket.com.