

Deciding On Dependents

Dear Tim:

I'm a dependable weekly shopper. That means you can depend on my coming into the store at least once a week for one thing or another. With that in mind, I've decided to declare you as a dependent on my tax return this year. Is that OK?

—Deduction Shy on Devon

Dear Deduction:

It is if you don't mind writing your next letter from minimum security prison.

Dear Tim:

What's going on between you and my wife? She's up at your store every day while I'm at work. She raves about the service you provide. Then this week she started talking about your muscles. There better be a good explanation for all this, or I'll be stopping by there myself. And it won't be to sample the soup of the day.

—Bodybuilder on Bedford

Dear Bodybuilder:

I think this is all just a big misunderstanding. While



DEAR TIM

I'm glad your wife is such a fan, I assure you we're not providing her a service that's any more personal than the friendly service we provide to all our customers. And the mussels she was referring to are probably the ones we're featuring in our brand new fresh seafood case. I encourage you to stop in and shop with your wife sometime. You'll see what I mean. And if you still have a beef with me, my real name is Ryan. Ask for me at the service center at the front of the store. I'd be happy to

take it outside and settle this like men.

Dear Tim:

When I went to check out the last time I visited your store, there was this whiz-bang computer screen staring back at me from behind the cash register with all kinds of information about the items I was purchasing. I've got to say, I was a bit surprised. I've always shopped at Huffman's for the hometown appeal and old-fashioned service. You're not going high-tech on me, are you?

—Senior on Stanford

Dear Senior:

We are if it makes your purchase more accurate and your shopping experience more efficient. I'm not a huge fan of technology either, but it's helping us do a lot of things better and faster than ever before. And while faster isn't always better, it is if you're trying to make it home for the evening news and I can get you through the checkout line in time.

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 or www.huffmansmarket.com.