

Correspondent of the Day for May 24

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## **GOP convention stuck in Stone Age**

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

You know those T-shirts with “I survived ...” logos printed on them? Well, I survived the 2013 Republican State Convention at the Richmond Coliseum, May 17-18, 2013, but just barely.

This two-day exercise of our basic political freedoms, won through the sweat and blood of our forefathers, is a sacred tradition. However, could not the technology of the 21st century make it more of a joyous occasion, rather than a needlessly drawn-out ordeal? The tedious process of repeated verification of official delegates, hand marking of ballots, ballot collection, physical ballot transport to another site for counting and tabulation and eventual public announcement of the official results add up to hours of tedium and ear-splitting campaign rhetoric.

What message do the weary delegates bring home late at night to their families at the end of the process, besides the eventual winners of the contest? For some families with youngsters at home it might be that the mechanics of the convention process is stuck somewhere back in the Stone Age of technology. Party officials bemoan the lack of interest in the political process by the younger generation. My opinion is that the “kids are all right,” and that they rightly see the present methodology as archaic and a reason to stay away. In the age of digital everything – cellphones, smartphones, iPads, touchpads and digital verification – they can see no reason such technology has not made its way into the convention process.

When “America's Funniest Home Videos” shows the television audience doing instant voting and result tallying, and our Congress does the same, why not in our convention process? That would be something I would vote for, and so would our absent next-generation delegates-to-be.

Charles Battig. Charlottesville.