

Chase Bank can bring my dad back from the dead?



My dad, Ed Jacoubowsky, born June 14, 1931, died May 25, 1988. Old style newspaper photo for an old-style newspaper guy. It's hard to believe that I've never had a brokerage account all these years. After all, the first job I was offered after college was with Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith (a job I didn't take because, on my way to their Monterey office, I stopped for lunch and saw an ad in the newspaper for Heathkit Electronics and went there instead). But the only way to afford this year's vacation with my wife is to sell off the stock I bought when I was 13 & 14 years old delivering newspapers. And here's the odd tie-in... the stock was Schlumberger, which I purchased because they owned Heathkit at the time and I was big into building their electronic gadgets.

So fast-forward one heck of a lot of years (46) to yesterday. I've got paper stock certificates and what I thought was the required paperwork to put the stocks into my name (originally they were in my dad's name via something called the Uniform Gift Act to Minors, since a minor can't technically own stock). Including my dad's death certificate, from 1988. The account manager at Chase, Kenny... pretty nice guy, going through all the questions, filling out a whole lot of forms. After making a copy of the death certificate, it comes time for... my dad's signature on one of the forms. Seriously. It was just one of those things required as you went from a-to-b-to-c-to-d-to-e-to-f etc. He had to call someone in help to figure out where to go, what to do. The person at the other end of the phone wasn't sure and had to ask someone else.

There was the potential that we would be re-enacting the basic premise of the movie "Brazil." Well-worth watching, by the way. I did explain that I was perfectly happy to provide my dad's signature, if they knew a way to bring him back to life. Sadly, there was a workable alternative, so my dad remains among the fish in Monterey Bay where his ashes were scattered so many years ago.

When Kenny (the Chase Bank guy) noticed that I was left handed, as he was, I had the opportunity to bring up the only thing I really wished I'd asked my dad before he passed away. Why, my father being left-handed himself, did he not do or say anything about the two teachers I had that tried to make me write right-handed? Yes, this question still sits with me, perhaps in a comforting way because I don't have to ponder anything more substantive that might have been left unsaid. I have a sense of closure regarding what can never resolved. Curious thing, that. --Mike--