

Name Change

By Hap Hansen

When I was born, my parents named me Harlan. I would have preferred Bill, Bob, Sam or Don. Or, why couldn't I have been named Rockefeller, on the outside chance I would have been eligible for an inheritance. For the same reason, I could have been called Warren Buffet, except I'm sure my nickname would have been 'Buffy'! On the other hand, I could have been named Yogi, Claude, Sebastian, Caesar, Adolph, Zachariah, Fidel, Rufus, Erasmus, Lorenzo, Horatio, or Fosdick. I think I'll just stick with Harlan.

Middle initials do not come into play very often. They are usually just one letter, which doesn't mean anything. Initials can also be a problem. In the Army, I had a friend named R.B. Jones. In the payroll's preferences and to prevent confusion, they listed his name as R (only), B (only), Jones. This told the paymaster that the initials were actually his name. Sure enough, when he got his first paycheck, it was made out to Ronly Sonly Jones!

As for my last name, I'm glad it's not Hitler, Stalin, Lenin, Trump, Clinton or Nixon, for obvious reasons. Back in Nebraska, many years ago, a man went before a Judge to have his name changed. The Judge said, "Sir, what is the name you would like to have changed?" The man said, "Your Honor, my name is Joe Lipschitz." Just so you know, that's spelled, L-i-p-s-c-h-i-t-z. It is an actual name. The Judge said, "I completely understand. What name would you like to have?" The man said, "I want to change my name from Joe to Bob." The Judge's mouth dropped and then he said, "What? Why?" The man said, "I'm tired of people coming up to me and saying, "Hello Joe, what do you know?"

If every surname in the world was thrown in a pile and we had to pick a name at random that would be ours for a lifetime, I think we would all want our own names back. I think I'll just stick with Hansen.