



Compassionate Advocates for the Injured and Disabled

# The Christie Report

Social Security Disability

July/August 2011

[www.SharonChristieLaw.com](http://www.SharonChristieLaw.com)

201 W. Padonia Rd.  
Suite 101  
Timonium, MD 21093

Phone: 410-823-8200  
Toll-Free: 800-218-7062  
Fax: 410-823-8208

[Sharon@SharonChristieLaw.com](mailto:Sharon@SharonChristieLaw.com)



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[Donna@SharonChristieLaw.com](mailto:Donna@SharonChristieLaw.com)

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## Remembering What's Really Important

I had a meeting this morning in Baltimore. When it was over I jumped in the car to rush back to the office and do some work. But I almost immediately ended up in a huge traffic jam. What was going on? Didn't everyone know that I was in a hurry because I had so much to do? Why wouldn't they get out of my way?

I quickly realized that something very bad had happened because there were police cars with flashing lights and ambulances with sirens blaring seemingly everywhere. Policemen and policewomen were all over the street – stopping traffic and clearing a path. They looked worried. I turned on the radio and learned about a bad accident on the Jones Falls Expressway. But I was under the expressway. Why were all the police cars there if the accident was on the expressway? Then I heard the rest of the story.

A policewoman had stopped to help a motorist with a disabled car on the expressway. She was on the shoulder in an elevated area, like a bridge. Another driver hit her police car, knocking her off of the expressway. She fell 25 feet onto a parking lot below. And I was seeing the aftermath. In an instant, all of that work I had to do could wait. I said some prayers for that policewoman and her family and her colleagues while I sat in traffic. I thought about the risks that police (and firefighters and soldiers) take for us every day. I thought about how much I take their work for granted. I thought about how grateful I am that they are willing to go to work every day.

As I write this message, the policewoman is in critical but stable condition. I hope and pray that she survives with minimal injuries. Her tragedy reminds me that life can change in an instant – for better or worse. Every day we need to look around and see what is good and right about our lives and be thankful. Even when everything seems bad or negative or hopeless, there is still something good. Maybe it's the smile of a child or good friend. Maybe it's a kind word from a stranger. Maybe it's just a few minutes of peace and quiet. Look for it every day – and be grateful.



## Thanks for the Referrals

The greatest compliment I can receive is for clients and colleagues to refer new clients. Thank you to everyone who referred clients in May & June:

Stanley Benn

Clyde Bracey

Brain Injury Association of Maryland Helena Brooks

Charles Cronin

Pernell Leake

Lupus Mid-Atlantic Denise McNair

Dwight Petit, Esq.

Harvey Kirk, Esq.

Weinstock, Friedman & Friedman



## What Happens at a Social Security Disability Hearing?

The hearing before an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) is your chance to talk face-to-face with the person who will decide if you meet Social Security's definition of "disabled." It is a courtroom proceeding and your testimony is taken under oath. In many cases this is the best chance you have to win benefits and you must be fully prepared.

Like any court case, the hearing is presided over by a judge. Unlike a criminal or civil trial, however, the hearing is not adversarial, meaning that there will not be an attorney present to argue against you. In addition, the hearing is private. There will not be a jury. The courtroom is not open to the public. You will be in a small courtroom with the judge, the judge's clerk, your lawyer and a vocational expert. Sometimes the judge will also call a medical expert to testify. Each judge has his or her preference as to how the case should be presented and how the testimony is taken. After you testify, the judge will pose some hypothetical questions to the vocational expert.

Then your lawyer will have an opportunity to ask the expert some questions. Most hearings last for an hour. You want to make sure that you stay focused on the most important issues in your case.

You will be nervous when you go to your hearing. After all, you may have been waiting for two years to get to this point. Make sure that you are fully prepared before you step into the courtroom. It is important that you are represented by an experienced disability lawyer who knows the judge's preferences and can prepare you accordingly.

You will not receive the decision the day of the hearing. The judge will issue a written opinion, usually within 60 days of the hearing although it can take longer.

For more information about Social Security disability claims and to order a FREE copy of my book, *Unofficial Guide to Social Security Disability Claims*, visit my website at:

[www.SharonChristieLaw.com](http://www.SharonChristieLaw.com)

*Maturity is the ability to do a job whether or not you are supervised, to carry money without spending it, and to bear an injustice without wanting to get even.*

~ Ann Landers, advice columnist



## Travel Tip

If you just step up to the counter and say you want a hotel room, you are likely to pay the highest price. If you call at the last minute, using a travel site such as Priceline, or within 24 hours of checking in, you are likely to book a room for half that price. Priceline reports that 82 percent of travelers using the company's mobile app booked their hotel room within 24 hours of arrival. Many converts to last-minute travel are now comfortable with the idea of biding their time in order to find the best deal.

## The Lighter Side

### Don't Mess With Old People

Old George was getting ready for bed when he saw that a light in the shed was on. When he opened the back door, he could see people stealing things.

He called the police who told him they were busy and just to stay in the house until an officer was available.

George hung up and waited a minute. He called back and said there was no hurry because he just shot them all.

Within minutes, six police cars, a SWAT team, a helicopter, two fire trucks and an ambulance showed up. The police caught the burglars.

One policeman called out, "I thought you said you shot them all!"

George called back, "I thought you said no-body was available!"

### The Human Race

A little girl asked her mother, "How did the human race appear?"

The mother answered, "God made Adam and Eve and they had children, and so all mankind was made."

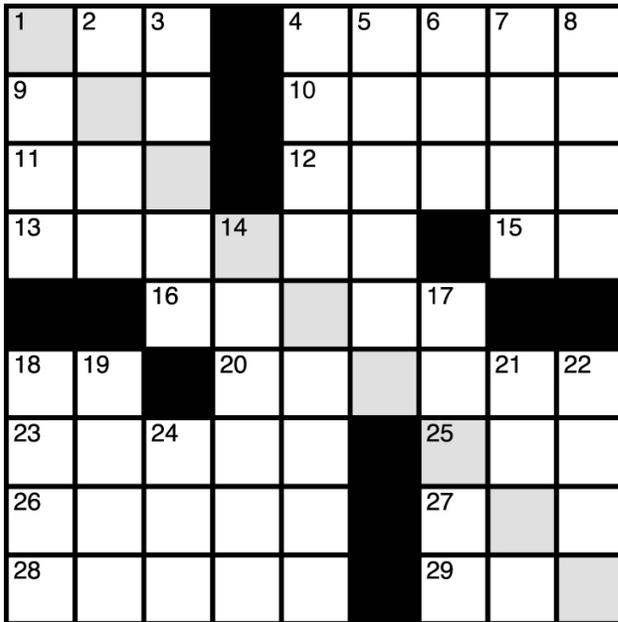
Two days later the girl asked her father the same question. The father answered, "Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved."

The confused girl returned to her mother and said, "Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said they developed from monkeys?"

The mother answered, "Well, dear, it is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your father told you about his."



## Summertime Leisure



**Across**

- 1. Tennessee athlete, for short
- 4. Opposition to Tories
- 9. \_\_\_ Claire, Wis.
- 10. Of the car
- 11. And more: Abbr.
- 12. Adult insect
- 13. "Wheel of Fortune" category
- 15. Expressing direction
- 16. Bonus
- 18. "\_\_\_ you like it"
- 20. Playground equipment
- 23. Japanese American
- 25. Neighbor of Wash.
- 26. Nominal
- 27. Genetic info carrier
- 28. Like some remarks
- 29. Double curve

**Down**

- 1. Political second banana
- 2. Curse
- 3. Riches
- 4. Place for a belt
- 5. Arm bones
- 6. Bank offering, for short
- 7. Famous lady singer
- 8. Coin opening
- 14. Crown vetch
- 17. Be crazy about
- 18. Carpenter and fire \_\_\_
- 19. State of Israel
- 21. Coastal raptors
- 22. Caribbean and others
- 24. Schuss, e.g.



**FREE Seminars**  
**- Social Security Disability -**  
 Sessions Each Month!  
 See website for days, times, and locations

## BALTIMORE EVENTS

**Personal Accounts of the Civil War**  
 April 29 to Nov. 12 | 10am - 4pm  
 Mount Clare Museum House  
 Carroll Park  
 1500 Washington Blvd  
 Brings to life the personal side of the war through objects & stories of those who personally witnessed and participated in the war. 410-837-3262  
 \$5 seniors | \$6 adults | \$4 students

**Artscape 2011**  
 July 15 - 17 | 12pm to 10pm  
 Bolton Hill Neighborhood  
 1200 Block of Mt. Royal Ave.  
 America's largest arts festival that remains FREE. Arts, crafts, opera, dance, fashion, street theater, and more...

**Heritage Walk**  
 Inner Harbor Visitors' Center  
 A 3.2 mile walking trail through four centuries of American history. The trail connects 20 historic sites and museums in a compact area that spans four city neighborhoods: the Inner Harbor, Little Italy, Historic Jonestown & City Center

## Vitamin D Helps Prevent Falls

A review of more than 50 studies shows exercise is associated with a 13 percent reduction in the risk of falling in older adults. But trials of vitamin D supplements caused a surprising 17 percent reduction of falls.

The review will be used to update the US Preventive Services Task Force recommendations for strategies to prevent falls. Falls are the leading cause of death and injury for the elderly, according to the task force.

The study of vitamin D supplementation included participants who took oral doses of vitamin D with or without calcium. The supplements ranged up to 1,000 IUs per day. When results were combined, participants who took vitamin D supplements had a 17 percent reduced risk of falling compared to control groups.

Reported by Tufts University, the Institute of Medicine has increased recommendations for vitamin D. It says children and adults under age 71 need 600 IU of vitamin D daily. Older adults need 800 IU. Patients with osteoporosis or vit. D deficiency need the 1000 IU supplements available at pharmacies.

## Eggsactly Right

Top chefs give this advice on choosing, storing and preparing eggs:

Farm fresh is good. As with any food or ingredient, a fresh egg is tastier than one that isn't. Test freshness by shaking an egg. There shouldn't be a lot of air inside the shell.

Cook at room temperature. If eggs are in the refrigerator, set them out before cooking. The white will set more evenly and the yolk stays soft.

Shell color doesn't matter. Taste and food value are the same. The shell just reflects the plumage of the mother.

Keep cooking simple. Fancy accessories aren't needed. You can skip the egg poacher and drop each cracked egg into a saucer, then slide the egg into a shallow pan of simmering water.



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# Sharon A. Christie Law

The **Law Office of Sharon A. Christie** helps disabled workers get disability benefits from Social Security. It is a long and complicated process and you should not go it alone.

The firm's founder, Sharon A. Christie, is a nurse as well as an attorney.

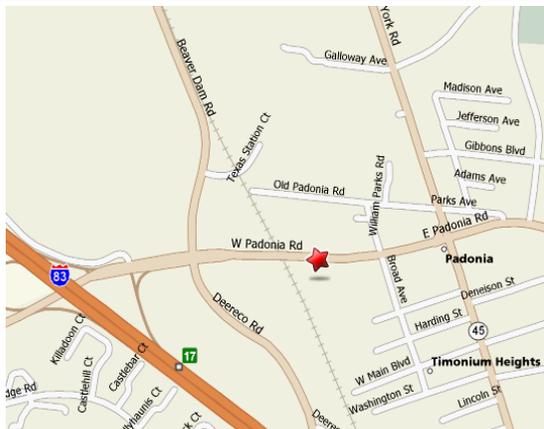
**Sharon's clients receive the benefit of having their cases handled by a firm that knows the medicine AND the law.**

If you have applied for Social Security disability benefits and need help, call the firm today. If you need more information about the process, go to the website and order a FREE copy of:

***Sharon's Unofficial Guide to Social Security Disability Claims***

or register for one of her upcoming seminars!

For more information, visit our website at:  
[www.SharonChristieLaw.com](http://www.SharonChristieLaw.com).



**201 W. Padonia Rd., Ste. 101  
 Timonium, MD 21093**



<http://twitter.com/sharonchristie>



<http://www.facebook.com/SharonAChristie>

**Office Hours**  
 M-F 9am to 5pm  
 800-218-7062  
 410-823-8200

**Practice Area:**  
**Social Security Disability**

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