



**Sharon Christie Law**

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# The Christie Report

**Social Security Disability**

**November/December 2013**

## Personal Message - from Sharon

### Let's hear it for the underdog!

I love sports. I really do! Not because I am an athlete – I am not. I go to the gym and run, but I am definitely not an athlete. So why do I love sports so much? Because of the underdog. There is nothing better than seeing the team that is supposed to lose come out on top. There is nothing better than watching David "slay" Goliath. There is nothing better than watching the team that is overmatched continue to persevere no matter what – and be successful in the end.

That is probably why I like handling Social Security disability cases. We are definitely "David" going up against "Goliath" – the U.S. government. And the government certainly has more resources for these cases. But that does not matter because if we have a strong case, we can win. We just have to persevere. That means pushing forward even though most cases will take 2 years to finish. That means pushing forward even though we get a denial letter. That means pushing forward even though the government shuts down! We just don't stop.

Practicing disability law can be exhausting. Some days it is super frustrating, especially when you cannot get through to the local Social Security office or you are transferred to a voice mailbox that is full. But I will tell you that there is no other type of law practice that is as rewarding as this one.

So if you are ever tempted to give up on your case just remember David and Goliath. David did not give up, and neither will we!

## 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 September & October.

<b>Nicole Castle</b>	<b>Donna Hill</b>	<b>Gayhart Mende</b>
<b>Allen Moser</b>	<b>Kim Parks</b>	<b>Albert Rebhan</b>
<b>Saiontz &amp; Kirk</b>	<b>Darrell Tingler</b>	<b>Donnell Vaughn</b>
<b>Brain Injury Association of Maryland</b>	<b>Weinstock, Friedman &amp; Friedman</b>	<b>Alliance of Harford County</b>

## Working While on Disability

*"I receive disability benefits. Can I work?"*

I hear this question a lot. Social Security defines disabled as being incapable of "substantial gainful activity." If you are awarded disability benefits, they continue until your condition improves and you can return to some type of work or until you reach your full retirement age.

What happens if your condition improves a bit and you want to try some work? Can you do it? Yes – but there are restrictions.

*~ Continued on page 2*

## Working While on Disability

(continued)

Social Security allows for a "trial work period" after you are approved for benefits. This is a period during which you can try to work without losing your benefits. The restriction is this: SSA looks at a rolling 60 month period to evaluate your work efforts. If you work a total of 9 months in that period (not necessarily consecutive but 9 months total) and earn \$750 or more BEFORE taxes in those 9 months, then you have completed a trial work period and your benefits will stop. If you then stop working because of your condition and it is within 3 years of when the benefits stopped, you can have them reinstated.

Confused? Most people are. The best thing to do is talk to your disability lawyer before you try to return to work. You need to understand these rules, and they do change over time. If you can return to full time work you will certainly earn more than you are receiving in disability payments, which is good for you! But you do not want an unpleasant surprise because you didn't understand the rules.

For more information about Social Security disability claims and to order a FREE copy of my book, *Sharon Christie's Unofficial Guide to Social Security Disability Claims*, visit my website—[www.SharonChristieLaw.com](http://www.SharonChristieLaw.com)—or call my office at 410-823-8200.

## The Lighter Side

While visiting his granddaughter, the man asked if he could borrow a newspaper.

"This is the 21st century, Grandpa," she said. "We don't buy newspapers. Here, use my iPad."

I can tell you this. That fly never knew what hit him!

## The Pumpkin's Colorful History

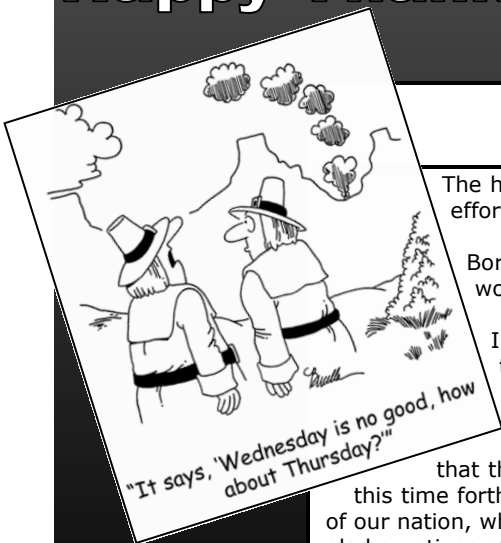
Pumpkins are native to the western hemisphere and have been cultivated in North America for 5000 years.

The Iroquois Indians were quite skilled at growing the gourd—an especially useful crop since most every part was edible. Each spring, holes were dug for planting. Into each hole they placed a fish along with a corn, bean and pumpkin seed. The fish fertilized the ground and the corn stalk provided support for the bean plant to climb. The pumpkin plant provided ground cover which kept weeds out, and the roots of the bean added nutrients to the soil.

The Pilgrims named the gourd "pumpkin" and prepared it by cutting off the tops, scooping out the seeds, and filling the hollow with various ingredients including milk, honey and spices. The tops were then replaced and the pumpkins baked in the hot coals of a fire. This created an early version of pumpkin pie filling! Later, they baked the concoction in a crust which gave us their version of the pie that is now traditionally served at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**Happy Thanksgiving!** Nov. 28

**Happy Hanukkah!** Nov. 27 to Dec. 5



## The Woman Who Made Thanksgiving

The holiday & remembrance we celebrate on the last Thursday of November can be credited to the efforts of the remarkable Sarah Josepha Hale.

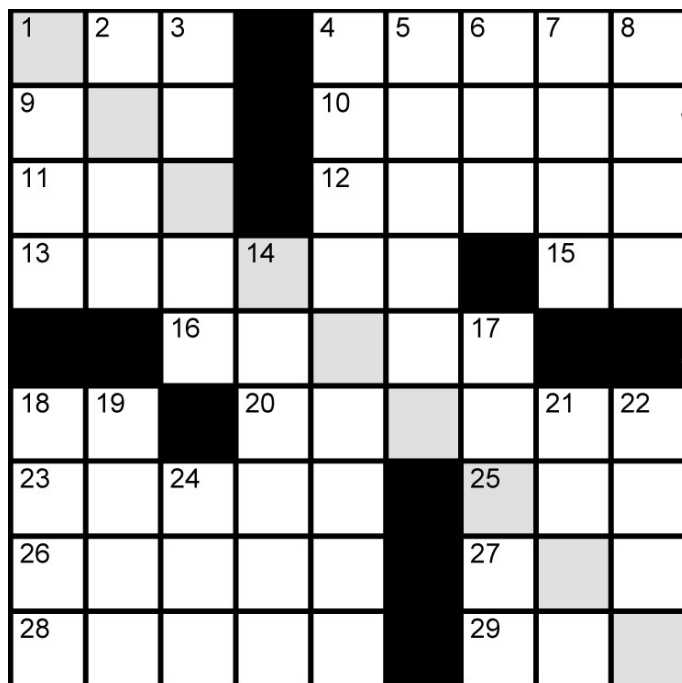
Born in 1788, Sarah was the self-taught daughter of forward thinking parents who believed women should be educated.

In the 1820s, Hale became the first American to write an anti-slavery book. By 1828, she was the editor of an influential ladies' magazine. During this period it was Hale who penned a still-popular series of children's poems that included, "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

In 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, she wrote to President Abraham Lincoln, requesting that the last Thursday of November be set aside for Thanksgiving. She argued, "Let this day, from this time forth, as long as our Banner of Stars floats on the breeze, be the grand THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY of our nation, when the noise and tumult of worldliness may be exchanged for the laugh of happy children, the glad greetings of family reunion, and the humble gratitude of the Christian heart."

Her request was granted. Let's strive to keep this day as it was originally intended!

# Thanksgiving Guest



**Across**

- 1. Wharton grad
- 4. Amount of hair
- 9. "Dig in!"
- 10. Devastation
- 11. "\_\_\_ Doubtfire"
- 12. Swelling
- 13. Texas oil city
- 15. Indefinite article
- 16. Not together'
- 18. "\_\_\_ You Like It"
- 20. Boozers
- 23. Type of scallop
- 25. Neighbor of Wash.
- 26. "Farewell, mon ami."
- 27. Chill
- 28. Stands for
- 29. Acquire

**Down**

- 1. Exec's note
- 2. Poet
- 3. Bewildered
- 4. Synonym finder
- 5. Navigation aids
- 6. "The Three Faces of \_\_\_"
- 7. Body
- 8. Diagnostic test
- 14. Ire
- 17. Flip-flop
- 18. Sandler of "Big Daddy"
- 19. Pro or Con
- 21. Cleveland's lake
- 22. Aug. follower
- 24. By way of



**FREE Seminars**  
 - *Social Security Disability* -  
 See website for info & to register  
[sharonchristielaw.com/events/seminars](http://sharonchristielaw.com/events/seminars)  
 Or call 410-823-8200

**Nov. 13, 1-3pm Bel Air Library**  
**Nov. 26, 6-8pm White Marsh Library**

## Baltimore Events



**Baltimore Ravens Football!!!**

- Nov. 17 | Bears at Chicago | 1:00pm
- Nov. 24 | Jets at Baltimore | 1:00pm
- Nov. 28 | Steelers at Baltimore | 8:30pm
- Dec. 8 | Vikings at Baltimore | 1:00pm
- Dec. 16 | Lions Detroit | 8:40pm
- Dec. 22 | Patriots at Baltimore | 8:30pm
- Dec. 29 | Bengals at Cincinnati | 1:00pm

**Miracle on 34th Street**

Nov. 30 to Jan. 1 | All Day  
 700 block of 34th Street  
 A Christmas light display put on by neighbors in this block of rowhouses. Lights strung across 34th street. Inflatable snowglobes. Musical trains, and more!

**A Monumental Occasion**

Dec. 5 | 5:30 to 8pm  
 Mount Vernon Place  
 600 block of North Charles Street  
 An evening of choir performances, strolling entertainment and more accompanying the 42nd annual lighting of the Washington Monument.

**New Year's Eve Spectacular**

Dec. 31 | 9pm to 12:30am  
 Baltimore Inner Harbor  
 Live music and fireworks.

Merry Christmas! Dec. 25

### Wild Rice & Sweet Potato Salad

- 2 1/2 cups water
- 1 1/4 cups uncooked wild rice
- 1 1/4 cups peeled & diced sweet potatoes
- 1 2/3 cups peeled Bartlett pears (about 2), cored & diced
- 1 tbl fresh orange or lemon juice
- 1 1/4 cups diced yellow bell pepper
- 1/3 cup sliced green onion
- 1/2 cup chopped, toasted pecans
- 1 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup apple cider
- 2 1/2 tbl maple syrup
- 1/8 cup fresh orange juice
- 3/4 tsp ground cinnamon

Bring water to a boil in medium sauce pan. Add wild rice. Cover & reduce heat. Simmer 45 minutes or until tender. Set aside.

Cook diced sweet potato in boiling water for 5 minutes or until tender. Drain. Rinse with cold water. Drain & set aside.

Combine diced pear & tablespoon orange juice in a large bowl; toss to coat. Add cooked wild rice, sweet potato, bell pepper, green onions, chopped pecans, and salt. Toss.

Prepare vinaigrette by combining vinegar, cider, orange juice and cinnamon. Then pour over rice mixture and mix well.

Refrigerate until ready to serve.

*Disclaimer: Recipe not tested by anyone at Sharon Christie Law. It just sounded good!*

**Law Offices of Sharon A. Christie, P.A.**  
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To receive a **FREE** copy of

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

Call 410-823-8200  
 or visit our website at  
[www.SharonChristieLaw.com](http://www.SharonChristieLaw.com)

**FREE Monthly Seminars**  
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**UPCOMING SEMINARS**  
 Nov. 13, 1-3pm Bel Air Library  
 Nov. 26, 6-8pm White Marsh Library

**Nov/Dec 2013**



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 Christie'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)**.

**Office Hours**

**M-F 9am to 5pm**

**800-218-7062**  
**410-823-8200**

**Social Security Disability**



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