



SHARON CHRISTIE LAW

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The Christie Report

Your Law Firm for Social Security Disability Benefits

March/April 2017

Personal Message - from Sharon

We Bonded Over a Dog

I write this note with a heavy heart. Today my friend, Marva, passed away. Let me tell you about her.



The year was 2000 and I volunteered with Westie Rescue, a non-profit organization that rescues West Highland Terriers in need of homes. I had a Westie named Mackenzie and was thinking about getting another so I went to a Westie Rescue meeting and met General MacArthur, II (Mac for short), who had come into the program the night before. Mac was 6 years old and clearly had been loved. He was well groomed, well behaved and a bit pudgy. It was obvious that he loved food and had plenty of it. His owner, Marva, was an older lady who developed hip and knee problems, had to sell her home in Northern Virginia and move into

a high-rise condo. She was not able to walk Mac or let him outside to do his business. How painful that must have been for her to give him up after 6 years. Mac came home with me that night, and never left.

Fast forward 1 year. Westie Rescue contacted me. Marva asked if I would send her a picture of him. Of course, I replied, and if she would like to see him I would be happy to take him to Northern Virginia. She agreed to the visit, so one Sunday morning I packed Mac into the car and off we went. When we arrived at the condo building, Marva was standing outside. They were so excited to see each other! We visited for several hours. I promised to return again soon and that was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

I visited her every 3-4 months, bringing Mac and my other Westie, Mackenzie. Marva was widowed. Her husband had been an FBI agent and she remained actively involved with retired FBI agents and their spouses, regularly attending FBI luncheons. Marva loved politics, just like I do. She was a Republican and I am a Democrat but that did not matter. Our friendship spanned several Presidents and we discussed the good and the bad of all of them.

Marva was always up to date on current events and anxious to talk about them. Joe went with me on one visit and, I'm sure, expected to meet a quiet, grandmotherly type lady, but he was in for a surprise. We visited for a while and then Marva wanted Joe's opinion on current events. Our visit was during the Bush Administration. Marva looked at Joe and said, "So what do you think about that no bid contract that Halliburton received?" (You may remember that Vice President Cheney's former company, Halliburton, received significant government contracts without competitive bidding.) Joe was speechless! He still talks about that visit.

Even though she was more than 30 years my senior, I counted Marva as a good friend. We talked about everything and I asked for her advice many times. What I really loved about Marva was that she never gave up or gave into her health problems. As time went on she slowed down but she still attended the FBI luncheons and still visited friends. In fact, at the age of 90 she was still driving and even bought a new car! Now that's an optimistic person.

Isn't life funny sometimes? Who would ever think that a little dog would be responsible for such a great friendship? I am so thankful that Marva was a part of my life. I miss her terribly. Rest in peace my friend.

Thanks for the Referrals

The greatest compliment I can receive is for clients and colleagues to refer new clients.

Sharon Amos	Jim Rutledge, Esq.	Ben Hassan, Esq.	Christine Salvati
Mary Gately Bodley, Esq.	Katrina Robertson-Bell	John Penhallegon, Esq.	Brain Injury Association of MD

What NOT to Say at Your Hearing

You will be excited to get a hearing date after a long wait! Your hearing is a very important part of your case and we will spend time preparing for it.

Here are some things to remember about your hearing:

1. **Don't exaggerate your symptoms** – I know that sounds very simple but sometimes people are tempted to exaggerate to make the case look better. Don't do it. Your medical records tell the judge a lot about your condition. For example, if you don't normally walk with a cane, don't bring one to the hearing. The judge will ask me whether there is a note in the medical records indicating that you need a cane. If I have to tell the judge that there is no indication in the records of a need for a cane, *it hurts the case*.
2. **Tell the truth** – Always be honest. Don't think about whether your answer will help or hurt the case. Not telling the truth will definitely hurt your case. Remember that your records can contain references to personal information or events in your life. For example, if you went on vacation and mentioned that to your doctor, it is probably mentioned in the medical record. If the judge asks you about the vacation don't say that you didn't go. He knows you did and will not believe anything else that you say if you are not honest.
3. **Be specific** – I recently asked a client to tell me why he had to stop working and he said that his "whole body shut down." I have heard that phrase from clients many times and while you know exactly what that means, it tells the judge nothing about why you had to stop working or why you cannot go back to work now. Describe your symptoms very specifically. Is it because of severe pain? Fatigue? Inability to pay attention? Inability to get along with other people? Be prepared to give examples of how your symptoms limit your day to day activities.

The hearing is your opportunity to tell the judge how your health problems affect your life every day. **You want to describe precisely what you can no longer do and precisely what you need help with now.** You want to paint the picture of what it is like to be you. That is the best way for the judge to understand why you cannot work.

If you have other questions about Social Security disability give our office a call at (844) 521-6700. You can also order a FREE copy of my book, **Unofficial Guide to Social Security Disability Claims**, by visiting my website: www.SharonChristieLaw.com or by calling my office.

Remember 620 and 110 Film?

How about having to take your camera into a dark place when replacing the film so none of it got exposed light? Those were the "620" days. And then film began to be manufactured in tiny cassettes that could just be dropped down into the camera. No more worries about light exposure.

Do you remember when there was only black and white film? Then the joy of color photographs!

Digital cameras today make picture taking so much easier. No film to develop. No waiting for it to be developed. No need to keep bad shots; just delete them! No need to limit the number of pictures taken!

This is just one example to show how life is always progressing. There will always be the next good thing and the next one after that. Strolls down memory lane and looking forward to the future are both fun entertainment.

Keep Your Brain Young!

Learning a new language is a great way to exercise your brain, however, if that isn't something you want to do, here are some other suggestions to keep your mind youthful, active and percolating :

- **Keep learning something.** Read fun non-fiction books and fill in the gaps from your already considerable education.
- **Utilize all of your senses** when you learn. Listen to classical music and/or suck on a mint. Both are proven to stimulate the brain. Aromatherapy is also good. Burn a fragrant candle or use a diffuser and essential oils.
- **Move your body.** Physical exercise stimulates your brain.
- **Repeat** the name, date and time of an event you'll be attending aloud to imprint it on your memory. This is especially helpful when meeting new people.
- **Eat the "Foods for Thought":** colorful fruits & vegetables, almonds, walnuts, fish, avocado, and yoghurt.

For Clients Only

At Sharon Christie Law we want to make your experience as a client great. We want you to have information about the disability process every step of the way. That is why we have a "Client's Only" section on our website. All current clients have a password that gives them access to the content there.

In the "For Clients Only" section, you will find information that we do not share with the general public. We will continue to add valuable information & will update you in every newsletter about the new information available to you.

HERE'S WHAT'S AVAILABLE TO YOU

- GENERAL INFORMATION
- APPLICATION
- RECONSIDERATION STAGE
- HEARING STAGE
- FAVORABLE DECISION
- PARTIALLY FAVORABLE DECISION
- UNFAVORABLE DECISION
- AFTER YOU RECEIVE DISABILITY BENEFITS

HERE'S WHAT'S NEW

UNFAVORABLE DECISION

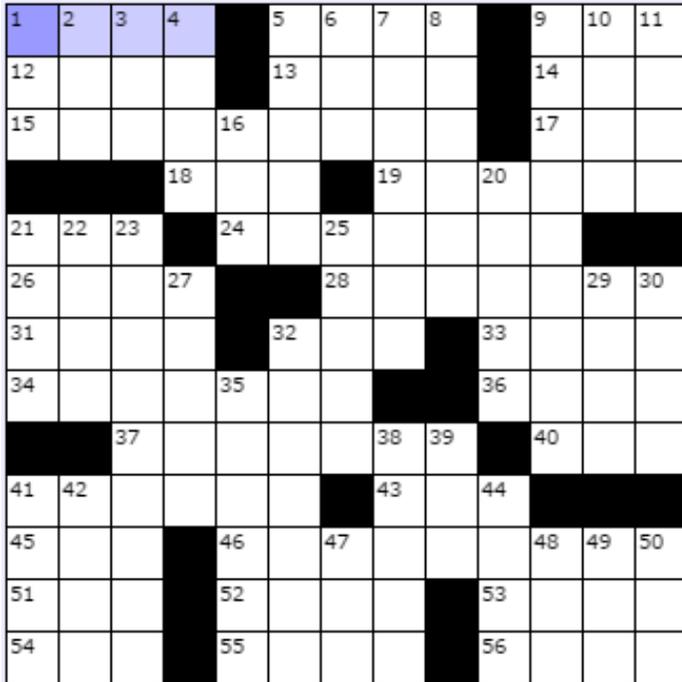
- (video) Why was I denied?

You've Got Mail!



Get our Weekly Electronic Newsletter (aka ezine)

www.SharonChristieLaw.com/ezine-signup



ACROSS

- 1. Bullets, for short
- 5. Warty amphibian
- 9. Carpenter's tool
- 12. Shore bird
- 13. Green Gables girl
- 14. Diner dessert
- 15. Holiday hunter's prize (2wds)
- 17. Discontinue
- 18. Lennon's spouse
- 19. Puts up
- 21. Actress _____ Ryan
- 24. Least fresh
- 26. Certain poems
- 28. Teeter-totters
- 31. Short skirt

- 32. Snaky curve
- 33. Above
- 34. Free from germs
- 36. Olden times
- 37. Sailboat race
- 40. Blushing
- 41. Seventh planet
- 43. Altar response (2 wds)
- 45. King _____
- 46. Penance
- 51. Busy activity
- 52. Cleopatra's river
- 53. Flat
- 54. Feminine pronoun
- 55. High cards
- 56. _____ Gingrich

DOWN

- 1. Consumed
- 2. Give _____ break! (2wds)
- 3. Married woman (abbr.)
- 4. Aware of
- 5. Fortuneteller's card
- 6. First number
- 7. Los _____, CA
- 8. Temperature unit
- 9. Observer
- 10. Isn't, incorrectly
- 11. Unites
- 16. Naval officer (abbr.)
- 20. Student's assignments
- 21. Dad's partner
- 22. Rewrite text

- 23. Electricity source
- 25. Plus
- 27. Warning horn
- 29. Dressed in
- 30. Moved quickly
- 32. Rubber band
- 35. Large lizard
- 38. Prongs
- 39. Fruit drink
- 41. Mormon state
- 42. Unmannerly
- 44. Prophetic sign
- 47. Bullring cry
- 48. Christmas _____
- 49. Never used
- 50. Explosive letters

St. Patrick's Day Mar. 17
Passover Apr. 10-18

Easter
 Apr. 16



FREE Seminars
 - *Social Security Disability* -

Register online at
 SharonChristieLaw.com/seminar
 Or call (844) 521-6700

Mar. 29, 6-8pm, White Marsh Library
Apr. 25, 6-8pm, White Marsh Library

Baltimore Events

Oriole Park Tours

Beginning in March!
 www.baltimore.orioles.mlb.com
 One of the best bargains around!
 Adults: \$9 Seniors (60+): \$6
 See the dugout, Press level, Scoreboard/
 Jumbo Tron control room & the exclusive
 suite level! Each area is accessible to all.
 Fans are also treated to a historical
 perspective of the Camden Yards area,
 including the B&O Railroad, the famous
 Inner Harbor and Babe Ruth!

Friday Night Stargazing

Every Friday (weather permitting)
 5:30pm—9pm
 Maryland Science Center
 601 Light St., Baltimore, MD 21230
 Call 410-545-2999 after 5pm on Fridays to
 find out if it's open.
Admission to the observatory is FREE.
 Enter through the Key Highway entrance
 at the back of the building (group
 entrance).

Art All Night Baltimore

April 8 to 9, 2017
 Second Chance, Inc.
 1700 Ridgely St., Baltimore, MD 21230
 410-385-1700
 Exhibit of all types of artwork plus live
 music and performances AND an auction.
 Local food trucks, craft brewers and craft
 activities. FREE admission

Make Your Own Lip Balm

Ingredients: (found online or at health food stores)
 2 tablespoons beeswax pastilles 2 tablespoons shea butter
 2 tablespoons coconut oil 30+ drops peppermint essential oil
 Lip balm tubes

Instructions:

1. Melt beeswax, shea butter & coconut oil in a double boiler, stirring until melted
2. Remove from heat but keep over the still-hot water to keep mixture melted.
3. Add essential oils to your preference.
4. Use a dropper to fill lip balm tubes. Do this quickly as it will start to harden.
5. Let tubes sit at room temperature for several hours until cooled and completely hardened before capping them.
6. Makes 12 to 14 tubes! Keep old empty tubes, clean out and refill.

FREE Webinars

What You Must Know To Get Social Security Disability Benefits

Register online at
 SharonChristieLaw.com/webinar
 OR call (844) 521-6700

March 15, 2pm ET

Or April 19, 6pm ET

