

What's What About Social Security

As another service to its readers, the Watauga Democrat each week will have authoritative answers to questions on the social security law. By special arrangement with Mr. W. C. Spruill, manager of the social security board office at 302 Office Building, Salisbury, the social security board has consented to pass on the accuracy of answers to questions on social security, which may be asked by employers, employees and others, through The Democrat. Address inquiries to the editor, the Watauga Democrat, Boone, N. C. Answers will be given here in the order in which questions are received. This is an informational service and is not legal advice or service. In keeping with social security board policy names will not be published.—Editor.

Question: How many workers are covered by the unemployment compensation laws in the District of Columbia, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia?

Answer: It is estimated there are 130,700 in the District of Columbia; 295,000 in Maryland; 370,100 in North Carolina; 315,500 in Virginia, and \$315,700 in West Virginia.

Q: How much does the social security board contribute for an individual under the old-age assistance law?

A: Public assistance is a state-federal program, administered by the state, in accordance with the state law, and the amount given an individual is determined by the state. The federal government will match dollar for dollar the amount granted an individual by the state up to a maximum federal contribution of \$15 a month, to a needy aged person.

Q: How much does the social security board charge for filing a claim?

A: The board makes no charge for receiving a claim nor for assisting a claimant.

Q: Should a married woman get a new social security account number after she is married?

A: No. Simply write to your social security board field office, enclosing your account number card, giving your maiden name as it is on your account card, your account number, and say you have been married and your name now is Mrs. Edna Jones, or whatever your married name is. Proper changes will be made in the board records and a new card will be sent to you with your married name and the same number.

Q: Will the social security board make lump-sum payments to anybody who doesn't file a claim?

A: No. While the lump-sum payments the social security board is making now under the old-age insurance system provided by the social security act are made as a matter of right, regardless of the need of the individual, no lump-sum payment can be made if a former claim is not filed with the board. Every assistance will be given a claimant by his social security board field office.

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Christmas In The New Home

THE first Christmas in our new home," Janice Wray announced joyously as she stepped across the threshold of Stewart's and her new home.

"Christmas in our new home," Stewart echoed, switching on the light.

"Oh, isn't it just grand!" exclaimed Janice.

"I'll say it is—but slow up—slow up, Janny! I've got about all my arms will hold, without taking you aboard." Stewart warned her as Janice attempted to throw her arms about him.

"Oh, keep quiet! You're just as excited as I am—so why pretend?" Janice answered with a toss of her head.

Stewart put his packages down and then with his arms around her he assured her, "You bet I'm, Honey. I think it is wonderful! Stupendous! And just because they were so happy they both laughed.

"Come on—let's get busy with the tree," Stewart suggested.

"Right!" agreed Janice, "just as soon as I change my dress."

The tree must be neither too large nor too small.

Some time had been consumed deciding just the proper size for a Christmas tree for two. They were to be alone this Christmas—the first Christmas in their new home; there was no doubt about that, for they had definitely decided that when they purchased the house. And now here they were ready to trim the much-discussed tree.

"Isn't that star lovely?" Janice said as Stewart placed it at the top of the tree.

"Yes. But I thought you had planned on something else," Stewart replied.

"I changed my mind," was all Janice said. She didn't tell him she couldn't think of a Christmas tree without a star at the top. They always had one on the tree "at home."

"Thought you weren't going to get any red balls," she reminded Stewart.

"I changed my mind." Both laughed at Stewart's echo of Janice's answer of a moment before.

"Mother would love this silver ball," Janice hung the ball where it caught the most light.

"Wouldn't Bess love this blue ball?" Stewart picked up the large blue globe.

"Our dads would enjoy that open one—and Bill those spruce boughs over the mantel"—Bill, the older brother of Stewart, loved anything from the woods.

And so each thing reminded them of someone's fondness for it, or of some of the happy times of former holidays.

"Well, I guess that's all for now," Stewart said when the decoration of the tree was finished and he and Janice stood admiring it. Janice made no reply to her husband's remark at first.

"All but the presents," she said hesitatingly.

"Oh, we can put those out later," Stewart suggested.

"But I mean the ones for the family," she explained.

"Didn't you distribute those today?" Stewart asked in surprise.

"I thought it would be more fun to take them together."

"Stewart stopped and kissed her. "I think so, too, honey—so let's go."

"Wait until I get my hat and coat."

"And I'll bring the car up to the door."

When Stewart returned to the room Janice was placing packages under the tree.

"Janice, doesn't it seem to you there is something wrong with the tree?" Stewart asked suddenly.

"No," Janice walked all around the tree, looking at it critically.

"No," she said the second time—then suddenly—"Yes, Stewart, there is something wrong—something missing—the loving sharing of decorating the tree. Our families would so have enjoyed it. We trimmed it just for ourselves. It does seem selfish."

Then after a moment's silence she cried: "I have it! Suppose we leave the presents here and invite our families here for a good old-fashioned Christmas eve celebration. What do you say?"

"I say—great! Here goes," and Stewart hurried toward the telephone.

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A Christmas Reconciliation



MARY and John had quarreled—just before Christmas, too. The Christmas candy had burned, and then, in the excitement, each had blamed the other, making cruel retorts, until Mary fled to her bedroom in tears and John stalked off in the snowy night.

The Christmas candle beamed a welcome from the window as John started around the block again. He was cold, and sorry, but he mustn't go in too soon.

The tree, the holly, their little girl asleep in her crib and dreaming of Santa Claus—all were a mockery. Mary went into the living room and snapped on the radio, looking for a jazz band and forgetfulness. Instead there came the strains of "Silent Night"—"peace on earth, good will to men."—"God bless us, every one"—"may nothing you dismay." Wasn't there anything on except Christmas programs? A click brought back the silence.

She opened the front door. Next time she would ask John to come in. Tell him she was sorry. Now that she stopped to think, she knew that he was sorry, too. Why let a few excited words that neither of them meant spoil their Christmas?

But John did not come. It was too cold to stand at the door any longer, but she sat at the window, with the curtain drawn aside, watching for him. An hour went by.

When at last she saw him coming the relief almost choked her. He



was striding rapidly, carrying something in his arms. She opened the door for him and he handed his burden to her.

"Here, Mary, hold him. Careful, now. His leg's hurt. I'll get a box and we'll fix a bed."

Mary looked down at the warm bundle. It was a furry puppy. One leg was in splints. The puppy whimpered a little and licked her hand.

"But, John, where did you get him?"

"Accident. Over on Linden. Fell out of a passing car. I took him to a vet and had him fixed up. Thought he'd make a cute pet for Alice." He stopped his work and straightened up. "I'm awfully sorry, Mary. I was a fool."

"It was my fault, John." Their eyes met in perfect understanding. How silly to quarrel. The situation was a more impressive reconciliation than words. Mary broke it nervously, for fear she would cry again. "There are some clean rags in that drawer. And we ought to get him something to eat. He can have this old bowl for his dish." She worked with one hand, cuddling the puppy. "Won't Alice be surprised? And what shall we name him?"

"Ought to have some connection with Christmas eve, don't you think. How about Scrooge, or Marlow?"

"Oh, no!"

"Good King Wenceslaus?"

"Such names for a poor innocent puppy! Maybe we had better see what Alice wants to call him in the morning." She put the puppy down with a saucer of warm milk. John came and put his arm around her, and they stood close together watching their pet lap greedily.

"We ought to call him Peacemaker, honey," said John. "If it hadn't been for him, I might have still been out there in the snow."

"Oh, John!" She held him close. "Weren't we silly? I was so worried when you didn't come. If anything



had happened to you I could never have forgiven myself."

"Felt pretty rotten myself. Not my idea of the best way to spend Christmas eve."

"Of course! I forgot! We have so much left to do! The tree, and Alice's doll must be unpacked, and her stocking filled. What time is it?"

He looked at his watch. "Almost midnight."

"Not really!"

He nodded, and put his watch on the table. "Here, pooch," he said, "it's bedtime for you." He lifted the puppy into its bed, and turned back to his wife. "And as for you, milady," he said, "in about ten seconds I want a kiss for Christmas, and then we're going to pitch in together and clean up this mess, and trim the tree, and maybe even chance another batch of candy. OK? Then, it's time, darling, to say Merry, Merry Christmas."

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BIRDS RETURN PROFITS DURING WINTER MONTHS

Proper management of a flock of well-maintained, production bred pullets during the winter months will return owners sizeable profits, according to C. J. Maupin, extension poultryman at State College.

Freshing weather has already been felt over the state, and a long hard winter is in prospect. Therefore, Maupin declared, the good poultryman should be prepared to give his birds a chance to do their best.

Two highly important factors in winter management are the kind of feed the laying flock receives and the condition of the laying house.

A constant supply of drinking water that is kept above freezing temperature is almost as important as proper feed, the poultry specialist pointed out. Then, too, eggs should be gathered as often as necessary to prevent their freezing or becoming lousy soiled.

Each year during the cold months, reports are received at State College on flocks coming into produc-

tion slowly, or of a sudden slump among many flocks that have been laying fairly well.

Maupin explained that if parasites or diseases are not present, the cause of this slow rate of laying is usually due to a lagging appetite or to the birds being underweight.

In some cases, the birds are perhaps not getting the proper amount of grain and in others, they are receiving insufficient mash. The wise poultryman can usually determine which is out of balance by handling or observing the birds.



Now let us turn off from the hurried and bustling highway of business and for a little way, enjoy the friendly turn through the Yuletide Lane, where good friends meet . . . where good wishes arise from the heart . . . and where appreciation of favors and courtesy finds expression in our sincere greetings.

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