

# Oasis

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Meet 106-year-old William Weamer.

# He's the last of the first to get benefits

OF OUR original group of nearly 28,000 charter beneficiaries, only one is now alive. This last survivor is William Howard Weamer, 106 years old and the resident of a Doylestown, Pa., nursing home.

In his lifetime, William Weamer has been a rural mail carrier (via horse and buggy), a dairyman, a two-time member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and, much later, the octogenarian chief custodian for that same legislative body.

In January 1940--the first month in which benefits were paid--Mr. Weamer received a social security check for \$17.44. He was 66 years old at the time and had paid about \$30 into the young social security system.

(All the charter beneficiaries were between 65 and 67 years of age when they became entitled because under the original 1935 Act coverage was limited to workers under age 65. Mr. Weamer earned his fully insured status with 6 quarters of coverage.)

Today, Mr. Weamer's monthly check is \$227.20. Until his wife's death in 1977 at the age of 95, she had received benefit checks for 31 years.

Our last charter beneficiary was interviewed in late February by Allentown Field Representative Andrew O'Donnell. When asked what he thought of social security, he simply replied, "It's great."



Two of William Howard Weamer's pleasures are occasional television viewing and Sunday morning church, for which he always dresses in his best suit. (Photo courtesy of the Allentown (Pa.) Call Chronicle.)

Andrew O'Donnell told us that Mr. Weamer is able to walk around his room unassisted, but outside his room he uses a wheelchair. "I don't walk," Mr. Weamer confided, "because the doctors are afraid I'll fall and break some bones."

Andrew says that Mr. Weamer enjoys playing bingo (with some assistance because of failing hearing and eyesight) and that the centenarian also liked to tease the nurses. "He tells them about his courtship with his first two wives," Andrew says, "and that he is looking for a third. He enjoys singing love songs to the nurses and receiving appreciative kisses from them."

When asked the inevitable question about how he had managed to live so long, he said, "If you quit hard labor a little earlier in life, you have a chance to live longer."

OASIS hopes William Howard Weamer continues to live much longer. He is, among other things, one of the all-too-rapidly-dwindling ties to SSA's own youth. □



Field Representative Andrew O'Donnell and Mr. Weamer.