

# Ruby Says

by

**Ruby Duncan**

Happy New Year! I hope 1975 will be a good year for all of you. Be glad that 1974 with it's Nixons and Agnews are gone---and let's make promises that next year will be more favorable for all of us. Did you make resolutions? I did, and here are some of them that might stimulate you to take an active role in 1975 for Clark County.

--I resolve, to work my hardest at the 1975 Nevada State Legislature, to increase grants for welfare recipients. Living on welfare has never been easy, but it has been getting progressively worse due to inflation, high cost of living, and welfare department terminations.

--I resolve, that I will work harder, to make local government more responsive, to the West Las Vegas community. Millions of dollars of Nevada taxpayers money has come back to the state through Revenue Sharing. If it had not been for a few brothers and sisters, West Las

Vegas would not have seen a dime of it. (It's our money too, right)? As it is, for 1974, West Las Vegas Heights will have some street and light improvement. This year, we should do better.

--I resolve, to work diligently at, preventing the Food Stamp program from being discontinued (as Ford and the Department of Agriculture are trying to do). Instead, I resolve, to see every needy and eligible person learn about the program and how they too, can participate.

--I resolve, that I will work, to see Operation Life become a successful, self-supporting organization and continue to provide its beneficial services like health care and food programs to the community. In addition, I resolve, to see that new programs are added, like a job placement center.

--Alas! I resolve, that I will get two days of rest during 1975. I think that was more than I saw in 1974 and with all the work resolutions planned, I hope this one has a chance of surviving.

Anyhow, have a good year!

# V A FACTS

Q -- Can veterans reserve space in a national cemetery?

A -- Any veteran whose separation from the service was for reasons other than dishonorable is eligible for burial in a national cemetery, but advance reservations are not accepted. Each veteran is entitled to one grave. Next-of-kin must share space with the deceased veteran.

Q -- I entered military service before completing high school. I was honorably discharged last month after four years of duty. Am I eligible for GI Bill benefits while finishing high school.

A -- Yes. Veterans in your category may receive educational assistance without charge against basic entitlement. That entitlement thus remains available for post-secondary schooling.

Q -- I receive 20 per cent VA disability compensation. I am 66 years old and retired. May I waive this compensation and receive pension.

A -- You should file a claim for pension benefits. Consideration will be given to medical information, your period of active military duty, and income and net worth information. After considering these factors you will be paid the greater benefit.

The Veterans Administration administers approximately \$36 billion worth of government life insurance for about 5 million policyholders.

The Veterans administration operates 171 hospitals, all accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals, and more than 300 out-patient clinics.

The Veterans Administration's 171 hospitals treat a million in-patients each year. Their average daily patient census is about 83,000, which includes about 12 per cent Vietnam-era veterans.

Richard L. Roudebush appointed by President Ford as Administrator of Veteran Affairs, is the ninth man to head the nation's largest independent federal agency since its establishment in 1930.

There were about 4.7 million veterans in the United States when the Veterans Administration was established in 1930. Today there are more than 29 million veterans eligible for VA benefits.

The World War II GI Bill, signed into law June 22, 1944, is said to have had more impact on the American way of life than any law since the passage of the Homestead Act more than a century ago.

Since the first of the three GI Bills became effective in 1944, some 15 million veterans have taken training under some Veteran Administration program. Six million persons have trained at the college level.

The National Cemeteries Act of 1973 provided for the transfer of responsibility of 82 national cemeteries from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration. These joined 21 VA cemeteries to form the National Cemetery System.

Letters are sent by the Veterans Administration to each man and woman as they leave military service, urging them to take advantage of veterans' benefits. A second letter is sent six months after the person's separation date.

# BROADCAST BILL DIES

One death we won't mourn is the demise of the Broadcast License Renewal Bill. This bill, which was being vigorously pushed by the broadcasting industry, would have made it almost impossibly hard for public interest groups to challenge the employment and programming policies of the present owners of radio and TV station licenses. The bill passed both the House and Senate by overwhelming votes, in spite of strenuous opposition from the Leadership Conference - or rather, it never got to conference. Although the Senate appointed conferees, Rep. Harley Staggers (D., W. Va.) Chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee simply never got around to appointing any. A decision we were glad to encourage and to applaud. This is another bill that is sure to crop up again next year. Meanwhile, be of good cheer!

# MEDICARE ENROLLMENT

People who didn't sign up for Medicare medical insurance when they first became eligible or who have cancelled the protection once can now enroll through March 31 at any social security office, according to Ed Cocks, social security district manager in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Medicare medical insurance is offered automatically to people who reach 65 and are eligible for social security benefits--and to disabled people under 65 who have been entitled to monthly social security disability benefits for 24 consecutive months or more. Nine out of 10 people eligible are enrolled in the program, according to Cocks.

"But some people decline the protection when they're first eligible," he said. "And some sign up once and cancel later. They can enroll in the first 3 months of any year."

The medical insurance helps pay doctor bills and other medical expenses and is the voluntary part of Medicare, funded by individ-

ual premiums and Federal revenues. The basic premium is \$6.70 a month thru June 1975.

"People who decline Medicare medical insurance and delay signing up for more than a year pay a higher premium," Cocks noted. "People who sign up and cancel later can re-enroll only once."

"People 65 and over who are not eligible for social security benefits can apply at any social security office and get Medicare hospital insurance by paying a premium," Cocks said. "The basic premium is \$36 a month through June 1975--and they must also sign up for the medical insurance," he said.

Medicare is administered by the Social Security Administration, an agency of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The Las Vegas social security office is at 300 Las Vegas Blvd, South. The phone number is 385-6371. The No. Las Vegas office is located at 820 E. Lake Mead Blvd. The phone number is 385-6567.

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