

Personal

You'll get tax forms later this January

With all the holdup there was this year on the tax reform packages Congress was working on, the Internal Revenue Service had to wait till mid-October to go into production of its new Form 1040. That means you'll probably be getting those tax forms sometime in the middle of January.

Short forms (1040A) may show up a little sooner. The always useful taxpayer publications the IRS puts out every year should also be available in the first month of the new year. These will be available at all IRS offices.

Social security tax increase no surprise

You and your employees will be paying more in social security taxes starting January 1. Maximum tax burden for employers and employees will be approximately \$965. Self-employed individuals can pay as high as \$1,300.

Over the last four years, taxpayers have watched the wage base on social security escalate from \$9,000 to the present level of \$15,300. The tax rate has increased from 5.2 percent to 5.85. Maximum amount of tax has climbed more than \$430 for employees and employers, while self-employed persons' taxes have doubled.

Thinking vacation, think Dorado Beach

Special golf packages are now available to Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico, in case you're looking for your winter vacation spot.

Dorado Beach offers two package dates that span from December 20, 1976 to January 31, 1977 and from March 1 to March 31. The special includes seven days and six nights at a rate of \$489 per person for double occupancy. The plan includes a deluxe, air-conditioned room; breakfast and dinner daily; and round trip limousine transportation between Puerto Rico's International Airport and the hotel.

For further details, check with your travel agent or the trip can be booked through Loews Reservations, Inc.

Look at dollar logic in home repairs

Inflation continues to push up real estate values. The problem besetting many homeowners in the "pause" the government's economic experts say we are now having is to shoulder the burden of needed home improvements or risk the chance of decreased values at the time of sale.

Many buyers today are forcing sellers to make needed repairs before the sale will go through, contingent on the inspection of a qualified service. Logically, such defects as unsound foundations, defective heating systems and leaky plumbing are the most prominent neglected areas found in inspections.

Protect your checks or pay the price

Almost one third of all the fraud schemes are related to check fraud according to the American Bankers Association. There are some simple rules to remember to protect your checkbook.

Know where your checkbook is at all times. If your book is lost or stolen, get in touch with the bank as soon as possible. Let your bank know if you don't receive ordered checks, canceled checks, or statements on time.

Never leave deposit slips around where a thief might have access to them. All a crook needs to get into your account is the account number.

Convenience foods can save you money

Sometimes fresh is not always best. Canned or frozen foods will cost you less in your budget than trying to make things from scratch. According to the Department of Agriculture, about a third less.

Surveys in selected food stores showed processed green peas, spinach and lima beans were considerably cheaper than fresh. Other vegetables were a bit less expensive frozen or canned, though in certain products, fresh is a better buy during the growing season.

A good example of where frozen is best is in orange juice. Canned juice is a much better buy. Canned peaches are much cheaper than the fresh product.