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United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Contact: Public Affairs Officer

Phone: (503) 727-1000

USAOR.PublicAffairs@usdoj.gov

Klamath Falls Man Pleads Guilty to Cashing More than 40 Years' Worth of Deceased Relative's Social Security Checks

MEDFORD, Ore.—A Klamath Falls, Oregon man pleaded guilty today after cashing more than \$458,000 worth of social security checks issued in the name of his deceased aunt.

George Doumar, 74, pleaded guilty to one count of theft of government funds.

According to court documents, in February 2020, the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Office of Anti-Fraud Programs identified a 114-year-old supercentenarian who appeared to be the second-oldest living person in the U.S. receiving Social Security retirement benefits. The last known update to the recipient's SSA benefit record was in July 1989, when the recipient's address was updated to Frontier Parcel & Fax Service on S. 6th Street in Klamath Falls.

In March 2020, an investigator with SSA-OIG interviewed two of the benefit recipient's nieces. Both nieces claimed that their aunt died in the 1960s or 1970s and recalled attending her funeral in Brooklyn, New York, where she had reportedly lived her entire life. According to one niece, their aunt did not have any children and was not married. She recalled that Doumar was named the sole beneficiary of her aunt's insurance payout.

Investigators soon discovered that Doumar himself was an active Social Security beneficiary and received his checks at the same address on S. 6th Street in Klamath Falls. According to SSA records, Doumar purchased the property on S. 6th Street seven days prior to the address on his aunt's benefit record being changed to the same address.

On June 16, 2020, SSA-OIG investigators obtained a copy of the aunt's death certificate from the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, confirming that she had died on March 7, 1971 in Brooklyn. Investigators determined that Doumar had added his aunt to he and his wife's shared checking account in 1989. His aunt's Social Security checks were often bundled in deposits with other checks made payable to Doumar.

Investigators obtained bank surveillance footage from February 2020 that showed a man, who appeared to match Doumar's physical description, depositing one of his aunt's retirement checks. On July 14, 2020, investigators from SSA-OIG and USPIS interviewed Doumar at his Klamath Falls residence. When asked about his aunt, Doumar sighed, slumped his head, and stated, "that's a long story...what happened was, well she's passed and yes, I've been collecting her Social Security."

On August 11, 2020, Doumar was charged by criminal complaint with theft of government funds and mail theft.

Doumar faces a maximum sentence of ten years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and three years of supervised release. He will be sentenced on August 3, 2021 before U.S. District Court Judge Michael J. McShane.

As part of the plea agreement, Doumar has agreed to pay \$458,992 restitution to the SSA and \$1,200 to the IRS.

Acting U.S. Attorney Scott Erik Asphaug of the District of Oregon made the announcement.

The SSA-OIG and USPIIS jointly investigated this case. It is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Rachel Sowray.

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