



# Your Eyes

**MARCH 2022**



**TODAY**

## **Tax Time with Low Vision**

**Tax season is upon us!**

**Below is some general information to help ensure you can complete taxes with accessible formats:**

**If you are legally blind, your standard deduction is higher. Make sure to check this box on your forms! To qualify as blind by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), you must keep in your tax records a certified letter from an eye doctor stating you have best-corrected visual acuity of 20/200 or worse in the better-seeing eye OR 20 degrees or less of visual field.**

**The IRS Alternative Media Center (AMC) can provide accessibility services for visually impaired taxpayers. They can provide readable materials via screen-reading software, Braille displays, and screen magnifying software. Call (800) 829-3676 to request paper forms or visit the AMC forms webpage to download electronic copies.**

**(Continued on page 2)**

**Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®  
415 2nd Street NE, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002**

**(202) 234-1010 | [www.youreyes.org](http://www.youreyes.org) | Facebook & Twitter: @youreyesdc**

# News & Updates

## Tax Time with Low Vision

---

(Continued from page 1)

Complete IRS Form 9000 (Alternative Media Preference Form) to receive your IRS tax notices in your preferred accessible format. You can also call (800) 829-1040 to elect your preferred format. You should then receive all future notices in the format requested.

Also, the IRS now has an Accessibility Helpline! Call (833) 690-0598 to ask your accessibility services questions. The Helpline does not have access to your IRS account.

To learn more, visit the IRS Alternative Media Center website at <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/information-about-the-alternative-media-center>.

Lastly, the IRS's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs offer free basic tax return preparation to qualified individuals. To locate free assistance near you, call (800) 906-9887.

(POB does not provide tax, legal or accounting advice. This material has been prepared for informational purposes only. You should consult your own tax, legal and accounting advisors for additional information.)

# Save the Date

## Being the Light: Friends and Family Connection Event

---

Save the date! You, your friends, and your family are invited to join us on **Saturday, May 14 at 12:30 p.m.** in McLean, Virginia, for a luncheon panel discussion moderated by Suleiman Alibhai, O.D., low vision specialist.

### Panel Discussion Topics:

- Talking Through a Day in the Life with Low Vision
- Navigating Difficult Conversations
- Overcoming Challenges

This in-person program serves as a way to help our friends and family understand the difficulties encountered with vision loss and share the many things we CAN still do! And, this is an excellent way for all of us to connect again!

Lunch will be served, and vision aid and device vendors will be on-site for you to try their products firsthand. Tickets will cost \$20 per person for this special event.

Mark your calendar! Invitations will be sent in the coming weeks via mail and email. For more information, call **(202) 234-1010, ext. 233.**

# Calendar of Events

**MARCH 2022**

To register for an event, call (301) 951-4444  
at least 24 hours prior to the event.

**TUE  
8**

## **Dry Eyes or Spring Eye Allergies?**

**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group**  
**Join Philip Conkling, M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident, to learn about dry eye, eye strain, seasonal allergies, and how to spot the differences. Bring your questions!**  
**Hosted by Washington National Eye Center.**

---

**TUE  
8**

## **Virtual Happy Hour**

**6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network**  
**All are welcome, regardless of eye condition!**

---

**TUE  
15**

## **Assistive Technology Program**

**1 p.m. - 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays**  
**Join us for a discussion with James Whitney, OTR, Assistive Technology Clinician, to learn about a program available in each state that can help you try out various tech before making a purchase.**

## **MARCH 2022** (continued)

To register for an event, call (301) 951-4444 at least 24 hours prior to the event.

**WED  
16**

### **Using Ears in Place of Eyes**

#### **Low Vision Town Hall Meeting**

**11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Special Event**

With reduced vision, one needs to learn compensatory strategies. Auditory (using your ears) is a great way to do this! Learn about some top resources, including Metropolitan Washington Ear, Audio Description, and Talking Books.

Call (301) 951-4444 to receive Zoom joining information – via computer or by phone!

---

**THU  
24**

### **Maryland's Talking Books Program**

**12 p.m. - 1 p.m. • Vision Resource Group**

Join Ashley Biggs of the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled to learn how to take advantage of free comprehensive services, including Talking Books, large-print books, and more.

Hosted by Friendship Heights Village Center.

---



Listen to replays of POB Low Vision Town Hall events on-demand at [www.anchor.fm/youreyesdc](http://www.anchor.fm/youreyesdc).

# **Living with Low Vision**

## **Making Your Cable Box Accessible**

---

**By Tara Aziz**

Many of us love watching TV or have the TV on as a home companion. However, when vision is lost, it becomes more difficult to follow the shows we love. There are ways to make watching TV possible, even with vision challenges!

Comcast's XFINITY X1 Cable Box includes a talking guide. The talking guide "speaks" what's on the screen and includes details such as program descriptions to help customers decide what to watch. Comcast's voice remote allows you to change channels, search for shows, and more. For more information, call Comcast's Accessibility Support Center at **(855) 270-0379** and say "Accessibility." You can also request a Braille or Large Print bill from Comcast.

Verizon Fios TV One Cable Box offers text-to-speech functionality for the Fios TV on-screen guide. Verizon offers a voice remote, as well as a remote with large-print buttons. For more information, call Verizon's Center for Customers with Disabilities at **(800) 974-6006**. You can also request a Braille, Large Print, or Audio CD bill from Verizon.

To learn more, call the POB Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at **(301) 951-4444**.

## Think "Big" on Your Smartphone

---

By Hang Nguyen, O.D.

We are now in a world where smartphones are the norm and make life more accessible. However, small icons that are standard on these devices can be challenging to find and navigate. Here are some helpful solutions:

For Android users, an app called “Big Launcher” can create large icons and texts with high contrast into grids for ease of use. Icons are easier to see and find due to the large pictures and text size. Download the app from the Google Play Store. Visit [www.biglauncher.com](http://www.biglauncher.com) for more information.

For Apple users, you can use the Magnifier feature to magnify your whole screen. You can also search for apps with Siri! Hold your home key to wake up Siri, then ask Siri to open whatever app is needed. Call Apple's Accessibility Support Hotline at (877) 204-3930 for additional assistance.

To learn about other accessible apps and smartphone features, call the POB Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at (301) 951-4444.

---

**Hang Nguyen, O.D.,** is a low vision specialist at Low Vision Services. To schedule an appointment, call (703) 652-7803.

# Share Your Experiences With Us

POB is conducting a survey to better understand your experiences and find ways to better serve our community. Can you give us five minutes of your time and take the survey today?

To take the survey, visit [www.pobsurvey.org](http://www.pobsurvey.org), or call (202) 234-1010, ext. 233.

Feedback from this survey is an integral part of understanding your experience with the available low vision services and resources. Your survey response is extremely valuable to help inform us, in order to provide a continually-improving experience to our community.

To also start receiving the digital edition of this newsletter, please send an email to [communications@youreyes.org](mailto:communications@youreyes.org).

FREE MATTER  
For the Blind or  
Handicapped

Prevention of Blindness Society  
of Metropolitan Washington®  
415 2nd Street NE, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20002  
Return Service Requested

