



Tax Time: Where Do I Start?

Tax season is upon us! Below is some general information to help you 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 hundreds of tax forms and other readable materials via screen reading software, refreshable Braille displays and voice recognition software.

Call (800) 829-3676 to request paper forms or visit the AMC forms webpage to download electronic copies.

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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 (large print or Braille). You should then receive all future notices in the format requested.

If a taxpayer has questions about IRS accessibility services, they can contact the Accessibility Helpline at **(833) 690-0598**. The helpline does not have access to taxpayers' IRS accounts.

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

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. VITA and TCE sites are generally located at community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls and other convenient locations. To locate free assistance near you, call **(800) 906-9887** or visit **<https://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/>**.

(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.)

Resource of the Month:

NFB Silver BELLS Program

Most people who experience vision impairment do so later in life. Conditions such as age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy can cause vision impairment and legal blindness. Adjusting to vision loss is difficult, but those losing vision later in life can experience unique difficulties, such as other physical burdens, rapidly developing technology, and navigating retirement.

The National Federation of the Blind of Virginia (NFB) offers the Silver BELLS Program! The program is a weekend retreat where attendees can have hands-on fundamental training in home management, technology, travel, and communications at no cost to you and one guest!

The program aims to connect seniors with positive role models who have experienced vision loss and can share techniques to succeed and thrive.

If you are a 55 or older, experiencing vision loss, live in Virginia, and have the stamina to embark on an exciting training opportunity, this program is for you! The program is now accepting applications. Register online at [**www.nfbv.org/silverbells**](http://www.nfbv.org/silverbells).

For more information, call Sandy Halverson at (703) 400-6890, email [**silverbells@nfbv.org**](mailto:silverbells@nfbv.org), or visit [**www.nfbv.org**](http://www.nfbv.org).

Calendar of Events

MARCH 2024

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

**TUE
12**

Dry Eye, Detecting Eye Emergencies, and Cataracts (Virtual Event)

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group
Join **Shefali Sood, M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident**, to learn more and bring your questions about common eye problems.
Hosted by **Washington National Eye Center**.

**TUE
12**

Workplace Accessibility (Virtual Event)

6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network
What accommodations or adaptations are available for those with vision loss? Share your experiences, helpful tools, and how you can keep working successfully for years to come.
Hosted by **Prevention of Blindness Society**.

**TUE
19**

Android Accessibility 101 (Virtual Event)

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays
Join a seasoned Android user to learn accessibility basics of an Android device!
Hosted by **Prevention of Blindness Society**.

MARCH 2024 (continued)

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

**WED
20**

Arts and Leisure with Low Vision Low Vision Town Hall (Virtual Event)

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

Moderator: Sean Curry, MPH

There are all kinds of accessible activities available in the arts. Join us as we hear about a few great options and open the floor for you to share your favorite arts and leisure activities!

Call (301) 951-4444 to register.

**THU
28**

Writing Tools with Low Vision

12 p.m. – 1 p.m. • Vision Resource Group

There are many ways to gather information and figure out how to do things regardless of low vision. Join us to share your solutions! To RSVP, call (301) 656-2797.

Friendship Heights Village Center

4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD



Listen and watch replays of recent webinars and other POB events at: www.youreyes.org/replays

Stories of Hope

Clarence "Buddy" Moore

By Laurence Bass

In 1939, Clarence "Buddy" Moore arrived in DC with his family from South Carolina at just two years old - when DC was still "just a little Southern town," he recalls. He has been passionate about equality for as long as he can remember, which led him along a path in local and national politics. "I worked on a lot of campaigns since the 1970s," Buddy recalls.

First, Buddy joined the campaign for the soon-to-be four-term Mayor of Washington – Marion Barry. Then, he worked as the Community Liaison for Congressman Walter Fauntroy, a longtime D.C. Delegate in the House of Representatives. He was part of Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential run. Buddy also campaigned for President Obama in 2008.

Buddy's vast professional experiences do not stop there: he's been a banker, a men's clothing store manager, a US Postal Service employee, a taxicab driver, a residential housing manager, a US Census enumerator, and an ANC Neighborhood Commissioner. Ask him about his career, and his warm grin leads perfectly to his response. "I've had so many jobs," he laughs. "It's too many to name when asked."

In 2009, Buddy's wife, Carolyn, was diagnosed with ALS.

"Unfortunately, my wife passed away just twelve months later. It was devastating." Buddy's shares. "I was supposed to go to the eye doctor for a glaucoma exam the same day my wife was diagnosed. But my wife's care took over, and I didn't go back until a year later. By then, glaucoma had destroyed all the vision in my left eye."

However, Buddy is not willing to let glaucoma bring his life to a halt. "Being an independent person, the last thing I ever want is to depend on someone to help me. I still use the Metro and take neighborhood walks. While I do have issues with depth perception, I just take my time now."

Buddy writes short stories about his life for a small circle of readers, especially the young men in his family, "so they can see that writing can be exciting."

Buddy also shares his optimism about his vision journey with those new to vision loss. He frequently attends support groups, lectures, and other events for people with vision impairment and shares tips and tricks that work for him.

Buddy serves on work groups dedicated to creating a more accessible DC. Recently, he served on the Mayor's Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Council – working directly with city agencies to implement changes that would benefit seniors.

A man of many hats, Buddy remains an active force in DC, contributing to accessibility initiatives and proving there's life far beyond vision loss.

March is Workplace Eye Wellness Month

Protecting our eyes at work is crucial. In 2020, over 15,000 U.S. workers suffered eye injuries, leading to time off. March is dedicated to promoting eye safety.

Whether at work or home, follow these steps:

- Use proper eye protection at work.
- Embrace the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, take a 20-second break, looking at something 20 feet away to reduce screen strain.
- Set up your desk for success with computers at eye level and optimal lighting.

To also start receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter,
please email communications@youreyes.org.

FREE MATTER
For the Blind or
Handicapped

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