



Your Eyes

DECEMBER '24 & JANUARY '25



TODAY

Tips for Holiday Travel with Low Vision

Remaining mobile during the holiday season to attend special events and spend time with loved ones is essential for everyone in our area. However, travel can be challenging for those with vision loss. Whether taking the Metro to Friendship Heights, driving to Alexandria, or flying from Reagan Airport, tasks like purchasing tickets or reading itineraries can add unnecessary stress. Here are some helpful travel tips to make your journey easier this season!

Air and Rail: Contact the airline or railway company at least 72 hours in advance to inquire about required documents, seat reservations, and accommodations. This will help streamline your check-in process and security procedures, ensuring you arrive on time for departure. Start the conversation by saying, "Hi, I'm visually impaired," as this will quickly direct you to the appropriate resources and ensure you receive the necessary support.

(Continued on next page)

**Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®
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(Continued from previous page)

Metro: Metrobus and Metrorail offer a Trip Planner at wmata.com, where you can find fare details, travel times, transfer points, and connecting services. Be sure to check for schedule changes and service updates. Speak to the station manager if you have any issues while at the station.

Taxi and Ridesharing: Local taxis can be scheduled in advance if public transit is unavailable. Rideshare apps like Uber and Lyft are also available at any time. To request an Uber ride, call (833) 873-8237 from your cell phone to speak with an Uber team member who will assist you in creating an account and booking a ride. Alternatively, GoGoGrandparent, a fee-based concierge service, offers rideshare arrangements at (855) 464-6872.

Don't hesitate to ask for help, especially when navigating multiple travel connections. Advocacy for yourself is key. Airports, bus stations, and train stations can be overwhelming, but customer service representatives are there to assist you at every leg of the journey.

It may also be beneficial to work with an Orientation and Mobility (O&M) specialist to learn mobility techniques, such as white cane use. Choose the mobility equipment that best suits your travel needs—sometimes, a walker may be more practical than a cane.

Call the POB Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline at (301) 951-4444 to speak with a Resource Navigator.

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER 2024

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

**TUE
10**

Holiday Get-Together (Virtual)

6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network

Join us to celebrate the holiday season and discuss ways to enjoy it, whether with others or on your own. Hosted by **Prevention of Blindness Society**.

**WED
11**

Maryland Accessible Telecommunications Program Update

2 p.m. – 3 p.m. • Leisure World Lions Group

Join a representative from the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications Program (MAT) to learn how Maryland residents can apply for free telecommunications equipment, empowering them to make or receive calls independently. The MAT program provides a range of user-friendly phone solutions designed for individuals with low vision, including devices with large, high-contrast buttons. To RSVP, call Larry at (908) 770-9111.

**Leisure World Clubhouse II Edmondson Room
3300 N Leisure World Blvd., Silver Spring, MD**

(Additional events on pages 4, 5, and 6)

**THU
12**

Protecting Your Identity Online (Virtual Event)

12 p.m. – 1 p.m. • Special Event

In April, an organized hacker group reported stealing sensitive identification information on more than 200 million people. If you weren't concerned about your online security before, you certainly should be now! Join **Perry Hammock** to discuss what is at risk, the repercussions for your financial security, and what you need to do to protect yourself.

**TUE
17**

Tools for Reading (Virtual Event)

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays

Do you have trouble reading? Join **Rachel Schreiman**, POB Low Vision Resource Navigator, to learn about resources and tools available to assist those with visual impairments with reading.

**WED
18**

Behind the Mic with Bob Johnson

Low Vision Town Hall (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Special Event

Guest Speaker: Bob Johnson of RJVoices

Join Bob as he shares his journey from Intelligence to voice acting, including his work with Audible, the Metropolitan Washington Ear, and more, showcasing the power of his captivating voice!

Call (301) 951-4444 to register.

JANUARY 2025

**FRI
3**

POB READS Book Club (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

January's book is **After the Funeral and Other Stories** by Tessa Hadley. To register, call **(301) 951-4444**.

**FRI
10**

iPhone Apps for Accessibility

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Join us to explore iPhone apps that support people with low vision in their daily lives. Bring your iPhone! To RSVP, call **(301) 951-4444**.

Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library
5005 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA

**WED
15**

Enhancing Your Quality of Life Through Vision Rehabilitation

Low Vision Town Hall (Virtual Event)

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. • Special Event

Speaker: Suleiman Alibhai, O.D., Low Vision Optometrist, Low Vision Services PLC

Join Dr. Alibhai to discuss low vision rehabilitation, including when to start, available options, and practical strategies. Learn how vision rehabilitation can help maximize your remaining vision and improve your overall quality of life.

Call (301) 951-4444 to register.

(Additional events on page 6)

JANUARY 2025 (continued)

**TUE
21**

Practical Solution Showcase (Virtual Event)

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays

Have a practical, low-tech, or no-tech item that makes life easier? Share your idea, whether it's a helpful large-print product, a new device, or a simple, impactful find! Submit by **January 15** to participate. Let's inspire each other with creative solutions to everyday challenges. To submit, call **(301) 951-4444** or email taziz@youreyes.org.

**SAT
25**

Glaucoma Research Update

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Presentation

12 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Free Glaucoma Screening

Special Guest: Arthur Schwartz, M.D., Washington Eye Physicians and Surgeons

Join Dr. Schwartz, a nationally recognized glaucoma expert, to learn about the latest research and updates on glaucoma, a leading cause of vision loss and blindness. After the presentation, POB will offer free glaucoma screenings. All are welcome! To RSVP, call **(301) 951-4444**.

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

Living with Vision Loss

Coping During the Holiday Season

By Tara Aziz

The holiday season brings joy, warmth, and family connection, but for individuals with low vision, it presents unique challenges. Bright decorations, crowded gatherings, busy environments, and loneliness can be overwhelming, but the season can still shine with thoughtful planning.

When attending gatherings, let hosts know your preferences, such as well-lit seating areas or help navigating spaces.

The holidays are a perfect time to talk about vision loss with family. Share how it affects you and educate loved ones about your condition. Express your needs clearly and encourage their support while reminding them that you're still a vital part of holiday traditions.

Thoughtful preparation can turn the holidays into a celebration of love and unity, no matter the challenges.

Remember that some people live alone and cannot leave their homes, so a phone call, a voice message, or a large print card would mean a lot to them.

Call the **POB Low Vision Resource and Information Hotline** at **(301) 951-4444** to speak with a Resource Navigator.

Resource of the Month: TSA Cares

TSA Cares provides assistance to travelers with disabilities during security screening. Call (855) 787-2227 at least three days before your flight to request a Passenger Support Specialist (PSS) for guidance.

If you don't arrange this in advance, notify the TSA officer if you are blind or have low vision and need assistance. You can inform the officer verbally, use the TSA Notification Card, or provide medical documentation. Canes and other aids must be screened by X-ray; if they don't fit, a TSA officer will inspect them. Let the officer know if you need the device immediately after screening.

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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Return Service Requested

