



Your Eyes

MAY 2025



TODAY

Summer Eye Safety

Summer brings warm weather, vacations, and endless outdoor fun! Our eyes are particularly vulnerable during this time of year, so taking proactive steps to safeguard them is essential. Here are some practical tips to help keep your eyes safe while you enjoy outdoor activities:

- 1. Wear sunglasses with 100% Ultraviolet (UV) protection.** UV rays can cause long-term damage to our eyes, leading to issues like cataracts and macular degeneration. Sunglasses are a simple yet effective way to shield your eyes from these harmful rays while adding a stylish touch to your summer look. Be sure to choose sunglasses that block 99% to 100% of UVA and UVB radiation to ensure maximum protection.
- 2. Wear a hat.** Hats provide extra coverage from the sun, reducing glare and offering additional protection to your eyes. Wide-brimmed hats, in particular, can shield your eyes, face, neck, and ears from harmful UV exposure.

(Continued on page 2)

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

(202) 234-1010 | youreyes.org | Facebook & Instagram: @youreyesdc

Summer Eye Safety

(Continued from page 1)

3. Wear eye protection when doing yard work. Whether you're mowing the lawn, trimming hedges, or working with tools, protecting your eyes from debris, chemicals, and flying particles is essential. Simple goggles or safety glasses from your local hardware store can keep your eyes safe. If you wear prescription glasses, you can also find safety goggles designed to fit over them.

4. Never look directly at the sun, even on cloudy days. Staring directly at the sun can cause severe, lasting damage to the retina. This damage can occur even during overcast days, as UV rays can penetrate clouds.

5. Seek shade during peak hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). The sun's UV rays are the most intense during these hours, making it the ideal time to take cover and minimize exposure. Seeking shade, whether under a tree, an umbrella, or inside, is the simplest and most effective way to reduce the risk of harmful UV exposure to your eyes and skin.

By following these simple precautions, you can protect your eyes from the harmful effects of the summer sun and confidently enjoy outdoor activities. Taking care of your eye health now will ensure that you can continue to make the most of every summer for years to come!

Blind Birder Bird-a-Thon 2025

Bird lovers, mark your calendars! On **Sunday, May 18**, birders with vision impairment nationwide will join the first-ever Blind Birder Bird-a-Thon. Step outside, record the birds you hear or see and build a national celebration of nature.

Whether you're a seasoned birder or can't tell a chickadee from a crow, the Blind Birder Bird-a-Thon welcomes you! It's the first national birding event created by and for people with vision impairment - a celebration of birds, community, and accessibility. This event is designed to build community, boost participation among birders, and highlight birding by ear, where many visually impaired participants excel.

No experience is needed - bring your curiosity and a willingness to tune in to the world around you. Participants will use their senses to identify birds, contributing to a shared observation list. Birdability also offers resources for sighted volunteers, making this a fun, inclusive event to enjoy with family and friends.

This event is co-hosted by **Birdability**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to making birding and the outdoors accessible and inclusive for everyone, especially those with disabilities and other health concerns.

Visit the Birdability website at www.birdability.org to learn more, register, or get your questions answered, or email **Martha Steele** at marthajs@verizon.net.

Calendar of Events

MAY 2025

To register for an event, call (301) 951-4444.

**FRI
2**

POB READS Book Club (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us for **The Formula: How Rogues, Geniuses, and Speed Freaks Reengineered F1 into the World's Fastest-Growing Sport** by Joshua Robinson. To register, call (301) 951-4444 or visit pobreads.org.

**TUE
13**

Healthy Vision Month (Virtual Event)

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Join **Gwen Jeong, M.D., Washington National Eye Center Ophthalmology Resident**, to learn how macular degeneration, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma impact millions in the U.S. Healthy habits and regular eye exams help protect your vision. Hosted by **Washington National Eye Center**.

**TUE
13**

What is Your Story? (Virtual Event)

6 p.m. – 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network

Join us to share and learn from each other's stories and experiences - let's connect and grow together! Hosted by **Prevention of Blindness Society**.

**WED
14**

Hands-On Workshop with Blind Industries and Services of Maryland (BISM)

1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. • Leisure World Lions Group
Join BISM for a hands-on workshop featuring interactive stations on labeling, braille, money identification, phone use, kitchen skills, and safe travel for people with low vision or blindness. To RSVP, call Larry at (908) 770-9111.

Leisure World Clubhouse I Maryland Room
3300 N Leisure World Blvd., Silver Spring, MD

**THU
15**

Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses Demonstration

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Vision Resource Group
Join Sandy Neuzil as she moderates a dynamic demonstration of Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses, showcased by low-vision community members **Ann Koch and Janice Samuel**. Discover how this innovative technology can assist with reading signs, navigating spaces, shopping, and more. Come and see how smart glasses are enhancing everyday independence! To RSVP, call (301) 656-2797.

Friendship Heights Village Center
4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD

(Additional events on next page)

**TUE
20**

Vision-Friendly Lighting (Virtual Event)

1 p.m. – 2 p.m. • Tech Talk Tuesdays

Join us to explore lighting solutions for low vision, focusing on types of lights, brightness levels, and features that support comfort, clarity, and eye health. Call (301) 951-4444 to register.

**WED
21**

Emotional Health with Low Vision

Low Vision Town Hall (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. – 12 p.m. • Special Event

Join us for a conversation with **Nina Glasner, LCSW-C**, a low-vision mental health therapist, on the importance of caring for your mental health when living with vision impairment. We'll explore common emotional challenges, practical coping strategies, and how to navigate everyday situations. Bring your questions and be part of the discussion. Call (301) 951-4444 to register.



Listen and watch replays of recent webinars and events, including POB Low Vision Town Hall events and Tech Talk events, at: www.youreyes.org/replays

Living with Vision Loss

Hope Starts with Connection

By Tara Aziz

It's okay to feel angry, sad, or shaken by life. Whether it's a curveball in your journey or a change in your vision—literal or not—it's tough. Feeling it all is what makes us human.

Changes in how we see the world (in every sense) are never easy. Vision loss is more than a medical issue—it affects how we connect, move, work, and feel. When life gets blurry, emotionally or visually, those around us feel it too.

Some bottle it up, others let it spill. Some days, we fight through; others, we struggle. There's no wrong way to cope!

However, don't stay in the dark. Reach out. Lean on those who care about you. That's the heart of what we do at POB. Our "Being the Light" events connect individuals with vision impairments (VIPs), their families, and friends. These gatherings create space for therapists, social workers, and caring community members to support one another in processing, coping, and growing.

We're here to help each other find the "light" again – even if it's a little fuzzy sometimes!

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

Join POB READS!

Summer's a great time to unwind with a good book! Join **POB READS**—a laid-back book club for people with vision impairment. Read, relax, and connect!

POB READS meets virtually at 11 a.m. on the first Friday of every other month. Our next meeting is **Friday, May 2**. All selected books are available for free through the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled, also known as the Talking Books Program. The group is led by a trained accessibility librarian.

To register, call **(301) 951-4444** or visit **pobreads.org**.

To also start receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email 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

