



Seeing HopeSM



SEPTEMBER 2026

TODAY

Reducing Fall Risks at Home

By Ummara Qadeer, Physical Therapist

September is **National Falls Prevention Awareness Month**. Falls are one of the biggest risks for people with vision impairments.

The good news? Small changes at home can help a lot, and you can start today.

Add more light: Low vision does not mean no vision. Many people can still see some light and shapes. Bright bulbs near stairs, hallways, and doorways help. Nightlights in the bedroom and bathroom help too.

Keep pathways clear: A bunched-up rug, a loose cord, or a chair moved a few inches can turn a safe path into a fall risk. Try to keep furniture in the same place. Walking the same route every day helps you remember where things are.

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Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington®
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Use contrast to see edges better: A dark rug on a light floor, bright tape on the edge of a step, or a handrail in a different color all help show where one surface ends and another begins.

Wear the right shoes: Shoes with a solid grip and a snug fit help you feel steady, especially on stairs.

Stay active: Simple exercises, like standing practice, seated leg lifts, or short walks with a cane, can help you stay strong and steady. A few minutes each day can build lasting confidence!

Use helpful tools: Talking clocks, liquid level indicators, and canes with textured tips are not a sign of giving up independence. They protect it. Phone apps that describe your surroundings can also act like an extra set of eyes.

Small steps add up. Better lighting, a clear path, good shoes, daily movement, and the right tools can all help you feel safer and more confident at home, not only during National Falls Prevention Awareness Month, but all year long!

Guest contributor **Ummara Qadeer** is a physical therapist and clinical researcher whose work spans patient care, academic teaching, protocol development, and community health education.

Resource of the Month:

Menus4ALL

Reading a restaurant menu should not require holding it inches from your face, searching for better lighting, or asking someone else to read every choice aloud. Yet many restaurant menus remain difficult to use for people with vision impairments. Printed menus often use small type, while online menus may be posted as blurry images that cannot be enlarged.

Menus4ALL.com, a volunteer-run nonprofit project of Modern Technology of the Blind, is working to make dining out more independent.

Its free website provides restaurant menus designed specifically for accessibility. The menus can be enlarged to very large print or read aloud with a screen reader. They are available on smartphones, tablets, and computers. No app is required. Diners can browse the selections, compare prices, and check dietary options independently and at their own pace.

Menus4ALL does not yet include many restaurants in our area, but you can help change that! Visit **Menus4ALL.com** and search for a favorite restaurant. If its menu is unavailable, complete the Request Form on their website.

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

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER 2026

To register for an event, call **(301) 951-4444**
or visit www.youreyes.org/events.

**FRI
4**

Seeing Hope Book Club (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Join us for **Welcome to Cottonmouth** by **Jay S. Bell**, a thriller set in a secret East Texas town for retired spies. To register, visit pobreads.org or call **(301) 951-4444**.

**TUE
8**

Fall Prevention (Virtual Event)

6 p.m. - 7 p.m. • Stargardt's Network

Join us to discuss how vision changes increase fall risk and practical steps we can take to reduce it.

**WED
9**

Living Life Fully (In-Person Event)

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

Join us as **Marguerite Woods** shares her passion for travel, accessible arts, and helping older adults with vision loss live fully. No RSVP required.
Leisure World Clubhouse II - Rossmoor Room
3300 N Leisure World Blvd., Silver Spring, MD

**TUE
15**

**Talking Book Program
(Virtual Event)**

1 p.m - 2 p.m. • Seeing Hope Tech Talk
Join Jason Yasner of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) and Ginger Hawkins of Fairfax County Access Services to learn how to access free audiobooks and magazines through NLS's Talking Book Program and your local public library.

**WED
16**

Healthcare Accessibility (Virtual Event)

11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Seeing Hope Low Vision Town Hall

Join Kimberly Avila, Ph.D. from George Mason University, to discuss accessibility challenges people with vision loss may face in healthcare. Learn about your rights and how to advocate for accessible care.

**THU
17**

Reconnect and Share (In-Person Event)

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group

Join us to reconnect after summer and share ideas and experiences for staying connected with vision loss. To register, call **(301) 656-2797**.

Friendship Heights Village Center

4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase, MD

(Additional events on next page)

**SAT
26**

**8th Annual Janet Morrison Memorial
Low Vision Mini-Symposium
(Virtual Event)**

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. • Special Event

Hear from **Andrew Adelson, M.D., Suleiman Alibhai, O.D., Sandra Cremers, M.D., and Jennifer Wood, O.D.**, as they share updates in low vision care and rehabilitation. **Sam Seavey of The Blind Life** will explore the growing role of artificial intelligence in the lives of people with low vision. **POB's Seeing Hope Low Vision Resource Center** will also demonstrate tools and services that can make daily life easier. This program is presented in partnership with **Washington National Eye Center**.

To RSVP, call Tara at **(202) 234- 1010, ext. 233**, or email **taziz@youreyes.org**.



Catch up anytime with more than 100 videos from our Seeing Hope series. Watch or listen to webinars, Town Halls, Tech Talk events, and more. Visit **www.youreyes.org/replays**

When One Device Replaces a Shelf

Seeing Hope with Vision Loss • By Tara Aziz

Recently, a friend and I flipped through a 2020 low vision product catalog. Its talking clocks, recorders, audio players, calculators, and color identifiers already felt like artifacts from another era.

Today, many of those functions fit into something most of us carry: a smartphone. One device can identify objects, read text aloud, navigate unfamiliar streets, magnify menus, and provide real-time assistance through video calls. What once required a shelf full of gadgets now takes a few apps.

This evolution reflects independence, convenience, and inclusion. Mainstream technology allows people with low vision to use the same devices as everyone else rather than relying solely on specialized equipment.

Yet technology can never replace human connection: encouragement from a friend, patience from family, expertise from a professional, or understanding within a support group. Technology may open doors, but people help us walk through them, making life richer, more independent, and more meaningful.

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

Special Feature

August is National Make-a-Will Month

Estate planning is for everyone, regardless of your age or how much you own. Think about a Power of Attorney, a health care directive, and a will, at a minimum.

A will is more than a legal document. It is a way to make your wishes clear, reduce uncertainty for your loved ones, and remember the people and causes that matter to you. You do not need to be wealthy or at a particular stage of life to create one.

August is National Make-a-Will Month and a good time to create an estate plan or review the plan you already have. Families change. Finances change. Priorities change. Your estate plan should change with them.

To get started, consider a few questions:

- Who should receive your home, car, savings, or personal belongings?
- Who would handle your finances if you could no longer do so?
- Who would make health care decisions for you?
- Do your retirement accounts and life insurance policies name the correct beneficiaries?
- Would you like to support a cause that has been meaningful to you beyond your lifetime?

A basic estate plan should include several important documents:

- **A will explains how you want your property distributed.**
- **A durable financial power of attorney names someone to handle financial and legal matters for you - only if you are unable to do so through incapacitation.**
- **A health care power of attorney names someone to make health care decisions for you if you cannot.**
- **An advance directive or living will records your wishes for medical care.**
- **Beneficiary designations determine who receives banking and retirement accounts and life insurance.**
- **A trust may help manage and distribute assets.**

An attorney can help you decide which documents are right for you. Your plan does not have to be complicated. What matters is that your wishes are written down and someone you trust knows where to find your documents.

After providing for the people you love, you may also wish to remember a nonprofit organization that has made a difference in your life.

A planned gift does not need to be large to be meaningful. Some people leave a specific amount. Others leave a small percentage of their estate or name a charity to receive part of a retirement account or life insurance policy. You keep control of your assets during your lifetime, and your loved ones can remain your first priority.

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As you create or update your estate plan, we hope you will consider including the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington.

For 90 years, POB has helped people preserve sight and quality of life. Since Dr. Suleiman Alibhai joined POB as Clinical Director last year, Seeing Hope has expanded vision rehabilitation and strengthened the care, training, resources, and support available.

By including POB in your estate, you can help people remain independent and connected for years to come.

The May Vories Society: When you include POB in your plans, you become part of the Vories Society, named in honor of our co-founder, May Vories. There is no gift amount required, and you may choose to be recognized publicly or remain anonymous. Sharing your plans does not create any legal obligation, but it gives us the opportunity to thank you for including POB in your future.

Here are five helpful steps you can take this August:

1. Review your will, especially if it has been several years or your circumstances have changed.
2. Confirm the beneficiaries listed on your retirement accounts and life insurance policies.
3. Review your powers of attorney and advance directive.
4. Tell someone you trust where your important documents are kept.
5. Consider whether you would like to include a charitable gift in your estate plan.

Tell Us About Your Plans

Whether you are considering a planned gift or have already included POB in your plans, we would be glad to hear from you. Contact **Nick Farano, CFRE**, at **(202) 34-1010, ext. 224**, or **nfarano@youreyes.org**, or return this form to Prevention of Blindness Society, 415 2nd Street NE, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20002.

Please check all that apply:

- ☐ I am considering including POB in my estate plan and would like more information.
- ☐ I have already included POB in my will, trust, retirement account, life insurance policy, or other estate plans.
- ☐ I would like more information about the Vories Society.
- ☐ Please contact me to discuss planned giving opportunities.
- ☐ I prefer that my planned gift remain anonymous.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Information will be kept confidential.

POB does not provide legal, tax, or financial advice.

Save the Date!

Seeing Hope Open House

Sunday, October 18, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Tour our space designed for people with vision impairments, meet our Seeing Hope team, including Clinical Director **Dr. Suleiman Alibhai** and our Low Vision Resource Navigators, and explore tools and technology that support independence. Come see a Waymo self-driving car up close! Additional details and RSVP information will be available soon.

Prevention of Blindness Society

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