

12061 Tech Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904 – 301-681-6636

[**https://washear.org/listener-newsletters**](https://washear.org/listener-newsletters)

March 20, 2025

Dear Listeners,

Did you know that people with disabilities and their families can use [**Achieving a Better Life Experience accounts**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fgovernment-entities%2Ffederal-state-local-governments%2Fable-accounts-tax-benefit-for-people-with-disabilities/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/_ZNHBtyZIBf4aebsssTCWvgBJ0Yd_Z9lk53lTAOUby4=397) (ABLE accounts) to help pay for qualified disability-related expenses. Full details are [**here**](#ABLE).

Also, the MWE Men’s Support Group is meeting this coming . Check out the details [**here**](#Men).

Cheers,

Sylvia

Here are the links to all the items below:

* [**Resources for Workers Impacted by Recent Federal Government Actions**](#Workers)
* [**ABLE Savings Accounts and Other Tax Benefits for Persons with Disabilities**](#ABLE)
* **[Theater Update](#Theater)**
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  + [**The Fairfax County All Access Book Club**](#Access)
  + [**Celebrate Elizabeth Catlett with the Howard Gospel Choir**](#Choir)
  + [**Celebrate Elizabeth Catlett with the Freedom Jazz Quartet**](#Jazz)
  + [**MedStar Washington Hospital Center Low Vision Support Group Virtual Meeting: Glaucoma—Why So Many Drops, What Do They Do and How Do I Not Get Them Confused?**](#MedStar)
  + [**Join a Virtual Community Forum on Virginia Transportation Accessibility**](#Transportation)
  + [**2025 AAPD Virtual National Community Event**](#AAPD)
  + [**Being the Light: Friends and Family Connection Event**](#Light)

###

**RESOURCES FOR WORKERS IMPACTED BY RECENT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS**

In response to recent Federal workforce reductions, Montgomery County is providing various resources to support affected individuals. Essential information to assist with employment, basic needs and health services during this challenging time is available at [**Resources for Workers Impacted by Recent Federal Government Actions**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html)**,** including the following.

* [**Employment and Career Support**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html#employment-support)
* [**Food, Child Care and Housing**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html#food)
* [**Crisis Intervention, Health and Insurance**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html#health)
* [**Federal and State Officials' Resources**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html#federal-state-officials)
* [**Municipality Resources**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html#municipalities)
* [**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Resources**](https://www.mwcog.org/community/data-and-tools/federal-workforce-resources-and-data/)

###

**ABLE SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND OTHER TAX BENEFITS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Forwarded by MWE Volunteer Evelyn Jemionek

People with disabilities and their families can use [**Achieving a Better Life Experience accounts**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fgovernment-entities%2Ffederal-state-local-governments%2Fable-accounts-tax-benefit-for-people-with-disabilities/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/_ZNHBtyZIBf4aebsssTCWvgBJ0Yd_Z9lk53lTAOUby4=397) to help pay for qualified disability-related expenses. ABLE accounts are savings accounts that don't affect eligibility for government assistance programs. Here are some key things people should know about these accounts.

**Contribution limit**The contribution limit for 2025 is $19,000. Certain employed ABLE account beneficiaries may make an additional contribution. The additional amount is the designated beneficiary's compensation for the tax year or, for 2025, the amount of $15,650 for residents in the continental U.S., $19,550 in Alaska and $17,990 in Hawaii.

**Saver's Credit**ABLE account designated beneficiaries may be eligible to claim the [**Saver's Credit**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fretirement-plans%2Fplan-participant-employee%2Fretirement-savings-contributions-credit-savers-credit/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/EN5ffgnL2YA2qlbS9uMH7wmmsCQD-5OQaoZNsukHilw=397) for a percentage of their contributions. This is a non-refundable credit for people who:

* Are at least 18 years old at the close of the taxable year,
* Are not a dependent or a full-time student, and
* Meet the income requirements.

The beneficiary can claim this credit using [**Form 8880, Credit for Qualified Retirement Savings Contributions**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fpub%2Firs-pdf%2Ff8880.pdf/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/7t4uOLyT6G8vbq4iQ_TQPM9K6ZysmJbjOpUleqm0Tuc=397).

**Rollovers and transfers from Section 529 plans**  
Families may roll over funds from a 529 plan to another family member's ABLE account. The ABLE account must be for the same beneficiary as the 529 account or for a member of the same family as the 529 account holder. Rollovers from a Section 529 plan do count toward the annual contribution limit.

Rollovers from a 529 to an ABLE account, plus the annual contribution to the ABLE account, cannot exceed the maximum contribution amount for the year. For example, the $18,000 annual contribution limit for 2024 would be met by parents contributing $10,000 to their child's ABLE account and rolling over $8,000 from a 529 plan to the same ABLE account.

**Qualified disability expenses**  
States can offer ABLE accounts to help people who become disabled before age 26 or if their families pay for disability-related expenses outlined in [**Publication 907, Tax Highlights for Persons with Disabilities**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fpub%2Firs-pdf%2Fp907.pdf/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/dxTXBPkKvJlwEfizctRJ5Y8K4eEM-RcRyRck-pFDKto=397). Though contributions aren't deductible for federal tax purposes, distributions – including earnings – are tax-free to the beneficiary if the taxpayer pays for a qualified disability expense.

**More information**

* [**Form 1099-QA, Distributions from ABLE Accounts**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fpub%2Firs-pdf%2Ff1099qa.pdf/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/yPKAyZIGchN-meHJuGlfOw_0zqfN7otI0Lsfs9l3N8g=397)
* [**Form 5498-QA, ABLE Account Contribution Information**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fpub%2Firs-pdf%2Ff5498qa.pdf/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/mEJuG7w-y-hEnzSxGTlOMj7vpng3dEXuL4NyjssJBTA=397)
* [**Instructions for Forms 1099-QA and 5498-QA**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https:%2F%2Fwww.irs.gov%2Fpub%2Firs-pdf%2Fi1099qa.pdf/1/01000195b3db27c0-aa9e926e-0580-4750-81a8-baf7dbc642de-000000/X4dHFpREg9g-nA3jkQTmfFrba0qMonf0eoiapY6j5Qs=397)

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**THEATER UPDATE**

The following performances will be described by an MWE volunteer. Note that recorded program notes will be available at the theater just prior to the actual performance and on Dial-In before and after the performance at Publication 8, Category 10, Branch 11.

**The Age of Innocence**

Arena Stage Fichandler at the Mead Center - 202-488-3300

Described Saturday, March 22nd at 2:00 pm

**Bad Books**

Round House Theatre Bethesda - 240-644-1100

**Described Saturday, April 12th matinee**

**Fake It Until You Make It**

Arena Stage Kreeger at the Mead Center - 202-488-3300

Described Saturday, April 12th at 2:00 pm

**Sleepova**

Olney Theatre Center – Mulitz-Gudelsky Theatre Lab 301-924-3400

March 26 – April 27

Described Wednesday, April 16th at 7:30 pm

**Uncle Vanya**

Shakespeare: Harman Hall: 202-547-1122

Described Saturday, April 19th matinee

###

**CALENDAR**

**Replay POB Events**

**Listen and watch replays of recent webinars and other POB events at**[**www.youreyes.org/replays**](https://youreyes.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=939b8acf4b5eb247b7120bcd9&id=21719989f4&e=59825d4dc8)

###

**FFB Virtual Class to Confidently Navigate the Kitchen**

Sunday, March 23rd at 7:00 pm

The Foundation Fighting Blindness In partnership with **The Blind Kitchen, Chef Debra Erickson** will be providing a class to teach practical tools, techniques, and strategies to confidently navigate the kitchen including:

* Minimizing the risk of cuts and burns.
* Building confidence to cook without embarrassment.
* Ensuring food safety to protect yourself and your loved ones.
* Discover how to overcome the four key fears – cutting, burning, embarrassment, and food safety – and reclaim your independence in the kitchen.

For more information or to register, please follow this link:  [**https://www.fightingblindness.org/events/dc-social-event-3309**](https://www.fightingblindness.org/events/dc-social-event-3309)

###

**VIP Vienna/Falls Church Support Group Meeting - Prep for the Tech Fair AND Plan and Share**IN PERSON ONLY  
Monday, March 24th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm  
The Thomas Jefferson Library

7415 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church, VA 22042  
Rachel Schreiman and Ann Koch will co-lead a meeting where everyone can share resources and devices that he or she finds helpful!  
Additionally, the cochairs will share several wearable visual aids that they find helpful, and that will be featured at the Low Vision tech fair that the group will host on April 28, 2025. Each one will demo one or two wearable devices for you to observe and ask questions about.  
  
Please come ready to ask lots of questions and share some helpful resources, Apps and/or devices that you have discovered! Nothing to share? That's ok. Come and learn from others. We all gain so much from each other.   
For questions, contact Ann Koch - [**akkoch710@gmail.com**](mailto:akkoch710@gmail.com) or  
Rachel Schreiman - [**Rachel.schreiman@gmail.com**](mailto:Rachel.schreiman@gmail.com)  
###

**Poetry Open Mic Night**

Tuesday, March 25th from 6:30 to 7:30 pm

[**Petworth Neighborhood Library**](https://dclibrary.libnet.info/event/13113497#branch)

4200 Kansas Avenue, NW

Meeting Room 2 (2-12 Person Capacity)

Come show off your performance skills at Petworth Library.

Come perform poetry. Participants are welcome to perform original work, as well as share the work of other published poets.

###

**AFB Webinar - Using Research to Strengthen State and Local Disability Advocacy**

Wednesday, March 26th at 12:00 pm

Join the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) for a webinar on how research can help strengthen your state and local disability advocacy. AFB staff will discuss their recently published research summaries and fact sheets—valuable tools to share with state legislators and local officials as you advocate for transportation access, accessible digital information, expanded funding for disability services, and more. Denise Jess, executive director of the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, will share a three-part formula for effective advocacy and discuss the power of coalition building.

Register for the webinar at [**Webinar Registration - Zoom**](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/9717417272043/WN_amqjqpH0QSCT3dhozV9v3g?sourceid=1091350&emci=e4334221-5aff-ef11-90cd-0022482a9fb7&emdi=fadcdb07-85ff-ef11-90cd-0022482a9fb7&ceid=5132417#/registration).

###

**Understanding your Medicare Options**

Wednesday, March 26th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm

[**Aspen Hill Library**](https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/12574834#branch)

4407 Aspen Hill Road, Rockville

Join an overview of Medicare benefits, eligibility, enrollment, costs, & coverage, as well as info on Medicare savings programs, Medicare fraud protection, & local services.

The [**Montgomery County State Health Insurance Assistance Program**](https://www.shiphelp.org/about-medicare/regional-ship-location/maryland) will provide an overview of Medicare benefits, eligibility, enrollment, costs, & coverage, as well as info on Medicare savings programs, Medicare fraud, protection & local services.

###

**MWE – Blind Men’s Support Group – Are Your Affairs in Order?**

Thursday, March 27th at 2:00 pm

12061 Tech Road, Silver Spring

Life is unpredictable. Make sure you and your loved ones are prepared.

Contact Janice Dyson-Ceasar at 301-681-6636.

###

**Accessible Board and Card Game Night**

Thursday, March 27th from 4:00 to 6:00 pm

[**Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library - Central Library**](https://dclibrary.libnet.info/event/12964044#branch)

901 G Street, NW, 205-B Accessibility Program Room

Play accessible board and card games.

Play accessible Scrabble, Bingo, Monopoly, Uno, Chess and more. All board and card games are accessible with braille or large print.

###

**ACB of Virginia Virtual Book Group**

Thursday, March 27th at 7:00 pm

Come share your recent readings and learn what others are reading.

All are welcome.

You do not need to be a member to attend.

As always, rather than asking everyone to read the same book, attendees are asked to report on a book or books they have read.

You do not need to have a book on which to report.

ACBVA's book group meetings are not only a great way to learn about books you may not be aware of, but you may also learn about sources of audio books and technology others use to read.

And they realize the time and date are not convenient for everyone, so, following the meeting, they plan to distribute information about

 the books attendees review.

Join Zoom Meeting

[**https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83807277786?pwd=NHhqckpZRHB0dTRsSEoyNzM5Z3B5dz09**](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83807277786?pwd=NHhqckpZRHB0dTRsSEoyNzM5Z3B5dz09)

Meeting ID: 838 0727 7786

Passcode: 669550

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,83807277786#,,,,\*669550# US (Washington DC)

+13052241968,,83807277786#,,,,\*669550# US

or Dial by your location

        +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

        +1 305 224 1968 US

        +1 309 205 3325 US

Meeting ID: 838 0727 7786

Passcode: 669550

Find your local number: [**https://us02web.zoom.us/u/**](https://us02web.zoom.us/u/)

###

**America InSight: Verbal Description Art Tour**Wednesday, April 2nd from 11:00 am to 12:00 pmSmithsonian American Art Museum  
8th and G Streets, NW, Washington, DC

Join POB for an in-person docent-led tour for visitors who are blind or have low vision. Through rich verbal description and sensory experience, discover highlights from the Smithsonian's collection.  
To RSVP, call (301) 951-4444.  
###

**The Fairfax County All Access Book Club**

Thursday,April 3rd at 11:00 am

This month’s selection is [**The Devil in the White City**](https://fcplcat.fairfaxcounty.gov/search/title.aspx?ctx=1.1033.0.0.1&pos=5&cn=214381) by Erik Larson.

The All Access Book Club meets on the first Thursday of each month at 11:00 a.m. via free conference call.

To join the event:

* Call **703-324-1800**or toll-free number **1-877-862-8112**
* At the prompt, enter the code **389887#**

For more information, contact Access Services Library at 703-324-8380 or email [**libas@fairfaxcounty.gov**](mailto:libas@fairfaxcounty.gov).

###

**Celebrate Elizabeth Catlett with the Howard Gospel Choir**

Saturday, April 5th from 2:00 to 2:45 pm

National Gallery of Art East Building Auditorium

4th and Constitution Avenue, NW

Registration Required at [**Celebrating Elizabeth Catlett — National Gallery of Art**](https://tickets.nga.gov/events/0194b86d-4ac1-e753-b04d-57aca8ab4730).

Celebrate with the Howard Gospel Choir in a centerpiece performance honoring[***Elizabeth Catlett: A Black Revolutionary Artist***](https://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2025/elizabeth-catlett-black-revolutionary-artist.html)**,** on view through July 6, 2025.  Elizabeth Catlett, a Howard University graduate and DC native, tapped these local beginnings to launch a distinguished career that spanned almost 70 years.

###

**Celebrate Elizabeth Catlett with the Freedom Jazz Quartet**

Sunday, April 6th from 1:00 to 2:00 pm

National Gallery of Art West Building, West Garden Court

6th and Constitution Avenue, NW

Registration Required at [**Celebrate Elizabeth Catlett with the Freedom Jazz Quartet — National Gallery of Art**](https://tickets.nga.gov/events/01953ec1-d5f8-4f45-089b-ed507c418fb7).

Enjoy the music of the Freedom Jazz Quartet in a concert honoring the exhibition [***Elizabeth Catlett: A Black Revolutionary Artist***](https://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2025/elizabeth-catlett-black-revolutionary-artist.html), on view through July 6, 2025. Francisco Mora-Catlett, son of artists Elizabeth Catlett and Francisco Mora, leads this quartet of jazz emissaries.

###

**MedStar Washington Hospital Center Low Vision Support Group Virtual Meeting: Glaucoma—Why So Many Drops, What Do They Do and How Do I Not Get Them Confused?**

Tuesday, April 8th from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

Guest Speaker: Alexandria Marshall, MD Ophthalmology Resident AND You can join via computer or phone or both—email Penny at [**penelope.a.helfgott@medstar.net**](mailto:penelope.a.helfgott@medstar.net) to receive an electronic link to the program. If you have any questions, please call Penny Helfgott at 202- 877-5329 and leave a message or call the POB number below.

Co-sponsored with: The Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, DC. For further information, please call 202-234-101.

###

**Join a Virtual Community Forum on Virginia Transportation Accessibility**

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| Monday, April 21st from 7:00 to 8:30 pm  The Fairfax Area Disability Services Board is hosting a virtual community forum on transportation accessibility. They are looking for your ideas and feedback to help them find out where there are problems or barriers in transportation for people with disabilities in Fairfax County, City of Falls Church, and City of Fairfax.  Your input can help make transportation better and more accessible for everyone. After you register, an email with the link to join the meeting will be emailed to you. Register at [**Participate in Community Forums to Provide Input on Services for Residents with Disabilities | Family Services**](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/familyservices/disabilities/fairfax-area-disability-services-board/community-forums?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  ###  **2025 AAPD Virtual National Community Event** |

Wednesday, April 30th at 6:30 pm

Join AAPD to celebrate our community's collective progress and power at the 2025 AAPD National Community Event.

This event is open to all in the disability community, and any ally who cares about advancing disability rights and inclusion.

Tickets are completely free, and the event is virtual.

Register at [**2025 AAPD National Community Event Tickets, Wed, Apr 30, 2025 at 6:30 PM | Eventbrite**](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-aapd-national-community-event-tickets-1245268554769).

The AAPD National Community Event is rooted in the disability community's advocacy and culture: they will bring you engaging conversations with national leaders, hear reports from across the nation about the critical work disabled people are doing across the country, celebrate disability representation in film and the arts, and more! Also celebrate and learn more about the work of the incredible 2025 Paul G Hearne Emerging Leader Award recipients.

Throughout the evening, they will also connect you to opportunities at the national, state, and local opportunities to advocate for disability equality, accessibility, and inclusion.

Audio description will be provided and streaming links will be sent out to all who register.

###

**Being the Light: Friends and Family Connection Event**  
Saturday, May 3rd   
Collington Life Care Community  
10450 Lottsford Road, Mitchellville

You, your friends, and your family are invited to join the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington (POB) for a luncheon panel discussion moderated by **Suleiman Alibhai, O.D.**, a low-vision specialist. Additional details and tickets will be available soon.  
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