**November 1, 2024| Vol. 49**

**DELAWARE DIVISION FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED NEWSLETTER**

**Providing educational, vocational, and technical support to empower and foster independence for Delawareans with visual impairments.**



**NEWS**

**November is…**

**Diabetic Eye Disease Awareness Month**: Individuals diagnosed with diabetes face an increased risk of developing severe eye conditions, including diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and cataracts. However, recent research indicates a concerning lack of awareness regarding these risks among ethnic groups that are more susceptible to diabetes. The findings suggest that a significant number of Americans may not be adequately safeguarding themselves against vision loss associated with diabetes. In response, the American Academy of Ophthalmology urges individuals with diabetes to adopt proactive measures to preserve their eyesight.

**November 14**: **World Diabetes Day**

The largest diabetes awareness initiative in the world engages a global audience exceeding 1 billion individuals across more than 160 nations. This campaign is commemorated annually on November 14, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting, who, alongside Charles Best, co-discovered insulin in 1922.

**November 28**: **Thanksgiving**

A national holiday that celebrates the blessings and of the past year and a time to highlight what you are thankful for.

**November 29**: **Black Friday**

This holiday is celebrated the day after Thanksgiving and marks the start of the Christmas shopping season.

**DART service changes will go into effect Nov. 17**

By: Peter Osborne

October 9, 2024

Changes to DART’s Statewide Bus Service will become effective Sunday, November 17, 2024. DART service changes are outlined below, summarized by county. Modifications to the original proposal are highlighted in **bold text**.

The new route schedules will be available online at [DARTFirstState.com](https://www.dartfirststate.com/RiderInfo/Routes/) by mid-November, and printed pocket schedules will also be available by mid-November.

Please use link to see the changes: [https://www.newsbreak.com/share/3624498403347-](https://www.newsbreak.com/share/3624498403347-dart-service-changes-will-go-into-effect-nov-17?_f=app_share&pd=0Bszqnn4&lang=en_US&send_time=1728498180&trans_data=%7B%22platform%22%3A0%2C%22cv%22%3A%2224.39.1.3%22%2C%22languages%22%3A%22en%22%7D&sep=ns_foryou_recall_exp_24q4-v3%2Cns_foryou_model_exp_24q4-v5%2Cns_foryou_rank_exp_24q4-v9%2Cns_local_strategy_24q3_exp-v3%2Cns_summary_v1-v3%2Cns_foryou_blend_exp_24q4-v7%2Cns_pushv1-v3&s=i0)

**Hilton and Be My Eyes Launch Industry‑First Partnership to Enhance the Hilton Stay for Guests who are Blind or Low Vision**

October 15, 2024

*The exclusive partnership brings AI‑powered virtual assistance and dedicated Hilton Reservations and Customer Care support to Be My Eyes users across the U.S. and Canada*

McLEAN, Va. – For many, checking into a hotel can mean the beginning of an exciting adventure, a relaxing getaway or important moments in life. For guests who are blind or have low vision, exploring the unfamiliar surroundings of a hotel could pose unique and specific challenges that have the potential to impact their stay.

Hilton, a global leader in hospitality, announced today an industry-first, exclusive partnership with Be My Eyes to ensure guests who are blind or have low vision can experience a more accessible, seamless and welcoming stay. Together with Be My Eyes, Hilton is making available AI-powered assistance and dedicated Hilton Reservations and Customer Care support to guests who are blind or have low vision across the U.S. and Canada. Be My Eyes is a free mobile app that connects blind and low vision users with sighted volunteers and companies through live video and AI, and now, directly connects Hilton guests with a team of dedicated, specially trained English-speaking Hilton Reservations and Customer Care agents.

Through this partnership, Be My Eyes users in the U.S. and Canada can use their smartphone to navigate to Be My Eyes’ “Service Directory,” select the “Hotels” category and choose the participating Hilton brand to be directly connected to Hilton’s dedicated teams. Hilton teams will be available to help users navigate the hotel, including helping guests identify and adjust the in-room thermostat, operate in-room coffee machines, identify window coverings, or navigate to the hotel’s meeting spaces and amenities such as bars, restaurants, gyms or spas.

Assistance is available across a variety of Hilton’s portfolio of brands, including Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, Conrad Hotels & Resorts, DoubleTree by Hilton and Hampton by Hilton, among others. The partnership provides both leisure and business travelers who are blind or have low vision with personalized assistance for every stay occasion.

Full article here: <https://stories.hilton.com/releases/hilton-and-be-my-eyes-launch-industry-first-partnership>

**Delta launches new flight map designed for accessibility**

October 29, 2024

Delta is bringing a new, more accessible flight map to most of its 165,000 seatback screens—the most in the industry—making the beloved moving map experience more accessible than ever.

The new flight map prioritizes accessibility while continuing to provide the key features customers know, love and expect. Its high-contrast display and features are designed specifically with travelers with low-vision disabilities in mind. The enhanced product ensures that even more customers are empowered to experience the flight map effortlessly and independently.

“No one better connects the world than Delta,” says Ekrem Dimbiloglu, Managing Director of Customer Experience – In-Flight Entertainment, Delta Studio and Wi-Fi. “To truly fulfill that promise, we must ensure every customer can connect with their journey in a way that enhances their experience and makes them feel valued and cared for. We are proud to be the first airline to launch this technology, setting the standard for inclusive travel experiences across the industry.”

For countless travelers, Delta’s flight map is a beloved part of the in-flight entertainment experience—it’s an opportunity to immerse themselves in their journey while embracing mindfulness through the calming details of the moving map. Delta’s new flight map demonstrates the airline’s understanding of the importance of making this experience accessible.

**Did you know?** Each month, approximately 80% of Delta’s customers enjoy the curated content on Delta’s in-flight entertainment. The no. 1 piece of content (ahead of movies, series, live TV audio and games!) is none other than the flight map – with 45% of customers engaging with the map during their flights.

**Delivering a World-Class Experience to All Travelers**

Delta’s commitment to accessibility is rooted in its belief that travel is for everyone. Already an industry leader with 100% closed captioning on all movies and series content and a 40% increase in audio descriptive content in the last year, Delta continues to seek ways to make travel more accessible.

While its flight map was already built to meet all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and European Accessibility Act (EAA) standards, Delta saw an opportunity to push further. Alongside inflight map provider FlightPath3D, the airline collaborated closely with its Advisory Board on Disability, presenting an early version of the map for hands-on testing and feedback that was instrumental in refining the final design and functionality that customers will experience today. This collaborative approach emphasizes the importance of listening, learning and innovating based on the real experiences of those most affected by inclusive design efforts.

Full article: <https://news.delta.com/delta-launches-new-flight-map-designed-accessibility>

**SSI Recipients Will Get an Extra Check in November. Here’s What to Know**

By: Jessica Roy, San Francisco Chronicle/TNS

October 23, 2024

People who receive Supplemental Security Income, or SSI, will get two checks in November instead of one.

Typically, SSI goes out on the first of the month. But according to Social Security Administration rules, when the first of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the payment goes out the last weekday before that. Dec. 1 is a Sunday, so benefits will be disbursed on Friday, Nov. 29.

That does mean recipients won’t see a payment in the beginning of December — but they’ll still get a check that month. New Year’s Day is a holiday, so the payment for January 2025 will be disbursed on Tuesday, Dec. 31. And Feb. 1, 2025, falls on a Saturday, so that month’s check will be disbursed on Friday, Jan. 31.

If this all sounds familiar, it’s because this calendar quirk just happened in August. Sept. 1 was a holiday (Labor Day) so that month’s checks went out on Friday, Aug. 30.

SSI beneficiaries will see a bump in that late-December check: The 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment goes into effect on payments for January 2025.

The Social Security Administration publishes an annual calendar of payment dates.

Please read full article here: <https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2024/10/23/ssi-recipients-will-get-an-extra-check-in-november-heres-what-to-know/31127/>

# **State of Delaware Student Mentoring Program**

Governor Carney announced the launch of a new statewide student mentoring program, designed to match students with positive role models. Mentors make a huge difference in a child's life both academically and socially, we encourage folks to sign up to support Delaware students.

Learn more here: <https://education.delaware.gov/community/state-of-delaware-student-mentoring-program/>

**EVENTS**

**ILS Meet & Greets**

The ILS team is continuing the monthly Meet & Greets for DVI clients. The November event is coming soon for Kent and New Castle County! Everyone is welcome to come!

Date, Time, and location for upcoming event:

Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Appoquinimink Library 204 E Main Street, Middletown, 19709

Light refreshments will be provided.

Contact Laura Gallant- [Laura.Gallant@delaware.gov](mailto:Laura.Gallant@delaware.gov) or at 302-255-9948 to RSVP.

**Assistive Technology Series for Caregivers**

EasterSeals Delaware & Maryland's Eastern Shore is hosting an Assistive Technology series for caregivers.

Discover how these independence-boosting tools can simplify your life as a caregiver.

Join virtually the third Thursday of every month at 11:30am for 15-minute sessions.

Topics covered:

August 15- Adapted Clothing

September 19- Fall Prevention

October 17- Parkinson's Disease

November21- Adapted Toys

December 19- Virtual Tour

January 16- Spinal Cord Injury

Zoom link: <http://bit.ly/ESATzoom>

**“A New Day,” Art Show by visually Impaired artist, Trebs Thompson on Nov. 8 & 15**

Trebs Thompson, a visually impaired glass and found objects artist, is debuting her first solo show at DVI. A ticket is required to this event but there is no admission fee.

Trebs began creating art to express her feeling in her late 40s. A few years later she was diagnosed with Parafoveal Macular Telangiectasia, a rare blinding condition. Initially, she thought her burgeoning art career had come to an end; however, a subsequent epiphany prompted her to modify her techniques in response to her changing eyesight. This adaptation has proven to be highly successful, resulting in the creation of numerous beautiful and thought-provoking works. Trebs often uses adhesives, magnification, and harsh lighting to continue telling her story. This year she had won an Individual Arts Fellowship from the State of Delaware, which is funding her first solo show that will be on display at DVI.

You can experience the art of Trebs Thompson at two openings on November 8 and the 15th from 3:30 to 6:00 PM. The event will be in our main office, at Herman M. Holloway, Sr. Campus Biggs Building Door 3 , New Castle, DE.

Address: 1901 N. Dupont Hwy, Biggs Bldg, Door #3, New Castle, DE 19720.

Directions:

Enter Herman Holloway campus

Turn right at guard stand

Make the first right on the traffic circle

Pass a building and picnic area on the left then turn left.

Biggs building is on the right.

You can get your tickets here: <https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/trebsthompsoncom/a-new-day?fbclid=IwY2xjawGPKJZleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHTXvBo3nUXMjGgj29mfXxQ2PQp-XO8-cQLwcFZaZtXOPvz4JKanvPNvCMw_aem_ybaEt8GkNtqmZBEgpWfOrA>

**Presidential Election on November 5**

The presidential is coming up November 5th and everyone has the right to exercise their democratic right to participate in this monumental event in America’s history.

The Delaware Voting Rights Coalition (DVCR) has created a voter guide for Delawareans which you can review here: <https://www.aclu-de.org/en/voter-guide2024>

***DVI Social Medias:***

[Follow DVI on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/DVIDelaware)

[Follow DVI on Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/dvidelaware/)



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