

BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION
74th NATIONAL CONVENTION

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE NATIONAL OFFICERS AND
NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FISCAL YEAR 2019
(JULY 1, 2018 - JUNE 30, 2019)

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**BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION
74th NATIONAL CONVENTION
TULSA, OKLAHOMA
AUGUST 12-16, 2019**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL OFFICERS
AND NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

INTRODUCTION

The Blinded Veterans Association National Board of Directors and the National Headquarters presents this report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019. The National Board is pleased to report that BVA's financial position remains reasonably stable as we continue to look for ways to strengthen BVA's financial position. Headquarters continues to operate out of the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) building in Alexandria, VA. We are leasing the entire 3rd floor of the building. Below are some highlights of the past to current year:

- 1) BVA's headquarters' office will be moving into its new property located at 1101 King Street, Alexandria, VA the beginning of October 2019. The property consists of 3-separate suites for a total of 11,314 Sq. Ft.
- 2) Currently, active membership of the Association stands at 7,426. At this time last year, the active membership had a total of 7,293. As of March 2019, we had 27 renewals. Membership statistics will be appended to the hard copy version of this report as Appendix A.
- 3) Spring 2019 elections were held in Director Districts 3 and 4, and a special election in District 6. Ballots were opened and counted on July 12, 2019. Monaca Gilmore was elected in District 3 and Jhennicea Morrow was re-elected in District 4. Kevin Jackson ran unopposed in District 6 and was declared winner by default.

- 4) **BVA signed a contract with the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill on March 29, 2019 for the 2020 annual convention.**
- 5) **We currently have a total of seventeen (17) employees. Sixteen (16) are full-time employees and one (1) part-time permanent employee. We also have two (2) contractors.**
- 6) **Board appointed Dr. Thomas Zampieri as BVA's National President on January 25, 2019 due to the resignation of Joe Parker who stepped down due to medical conditions.**

BVA'S OPS PROGRAM EVENTS

- 1) **Five blinded veterans with their 15 safety guides kayaked 226 miles of the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon from September 1-11, 2018. They trained for over seven months with experts from the non-profit Team River Runner (TRR) program that promotes kayaking and recreational water adventures for wounded and disabled veterans. The team was led by Dave Robey, a retired Navy Captain and the Program Director of TRR and blinded Navy BVA veteran Lonnie Bedwell.**
- 2) **Project Gemini which is a collaboration between the members of BVA and the BVUK hosted an event in Tucson, Arizona from October 14-20, 2018 with four BVA members and five BVUK members visiting the local VA Blind Rehabilitation Center, followed by a day of adventurous activities. They also did tours of the International Air and Space museum and the International Wildlife museum. This program was established in May 2011, where each year they get to learn from one another and share their experiences in the areas of blind rehabilitation, adaptive technology and recreational sports.**
- 3) **The Major Charles R. Soltes Jr. OD, Memorial Golf Tournament held its 14th annual golf event in Irvine, California on Monday, October 8, 2018 at the Oak Creek Golf Club. This event hosted 4-members of our association. The event marks the annual competition to honor Major Soltes who became the first U.S. Army Optometrist to be killed in action while serving on active duty in Iraq. The tournament raises money to support eye care services for veterans who suffered eye injuries during combat. The annual golf tournament supports various events of the OPS program.**
- 4) **The OPS Program with the support of Heroes New Hope Foundation organized a deer hunting trip for blinded veterans with the assistance of**

professional guides from November 16-20, 2018. The foundation also organized a turkey hunting trip from April 23-28, 2019 in Sullivan, Indiana. The foundation was formed in 2016 by Scott Goodman.

5) The OPS Program together with Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS) in Colorado hosted six members of BVA with two sighted guides as they participated in adaptive skiing. The objective of STARS is to empower, encourage, and enrich the lives of all participants through adaptive sports. The event took place from January 23-27, 2019.

6) The OPS Program took part in the Congressional Advocacy Vision Conference in Washington, DC from March 27-30, 2019. Three members of the association advocated on behalf of BVA and the Department of Defense Vision Research with members of Congress.

7) Four female blinded veterans hiked a portion of the Appalachian Trail during the time May 30-June 1, 2019. Prior to the hike, the ladies spent days and weeks training for the physical challenge with their guides.

DIRECTORS AND NATIONAL OFFICERS

The members of the National Board of Directors for the period August 2018-August 2019 are:

National President and Chairman, Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Pearland, TX

National Vice-President, Paul Mimms, Kansas City, MO

National Secretary, Joe McNeil, Columbus, GA

National Treasurer, Daniel Wallace, Cape Coral, FL

Director District 1, Dennis O'Connell, Long Beach, NY

Director District 2, Timothy Hornik, Lawrence, KS

Director District 3, Vernon Richmond, Haw River, NC

Director District 4, Jhennicea Morrow, Gilbert, AZ

Director District 5, Paul Kaminsky, Middleburg, FL

Director District 6, Kevin Jackson, Austin, TX

Immediate Past National President, Joe Parker, Pisgah Forest, NC

Honorary Members to Board of Directors, Joe W. Burns, New Orleans, LA and Dr. Donald Gagliano, National Harbor, MD

National Chaplain, Jay McLeod, Hampton, VA

National Sergeant-at-Arms, Monaca Gilmore, Knightdale, NC

COMMITTEES AND REPRESENTATIVES

The following appointments have been made by BVA National President Dr. Thomas Zampieri and unanimously approved by the Board:

Executive Committee

Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Chairman; Paul Mimms, Joe McNeil, Daniel Wallace and Joe Parker

Audit Committee:

Joe W. Burns, Chairman; Robert Stamper and Daniel Wallace

Honorary Members to Board of Directors:

Joe Burns and Dr. Donald Gagliano

Life Membership Fund Board of Trustees:

Joe W. Burns, Chairman; Thomas H. Miller, Paul Mimms, Daniel Wallace, Paul Kaminsky and Joe Bogart, HQ staff

Government Relations & Legislative Committee:

Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Chairman; Joe McNeil, Joe Parker, Daniel Wallace, Timothy Hornik and HQ staff members, Melanie Brunson and Janei Holder, and Russ Nelson, BVA Legislative Intern summer 2018

Investment Fund Board of Trustees:

Joe W. Burns, Chairman; Aaron Pomerantz, Thomas H. Miller, Daniel Wallace and Joseph Bogart, HQ staff, and Robert Stamper, temporary appointee

Scholarship Committee:

Rosalind McQueen, Eric Bridges and Dr. Mike Gandy

BVA/BRS Committee:

Jhennicea Morrow, Chairperson; Dennis O'Connell, Joe McNeil, Timothy Hornik, Kevin Jackson, and HQ staff members, Claudia Baldwin and Wade Davis

Membership/Regional Group Committee:

Paul Kaminsky, Chairman; Vernon Richmond, Paul Mimms, Danny Wallace, Monaca Gilmore, Timothy Hornik, Kevin Jackson, Dennis O'Connell, and Maria Ingegneri, Interim Membership Coordinator

Fundraising/Publicity Committee:

Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Chairman; Vernon Richmond, Joe McNeil, Danny Wallace, and HQ staff members, Chet Curtis, Danielle Petty and Joseph Bogart

Ombudsman:

Joe W. Burns

Veteran Service Officer/VVSO Program Committee:

Timothy Hornik, Chairman; Paul Mimms, Daniel Wallace, Jhennicea Morrow, and HQ staff members, Wade Davis and Claudia Baldwin

Education and Training Committee:

Paul Kaminsky, Chairman; Timothy Hornik, Dennis O'Connell, Kevin Jackson and Joe Bogart, HQ staff

DOD VA Vision Trauma & Research Steering Committee:

Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Chairman; Timothy Hornik and HQ staff Joe Bogart

OPS Committee:

Monaca Gilmore, Chairperson/voting member; Steve Baskis, Lonnie Bedwell, Tina Lemus, Scott Scieszinski, Brian Harris, Danny Wallace, James Sadecki and Larry Gunter, voting members; Dr. Thomas Zampieri and Joe Amerling non-voting members

Communications & Social Media Committee:

Paul Mimms, Chairman; Paul Kaminsky, Dr. Thomas Zampieri, Jhennicea Morrow, Vernon Richmond, Eric Marts, Kevin Jackson, and HQ staff members, Chet Curtis, Danielle Petty and Joseph Bogart

Assistant National Secretaries and Assistant National Treasurers:

- **Joseph Bogart, Executive Director/Assistant National Treasurer**
- **Melanie Brunson, Director of Public Affairs/Asst. National Treasurer**
- **Brigitte Jones, Administrative Director/Asst. National Secretary**

MEETINGS AND ACTIONS OF NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Director's Meeting March 13-15, 2019

- **BVA will conduct two surveys in multiple formats to members and non-members asking why they are not members and what would make them want to become members.**
- **BVA's 74th Convention will be held at the Marriott Tulsa Southern Hills in Tulsa, Oklahoma during the period August 12-16, 2019.**
- **Board approved researching the Hilton Crystal City in Virginia for the 2020 convention.**
- **BVA's Scholarship program is entering its 36th year for the Kathern F. Gruber Scholarship and the 7th year for the Thomas H. Miller Scholarship.**
- **Currently we have 50 regional groups. Measures are ongoing to improve support and services to our regional groups to ensure they are working effectively, efficiently, and being productive. Most importantly, we want our regional groups to remain in a "good standing status". Several groups have merged with other groups to remain in existence.**
- **BVA would like to create a new logo for our business cards, letterhead, merchandise and website. We will reach out to some artist who are**

blind or graphic designers for up to 5 samples. The membership will vote on the final design during the President's Reception at the convention.

- **BVA auditing services will now be provided by Hertzbach & Company, P.A., certified public accountants located in Arlington, VA. The service agreement was signed on June 26, 2018. They have been in business for 70 years and thirty of those years have been with non-profits. The audit began the week of September 4th and was complete in November 2018. The audit went very well, they encountered no real problems.**
- **BVA have over \$11.5 in Investments: The Investment Account value as of March 2019 was \$5,976,804. The Life Membership Account (LMF) value as of March 2019 was \$1,065,827 and the Building Fund Account value as of June 2018 was \$4,253,782. The LMF apportionment for disbursements this year to regional groups was a little over \$40,000.**
- **Board voted to pass the overall budget for FY 2020. The budget will still need Membership ratification at the national convention.**
- **Board granted approval for Joe Bogart to hire a Deputy Executive Director.**
- **The new property was purchased for \$2.025 million in January 2019. We will keep \$500,000 in reserve for building maintenance. The Board approved moving the remaining \$1.7 million to the Investment Fund.**
- **BVA signed a contract with a company out of New Jersey called Eastmain Group to redevelop the website.**
- **BVA signed a contract with a company out of Pennsylvania called Salesforce to manage our member and donor database.**
- **BVA President Dr. Thomas Zampieri testified before a joint session of the House and Senate Committees on Veterans affairs on March 12.**
- **Light up the Darkness Blinded Veterans Day, a charity event for BVA took place on Thursday, March 28.**

- **Mr. James Hindle, Parliamentarian will attend the convention in Tulsa, Oklahoma from Tuesday, August 13 through Friday, August 16.**

Post-Convention Minutes August 17, 2018

The following appointments and resolutions were adopted without objection from the Board:

- **Appointed the Executive Director as Assistant National Treasurer and the Administrative Director as Assistant National Secretary and appointed the Director of Public Affairs as Assistant National Treasurer to have sufficient signatories.**
- **Adopted a resolution that at least one of the two signatories required by the BVA National Bylaws for the withdrawal of BVA financial deposits should be either the Executive Director or the Administrative Director.**
- **Adopted a resolution that the Assistant National Treasurer and the Assistant National Secretary are empowered to roll over investments in T-Bills, certificates of deposit, and money market accounts at their discretion, and to invest surplus funds in high-yield financial instruments without the prior approval of the National Board of Directors.**
- **Adopted a resolution that the Board appoint the Executive Director/Assistant National Treasurer and Director of Public Affairs/Assistant National Treasurer, and Administrative Director/Assistant National Secretary, as officers of the Association for the purposes of executing registration forms required by the various states in compliance with those states' laws for the registration of BVA as a charitable organization engaged in direct-mail fundraising.**
- **Adopted a corporate resolution as required by the brokerage firm authorizing the Executive Director and the Administrative Director to**

make appropriate transactions of the BVA Life Membership Fund (LMF) negotiables as required.

- **Adopted a corporate resolution as required by the brokerage firm authorizing the Executive Director and the Administrative Director to make appropriate transactions of the BVA Investment Fund negotiables as required.**
- **Adopted a resolution that appoints the Executive Director as the Benefits plan administrator of the Blinded Veterans Association for all employee benefits.**
- **Agreed to maintain the blanket bond coverage with a limit of \$2,000,000 for Board of Directors, BVA employees and any non-compensated officer.**
- **Adopted a resolution that appoints Joseph Bogart, Executive Director as Benefit Plan Administrator of the BVA for the purpose of all employee benefits.**
- **Board made a unanimous decision to appoint Kevin Jackson on an interim basis as Director District 6 until spring 2019 special election to fill the remainder of the term left by Dr. Thomas Zampieri who became BVA National Vice-President.**
- **Board made a unanimous decision to appoint Monaca Gilmore as the Chairperson of the OPS Committee.**
- **Board granted approval for Joe Burns to appoint Paul Kaminsky to the Life Membership Fund Board to replace Dr. George Stocking who has passed on.**

73rd Convention Minutes August 13-17, 2018

- **Board approved all minutes from 72nd BVA National Convention previously distributed by e-mail.**
- **Board approved Annual Report for FY 2018 previously distributed by e-mail.**
- **Board approved the proposed BVA budget for FY 2019 and financials as of June 30, 2018.**
- **As of June 30, 2018, the fiscal year ended with a total of \$389,000 in cash and cash equivalents. Total liabilities ended the fiscal year with \$299,000. The total budget deficit was \$268,000. Total Net Assets ended the fiscal year with \$12.2 million. The overall, proposed budget for FY 2019 shows a surplus of \$39,000. This is derived from a growth of operational income of \$280,000 resulting from online giving, mobile apps, round up apps, corporate donations and grant prospects. Our operational expenses will decrease by \$314,000 as a result of outsourcing the financial department, reducing unnecessary costs, and combining departments. This brings the total operational deficit down from \$832,000 to \$229,000.**
- **The LMF Fund ended the year with a balance of \$1,040,892. The Investment Fund ended the year with \$6,063,696 and the Building Fund ended the year with \$4,253,782.**
- **Welcome remarks were made by Congressman Ruben Kihuen, Nevada's 4th congressional district; Honorable Geno Martino, Mayor of Sparks; Dr. Sumitra Muralidhar, Program Director for VA's Million Veteran Program in the Office of Research and Development; and Edward Martinez, Regional Representative for Senator Dean Heller.**
- **Welcome remarks were given by Mrs. Sandy Krasnodemski, President of BVA Auxiliary.**
- **There was a total of 219 in attendance at the convention. This included 125 members, 71 guests, 10 staff and 13 OPS members. We had 54 Exhibitors. Total income for the convention was around \$114,450. This**

included \$57,400 in Sponsorship; Exhibitor Revenue was \$32,500 and Convention Registration was \$24,550. We received \$600 in donations for the hospitality room. There were more than 100 VA personnel in attendance.

- **Guest speaker for the Father Carroll Memorial Luncheon was Ms. Sharon Giovannazo, the President/CEO of World Services for the Blind in Little Rock, Arkansas. She delivered a remarkable and motivating speech through the words of Father Thomas Carroll.**
- **The convention voted unanimously to pass a total of 21 resolutions that was previously passed as a block.**
- **Three (3) proposed bylaw amendments was passed by the convention assembled.**
 - **Proposed Bylaw Amendment No. 1 - PASSED. Article X (Dues) Life and Associate Life Membership dues will be \$25.00.**
 - **Proposed Bylaw Amendment No. 2 - PASSED. New Article XXII – National Trusted Advisory Council. Established by the Board of Directors to improve fundraising, advocacy and public education, increase membership and improve marketing for the Blinded Veterans Association.**
 - **Proposed Bylaw Amendments No. 3 – PASSED. Article X (Dues) and Article XI (Finances and Investments). Changed the word “Controller” with the word “Executive Director” in both sections. Due to the structural reorganization of our Headquarters’ office, we no longer have a Controller position.**
- **Nominations for elections of National Officers were held with the following results:**

- **National President: Joe Parker – 56.2%; Mark Cornell – 36.2% and Joe Burns – 6.3%. Mr. Parker was elected as National President of the BVA.**
- **National Vice-President: Dr. Thomas Zampieri – 51.9% and Edward Eckroth – 6.7%. Dr. Zampieri was elected as National Vice-President of the BVA.**
- **National Secretary: Joe McNeil – 51.9% and Ernie Ferran – 14.5%. Mr. McNeil was elected as National Secretary of the BVA.**
- **National Treasurer: Elizabeth Holmes – 5.9% and Daniel Wallace – 56.2%. Mr. Wallace was elected as National Treasurer of the BVA.**
- **The Major General Melvin J. Maas Achievement Award for 2018 was presented to John Linder of Honolulu, Hawaii. This award is presented to the individual for his/her outstanding achievements.**
- **The David L. Schnair Volunteer Service Award for 2018 was presented to Anthony Ricci of N. Providence, Rhode Island. This award recognizes and individual for his/her extraordinary volunteer work on behalf of blinded veterans.**
- **The Irving Diener Award for 2018 was presented to Floyd Everett of Evans, Georgia. This award is presented to the individual for his/her outstanding contribution to the growth and development of their regional group.**
- **A Certificates of Appreciation was presented to Trudi Valdez from Albuquerque, New Mexico. The award recognizes individuals, groups, employers, etc., who have provided outstanding services to blinded veterans and/or to BVA at the national level.**
- **The 2018 Award of Excellence for Blind Rehabilitation Services was presented to Hines Blind Rehabilitation Center, Hines, Illinois.**

- **Dave Fox of Kettering Ohio received a service award for his years of dedicated service and commitment to our blinded veterans and their families.**
- **The Gold Gavel was presented to the Massachusetts Regional Group for having the largest numerical increase in membership for the past fiscal year.**
- **The Silver Gavel was presented to the White River Junction Regional Group for having the largest percentage increase in membership for the past fiscal year.**
- **The Bronze Gavel was presented to the Florida Regional Group for having the greatest percentage increase for non-active members that become active members.**
- **BVA's Administrative Director Brigitte Jones was recognized as employee of the year for 2018.**

Board of Director's Meeting August 12-14, 2018

- **Board approved minutes for Board of Directors' meeting held March 21-23, 2018 previously distributed by e-mail.**
- **We are doing quite well with donations for Veterans Day 2020. The event will cost around \$40,000 at Arlington cemetery. To host a reception at a nearby hotel will cost between \$150,000 to \$200,000.**
- **BVA commenced with a new financial management and accounting service in March 2018. The company name is SmithBucklin Corporation. They are based out of Chicago, Illinois, but have a local office in Washington, DC.**
- **Everyone is encouraged to start using the Roundup App. It is a program to support BVA. The app rounds up your purchase to the next**

whole dollar, and at the end of the month that change total will donate to BVA.

- **Last year the Direct Mail program did just under \$1.5 million after expenses in both fundraising and public education.**
- **The Senate sent the Marrakesh Treaty bill to the House for approval. This bill implements the Marrakesh Treaty to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled.**
- **Active membership as of August 12, 2018 was 7,397. The Affiliate Membership had a total of 22 members. Twelve were Affiliates, 8 Occupational and 2 Organizational.**
- **Board made a unanimous decision to rename the member type in the database from OIF/OEF to Global War on Terrorism.**
- **BVA received a total of 22 application packages for the 2018-19 academic years. Six winners were chosen for the Kathern F. Gruber scholarship at \$2,000 each and one for the Thomas H. Miller scholarship at \$1,000. Three alternates were also selected.**
- **Spring 2018 elections were held in Director Districts 1 and 2. Dennis O'Connell was elected in District 1 and Timothy Hornik was elected in District 2, both for a three-year term of office.**
- **Regional Group changes:**
 - **Kentuckiana Regional Group has decided to fold their regional group due to lack of interest in serving as officers of the group.**
 - **Nebraska Regional Group would like to merge with Heartland Regional Group.**

- **Maine Regional Group is interested in merging with RI & SE Mass Regional Group.**
- **Orange County Regional Group has requested to change their name to “Long Beach-Charles Register Regional Group.**
- **Board made a unanimous decision to change the name Field Service Officer (FSO) to Veteran Service Officer (VSO) in the National Office.**
- **Board made a unanimous decision to change outside Veteran Service Officer (VSO) to Volunteer Veteran Service Officer (VVSO).**

BVA NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND OFFICE

The following are current full-time and part-time BVA employees:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>
Executive Director	Joe Bogart
Administrative Director	Brigitte Jones
Administrative Assistant to Executive Director & Administrative Director	Danielle Petty
Convention Coordinator/HR Specialist	Krissi Spence-Gilbert
Bookkeeper	Yvonne Preston
Director of Government Relations	Melanie Brunson
Government Relations Assistant	Janei Holder
Chief of Public Relations	Chester Curtis
Communications & Development Assistant	Kylie Fitzgerald
Membership Coordinator	Maria Ingegneri

Receptionist	Julian Sanders
National Veterans Care Review Specialist	Wade Davis
Chief of Veteran Services	Claudia Baldwin
Veteran Service Officers: Patrick Johnson; Loreal Hamilton, Courtney Jennings, and Charles Reynolds	
Contractor for Finance	Smith-Bucklin
Corporate Fundraiser	Thomas Tobin

REGIONAL GROUPS

Currently, we have 47 active regional groups. Several groups are unstable. The Heartland Regional Group now consists of the groups, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa. Regional groups that have formed chapters, or who are planning to form chapters in the future, are reminded that it is the policy of the BVA National Board of Directors that such groups amend their bylaws to include guidelines for controlling and administering their subordinate chapters.

Notices and forms for the submission of regional group financial reports for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019 were mailed to all regional group treasurers around June 15, 2019. These reports are due at BVA National Headquarters no later than September 30, 2019. Delinquent regional groups are subject to being placed in a “NOT-IN-GOOD-STANDING” status in accordance with Section 13a and b of Article XIV (Regional Groups) of the BVA National Bylaws, as amended.

DIRECTOR DISTRICT ELECTIONS

Director District 1 Election:

Nominations for the office of Director District 1 were solicited by BVA National Headquarters memorandum dated March 16, 2018 for members in good standing residing in said district. The election is for a three-year term of office.

Member’s Dennis O’Connell (NY); Leon Collier (NY) and Warner Murray (NY) were nominated for the office of Director District 1.

Around 1,186 ballots and biographical sketches of the candidates were mailed to Members and Associate Members residing in District 1. Ballots were opened and counted on July 10, 2018. A total of 165 ballots were received at Headquarters for a .14 percent return rate. Mr. Dennis O’Connell was determined to be the winner of this election.

Director District 2 Election:

Nominations for the office of Director District 2 were solicited by BVA National Headquarters memorandum dated March 16, 2018 for members in good standing residing in said district. The election is for a three-year term of office.

Member’s David Fox (OH) and Timothy Hornik (KS) were nominated for the office of Director District 2.

Around 1,320 ballots and biographical sketches of the candidates were mailed to Members and Associate Members residing in District 2. Ballots were opened and counted on July 10, 2018. A total of 141 ballots were received at Headquarters for a .11 percent return rate. Mr. Timothy Hornik was determined to be the winner of this election.

VETERAN SERVICES

Empowering veterans with substantial vision loss through access to services, education, and support. The BVA Veteran Services Resource Center (VSRC) based in Alexandria, Virginia, is a one-stop shop for assistance for all blind veterans and Volunteer Veteran Service Officers (VVSOs) across the nation. The VSRC features a dedicated toll-free number and a dedicated VSRC fax line for VSRC staff to assist in Veterans Benefit Claims and research local and national resources for veterans.

During FY 2019, the BVA Veteran Service Officers and VVSO’s recorded grants on Veterans’ claims such as, compensation, pension, housing grants, etc., with an average payment of \$2,623 each month, and Total annual retroactive benefits are over \$4,559,144.99.

POA: BVA	May 2019	Total Awards	TOTAL AWARDS MTH Summary	TOTAL BENEFITS MTH Summary	TOTAL BENEFITS FYTD Summary	AVERAGE PAYMENT MTH Summary
Station:						
USA			\$1,725	\$4,559,144.99	\$36,976,853	\$2,643

Initial Claims Pending: 163

Claims in Appeals: 181
Court of Appeals Claim Referrals: 7
Total Training CCE Hours FY19: 13
Combined VSO Training Hours: 56
Combined VVSO Training Hours: 37

BVA Veteran Service Officers continue to work on improving systems and procedures during FY2019, some of the changes were as follows:

- **Implementation of a new spreadsheet to track annual referrals to law firms for CAVC representation.**
- **New Appeals Modernization Program in which BVA has worked tirelessly on changing our pending appeals from the old legacy system, to this new system, which is faster for our veterans, whenever it is possible to do so. Due to this new appeals system, we have less in retroactive amounts since the turn-around times are much faster.**
- **Access for appeals officers to the Case flow system for tracking of hearings at the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA).**
- **Hiring new VSOs from losing 2 VSOs. Currently, all VSRC VSOs are accredited through OGC and disabled veterans.**
- **Training continues on a monthly basis for all staff and volunteers. All material required by OGC for an audit has been covered during the past six months with VSRC VSOs and VVSOs.**
- **Training is on track with the VSRC. All VSOs have the basic training required by OGC should an audit occur. The establishment of a training folder for the perspective fiscal year, along with the training content covered in each month has been created; and a spreadsheet of continuing training hours is updated by adding new VVSOs or staff, for record keeping.**
- **All VA Regional Offices (VAROs) have been contacted and advised to mail all correspondence to our BVA Headquarters office. In the same email, I also provided our appeals officers and my contact information for any upcoming hearings.**
- **Worked on developing a Claimant Responsibilities Agreement form and an Against Advice Risk form to protect BVA from adverse actions from handling claims (this is still pending final approval).**
- **Developing a more structured Volunteer Program with resources to our new BVA VA Voluntary Services (VAVS) volunteers. I was able to get some assistance from Soldier's Angels from attending the VAVS annual conference. BVA sits on the National Advisory Committee for this and should always attend this event.**

- Gained 2 workstations at the Board of Veterans Appeals office and regained computer access for our appeal officers while still maintaining our office space at the VARO.
- VA is implementing to have video hearings using VA Video Connect, the same platform for VA Telehealth services. We will work with this new system while making sure the new system is compliant for our blinded veterans.
- Continue 508 Workgroup on an every bi-monthly meeting, to address any accessibility issues.
- Provided assessment of VA Kiosk at Washington, D. C. VAMC and shared the results with Section 508 staff.
- Attend a monthly Women Veterans meeting with the Center for Women Veterans (CWE) to address any issues with our organization and to gather resources pertaining to this particular group.
- Sent letters of appreciations for all BVA volunteers and VVSOs from Tom Zampieri.
- Attended 2019 M-Enabling Summit focusing on accessibility. Initiated contact with Apple and Amazon representatives and invited them to our BVA Convention. We were able to get new innovative tech companies and potential vendors for our annual convention.

Goals for Veteran Services to accomplish:

- Create an accessibility department – make sure BVA content is accessible for our members (Organizational action not just departmental)
- Develop a structured Volunteer Program with job descriptions and roles for volunteers, resources, and share best practices between volunteers.
- Provide Volunteer Program Information during Leadership Training at BVA convention.

In Fiscal Year 2019 the BVA had a combined total of 16 VA Representatives and VA Deputy Representatives. BVA had a total of 89 BVA VA volunteers, which donated over 11,281 hours in 60 VA medical facilities. Additionally, we have 7 VVSOs, who train along with our HQ VSOs, assisting blinded veterans in the claims process. We should have a Representative and Deputy Representative assigned in each facility working with voluntary services to create programs for Blinded veterans.

Veterans Care Review – by Wade Davis

The Veterans Care Review Partnership is a collaborative effort between

the BVA and the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to share best practices. BVA visits BRC's and VISOR clinics to evaluate the full curriculum of care for visually impaired and blind veterans and to share the findings with staff and administration to promote and expand the facility's successful procedures. This also affords a cooperative exchange to find and alleviate issues and take advantage of existing opportunities to make the facility as productive and safe as it can be for blinded veterans. BVA provides a comprehensive report to each facility and VA Central Office with written recommendations.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Over the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the Blinded Veterans Association continued moving forward from the changes of last year. While we still felt some ripples from the drastic changes of the previous fiscal year, the BVA continued marching forward striving to improve in all areas. BVA experienced changes and success in areas of fundraising, membership, Department of Veterans Affairs engagement, marketing and communications, headquarters operations, and partnerships.

Throughout the past year, the Executive Director and the Development team worked to modernize fundraising efforts. During this the HQ transitioned to new contractors for registrations, expanded social media outreach, connected with new fundraising technology and reduced our costly direct mail program expenses. These changes brought us a significant cost savings in direct mail, it still needs to grow to capture the new donor markets. Revenue efforts are engaging with major and minor corporations to grow our partnerships and supporters. As part of our development program the Executive Director and Development Team are making positive movement in donor development. This all builds the foundation continued expansion and growth of a successful and sustainable revenue stream.

In parallel with the BVA's development efforts, the marketing and communications programs are improving and growing. Last winter the new BVA website launched and while it had some bugs starting out, new capabilities have sprouted. This year, members and exhibitors could register online for the annual convention. Public Relations team members can track website visits, and see the analytics of Google searches, website visits, and social media interactions. BVA's online reputation continued to grow and improve along with our more traditional communications.

The Executive Director and the Public Relations Team attended several

events to expand awareness of the BVA through advocacy, education and brand marketing. Team members attended the AUSA Conference, NIB Conference, AFB Conference, MOPH National Convention, VSA Conferences, women veterans' seminars, Prevent Blindness events, ASUV meet and greets and numerous other events in the D.C. region and across the country.

This past year saw a change in the bulletin production which resulted in an improved product, more articles, and a reduced cost. These improvements are growing into the newsletter as well as personal interactions. BVA's influence continued to positively affect other Veteran Service Organizations, civilian Blind and Visually Impaired organizations, government organizations, national and international blind and visually impaired organizations and with American Blinded Veterans. BVA Headquarters Team members advanced the cause and issues affecting the blind and visually impaired by bridging the Veteran and Blind/Visually Impaired champions and leading the efforts.

The Executive Director grew the BVA's influence with the Vision Serve Alliance and improved awareness of the programs available to all veterans with vision loss as well as support for any veterans not receiving VA benefits, like Veterans of the National Guard. The BVA's international presence grew with the World Blind Union by raising awareness of other Blinded Veterans around the world that may not have the support systems common in the U.S., U.K., Canada and other more developed countries. The Executive Director broke the ice with our Canadian friends to begin identifying any Blind Canadian Veterans that could benefit from Project Gemini with the U.K. and South African Blinded Veterans.

This past spring, BVA was inducted into The Military Coalition to represent the Blinded Veteran by providing our subject matter expertise on eyesight issues. We have already provided key insight into the services key to both veterans and currently serving military in the area of ophthalmology and optometry to assist in bigger picture advocacy along with the Big Six and all the other military and Veterans Organizations.

BVA lead efforts to clarify and provide specific language for Blinded Veterans to receive Special Mode Transportation from VA facilities provided it. This spring, Niki Sandlan, Director BRS, finally received the final copy of the VA Policy Memo and shared it with BVA. Headquarters directly and indirectly assisted, coached and mentored countless blinded veterans with claims, appeals, state and federal benefits, accessibility, discrimination issues, and peer support. The BVA worked directly with the VA Deputy Secretary to finally

identify the problem and begin developing a lasting solution to claims and benefit notifications. And worked with the VA and technology companies to improve assistive technology availability to the blinded veteran through Blind Rehabilitation Services. Needs assessments and issuing of head mounted devices continued to improve over the past year. While the BVA saw an increased collaboration between the BVA and the VA's BRS to identify successes, needed improvements and opportunities to expand services.

Membership remained fairly steady through the past year, while BVA worked to improve member benefits. Opportunities to seek out discounts above the normal veteran discount or to expand to families arose, and the Executive Director worked to secure them. While they are not final at this time, the foundations are laid, and discussions are transitioning into written agreements. These relationships could result in connections to some reliable revenue sources as well.

The Executive Director presented the BVA Board of Directors with a 2019-2020 budget for approval in March at the Mid-Winter Board meeting. This was a big win for the BVA because the Headquarters could now operate on a board approved budget at the beginning of the fiscal year. While this budget still needs Membership ratification at the national convention the BVA scored a major win for efficiency.

During that meeting, the Board conducted the first steps in developing a new strategic plan and gave the Executive Director top priorities for the next six months. Those priorities refined into four lines of effort of develop sustainable revenue, communicate to stakeholders, advocacy and education and grow engaged membership. While this was only the first step in the process, the Executive Director found a Strategic Planning Facilitator with BOSMA Enterprises. BOSMA committed to sponsoring the strategic planning process to free up some of the workload from the Executive Director. The new process began the beginning of FY 2019-2020. The next phases will include the Board, BVA Headquarters and the BVA membership.

During the past year the BVA attended the Veterans Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery and was represented by the BVA President Joe Parker, and with Michaun Harrison and James Baldwin as Color Guards. At Memorial Day, BVA President Dr. Thomas Zampieri represented the BVA with Michaun Harrison and Chester Curtis serving as color guards.

The final change for the BVA going forward was the purchase of a new

property for the BVA Headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia. This purchase was below the amount set aside in the building fund and place the Headquarters at a prominent location in a new building. The final move to the new

headquarters will occur in late September or early October and give another boost to the forward momentum of this organization.

Since last year, the BVA Headquarters staff has seen staff changes. The Veteran Services Resource Center bid farewell to Thedra Thornhill-Johnson and welcomed Ms. Courtney Jennings, Ms. Loreal Hamilton and Mr. Charles Reynolds. Cecilia Montenegro resigned as Membership Coordinator and Maria Ingegneri assumed the duties. James Lewiski resigned from the BVA this past spring. Longtime BVA team member that virtually grew up in our organization Lindsay Ruais resigned last winter to seek government employment. In her place the Headquarters welcomed Danielle Petty as Administrative and Executive Assistant and Kylie Fitzgerald as Development and Communications Assistant. Last winter Janei Holder joined the BVA Team as the Government Relations Assistant to aid both the Director of Government Relations and Chief of Veteran Services in their needs. And as all, as last year's convention neared, Dawn Jakutowicz resigned as Convention Coordinator last July and Krissi Spence-Gilbert stepped up to assume this important role.

During the coming year the Headquarters plans to add in a Chief of Staff to lighten the daily operational load from the Executive and Administrative Directors. Additionally, in June Melanie Brunson submitted her resignation effective the end of August, 2019 to seek retirement. Therefore, the BVA Headquarters will be conducting hiring to fill the much-needed Director of Government Relations.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The months since our last report in March have been very busy. The government relations agenda has a number of issues on it this year, covering a wide range of topics. Here are some of the highlights. In addition to our testimony at the joint House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee in March, BVA has been invited to provide testimony at two additional hearings so far this year. On May 1, we submitted written testimony regarding a number of bills that were under consideration by the House Veterans Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, as well as oral testimony that focused on H.R.1199, the VA Website Accessibility Act. Melanie Brunson gave the oral testimony and answered questions from subcommittee

members during the hearing.

On May 22, the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee invited us to submit a written statement for the record of their hearing on the Senate version of this bill, S.647. We were pleased to support both bills, as a first step in raising the profile of Section 508 compliance throughout the VA, and we are hopeful that this legislation will pass both houses early in this Congress.

BVA has also endorsed a number of House and Senate bills that have been introduced this year. Senator Jon Tester of Montana has introduced a number of bills covering topics such as improved health care for women veterans, enhancements to VA's mental health and suicide prevention program, and increasing access to transportation options for veterans living in rural areas, and we have endorsed these. We are also supporting efforts by members of the House from both parties to create a registry of veterans exposed to toxic substances from open burn pits, and expand eligibility for benefits for those veterans, as well as legislation introduced by Rep. Julia Brownley of California to expand eligibility for coverage of dental care by VA to all veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. Additionally, we are supporting legislation to allow concurrent receipt of military retirement and veterans pensions. This is not an all-inclusive list, but it illustrates the range of legislative issues we are tracking currently.

As I write, we are also involved in negotiations with staff of the House Veterans Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity regarding proposed changes to the Specially Adapted Housing Grant program that would make it easier for blinded veterans to qualify. Dr. Zampieri and I met with the director of this program last week and are happy to report that he seemed sympathetic to our concerns about the lack of benefit from this program for BVA members. He expressed an interest in trying to fix the problem through regulatory changes, but in the meantime, the House Committee has decided to take up the matter as well and has a legislative fix under consideration. We will update you on the outcome of these discussions when we meet in Tulsa, if not before.

On the VA side of things, we continue to hold regular conference calls with staff and contractors from VA's Section 508 Compliance Office. Both Claudia Baldwin and Melanie Brunson participate in these meetings, and their purpose is to identify accessibility barriers that have come to our attention and receive continuing status reports on VA's efforts to address them, until such

time as they are resolved. . Participants from the Section 508 Compliance office have been very responsive. Although issues remain, we continue to have a good working relationship with this office and a number of improvements to VA websites have been made. It is our hope that we will soon begin seeing fewer issues to bring to their attention, as they get better at identifying them before things roll out rather than waiting for us to point them out afterwards.

We also regularly remind both the VA and Congress of the need to begin taking steps to give VA the capability to produce documents in accessible formats for veterans, as well as for VA employees, who cannot read traditional print. Unfortunately, there has been quite a bit of turnover among personnel in the VA Office of Information Technology, including the senior leadership positions, and that has impacted the office's work on this issue. However, we are optimistic that some progress is being made. This optimism has been fueled somewhat by VA's recent response to our request for a follow-up meeting with the team that was tasked by the Deputy Secretary, Jim Byrne, with implementing an alternate-format communication policy for the VA. A meeting has been scheduled for mid-July to update us on the status of the team's work, so we hope to have more details to share with you at the convention in Tulsa.

Speaking of collaboration with VA, we were very pleased to receive the news a few weeks back that VA has finally issued a guidance memo clarifying the circumstances under which blinded veterans are eligible to use VA's Special Mode Transportation Service, or other transportation services provided by VA medical centers within their local areas. We are helping to spread the word, but we recognize that getting the information to everyone throughout the organization who needs it can take some time. Nonetheless, we are hopeful that we will begin to see some easing of the hardships many veterans face, as a result of the availability of access to more transportation options.

Meanwhile, we continue to lobby Congress on behalf of legislation that would permanently authorize these transportation programs and create incentives for medical centers to participate in them. Senator Tester's rural transportation bill goes a long way toward addressing these issues by permanently authorizing the Special Mode Transportation program.

BVA staff members have expanded our participation in coalitions with other Veteran Service Organizations and disability rights organizations this

year. For the first time, BVA is now a member of The Military Coalition.

Apparently, we joined this coalition at an opportune time. One of the issues that members of this coalition are very active on right now concerns the major reductions in medical personnel with expertise in specialty areas, such as eye trauma and traumatic brain injury, that are being proposed by the Pentagon and the White House. It is our understanding that these cuts would affect all services, and their impact would be felt not only in the U.S., but they could have a very negative impact on the quality of healthcare that service members receive following combat-related injuries. You will very likely hear more about this issue in Tulsa.

BVA has also joined the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), a coalition of both national organizations of people who have disabilities, and organizations that provide services to disabled people. Much of this coalition's business is conducted by taskforces, and BVA has joined the Veterans Issues Taskforce. During our first meeting, the members of this taskforce voted to write a letter of support for BVA's efforts to obtain a funding increase for DoD's Vision Research Program from \$10 million to \$25 million for the next fiscal year. Needless to say, this was an auspicious start to our participation in this group, and we look forward to working with them in the years ahead.

The letter from the CCD Veterans Issues Taskforce was a welcome addition to our ongoing work with the National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR), the American Optometric Association (AOA) and the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) in support of a programmatic request for an increase in funding for the Department of Defense Vision Research Program from \$10 million to \$25 million. The House appropriations bill gives the program \$20 million, and the Senate appropriators are still working on their bill. We are hopeful that we can get the funding level increased to the much needed \$25 million in the Senate bill, and that the larger amount will be agreed to by both chambers in the weeks ahead.

Another issue that we have been working on in coalition with other veteran service organizations and disability organizations, concerns access issues for people with disabilities when they travel on airplanes. We are part of a coalition of national organizations working with both officials from the U.S. Department of Transportation, and members of Congress to advocate for a major update of the Air Carriers Access Act. This is the law that covers the obligations of airlines to accommodate passengers who have disabilities.

Comprehensive legislation that would make a variety of updates to this law was introduced by Senator Tammy Baldwin earlier this year, based on suggestions from this group. We have also been meeting with officials from airlines individually to educate them about our concerns. The group meets monthly at PVA headquarters.

Melanie Brunson still continues serving as Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University. This committee has another year and a half of work ahead. Our work this year has included an in-person meeting at Mississippi State in March, as well as quarterly conference calls on the status of the research projects funded by the Center's current federal grant. There are six such research projects under way related to various aspects of blind rehabilitation. The work appears to be going well and we anticipate some useful information will come out of this research once these projects are completed.

Finally, this past year, Melanie had the privilege of representing BVA on a committee to review applications for the Library of the Year awards that are given each year by the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled. Each year, one regional and one sub-regional library are recognized for their outstanding service to blind and disabled patrons. Applications are first reviewed by a committee made up of representatives of the national organizations of the blind, along with representatives of the American Library Association. The committee selects two finalists for each category, and those are passed on to the National Library Service which selects the award winners. It was fun to be a part of this process for each of the past three years. The winners this year were the Carnegie Talking Book Library in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and the Talking Book Library in Staunton, Virginia.

We will continue to provide updates on all this work as they become available. As always, please let us know if you have questions, or if you think we should be covering something that we have failed to mention in this report. We value your feedback.

CHIEF OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Bulletin: In March 2019, BVA switched Printers from Lewis Direct to Karen Designs for design work, and to Master Print for printing services. Costs to produce the Bulletin went down from \$3,000 to \$875 for design and

from \$10,000 to \$4,000 for printing; a total savings of \$8,000 per issue. Each issue of the Bulletin since has increased to 36 pages from 28 pages; this is due to the staff additions of Kylie Fitzgerald and Danielle Petty. The Bulletin has increased articles and photos, and has a newer cover design. The BVA "Bulletin" is a bi-monthly publication with 6,300 copies printed. It averages between 28-36 pages. It comes in several formats: Word, PDF, website, and CD (200 copies per issue). CDs are produced at a cost of \$900. The goal to publish the Bulletin prior to the issue date has been met the last two issues. MP has a turnaround of two days from printing to mailing.

Social Media: BVA, in partnership with Eastmain, has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and is just starting Instagram. Facebook likes have increased from 5,170 to 5,251 in March 2019 and 5,040 to 5,630 followers as of July 2019; Twitter is at 3,200 followers and LinkedIn is at 323 followers. Social media posts are scheduled automatically in advance by use of an Airtable. This has resulted in increased likes, followers, and traffic to our website. Going forward, Eastmain will operate our Social media Platforms on a month to month basis to supplement staff input. Social media posts are scheduled strategically based on the best amounts for each platform and the best times for each platform. Ideally, we schedule 1-4 Facebook posts a day, 1-2 for Instagram, 1-13 for Twitter, and 1 for LinkedIn, all posted during working hours. We have implemented the use of hashtags across all platforms to get our posts seen by more people than who follow us. The combination of strategically posted content and using popular hashtags has increased page views, likes, and follows across all platforms.

Website: In October 2018, we contracted with Eastmain, Inc. to create our website, and to maintain it for one year. This allows us to update the website with ease while we learn how to maintain and make changes to the site at the staff level. The goal is to update all 50 regional group sites using National as the template. Under our News section, we have implemented a blog, in order to encourage communication between headquarters, our members, other VSOs, and other organizations. We plan to post and discuss important topics, news, fun facts, real-time and upcoming events. Some blog topics that will always be relevant throughout the year, but are broad - facts and statistics about blinded veterans, how brain trauma can affect eyesight, military facts, an explanation of what tools are used in the blind community and how they work (braille, walking stick, computer programs, etc). Upcoming events would be a World Sight Day and the meaning behind it, White Cane Awareness Day, Veterans Day blogs and elaborating on them. About 95% of

visitors to the BVA website are new users – people who have never visited the site before; this means that our efforts in using Search Engine Optimization and social media reach are working. More and new people are finding the website.

Podcasts: We plan on conducting several podcasts at the BVA Convention in Tulsa, OK. And then schedule Podcasts on a regular basis.

Staff: In March, we hired Kylie FitzGerald as the Communications and Development Assistant, and Danielle Petty, as the Executive/Communications/Administrative Assistant.

Newsletters: We distribute our newsletter at the end of the month. We switched from Vertical Response as our newsletter mailer to MailChimp. MailChimp is free, easier to use, and more aesthetically pleasing. We have received positive feedback that the MailChimp format is more screen reader friendly. When using Vertical Response, we were sending out 3,600 emails with an open rate of 20%, which is an average open rate. Since moving to MailChimp, we send 2,600 emails, but with a 31% open rate and 89% of the email addresses reported as good.

Miscellaneous: We have submitted, in the 2020 budget proposal, for a BVA promo video and public service announcements to better highlight the work of BVA.

KATHERN F. GRUBER AND THOMAS H. MILLER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Blinded Veterans Association awards seven (7) scholarships each year. There are six (6) scholarships for \$2,000 each available through the Kathern F. Gruber Scholarship Program and one (1) for \$1,000 offered through the Thomas H. Miller Scholarship Program.

The scholarships are open to dependent children, grandchildren and spouses of blinded veterans to include Active Duty blinded service members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The blindness may either be service-connected or non-service-connected and membership in BVA is not a prerequisite. A BVA Scholarship Committee comprised of three volunteers, none of whom is a blinded veteran, reviews the scholarship applications and chooses the seven primary recipients based on “best qualified”. The Committee also selects three alternates.

EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE

We purchased four computer packages and two laptops. The computers were issued to the social Media Specialist; HR Specialist; Administrative Assistant and the Bookkeeper. The laptops were issued to the Director of Government Relations and in the Resource Center. In addition, we purchased two monitors. There was no new furniture purchased during this fiscal year.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

From an investment and reserves standpoint, BVA's remains in a stable financial position for FY19. The investment balance at Morgan Stanley for BVA sits at \$9.6M. This is broken out with \$8.5M in BVA's General Investment Fund and \$1.1M in the Life Membership Fund. Cash flow for BVA is in a healthy state as the association collected multiple bequest payments in the five to six figures range from promises that were recorded in prior fiscal years. Because of the healthy cash flow streams, BVA withdrew only \$300K from the General Investment Fund. This amount is \$300K less than the \$600K withdrawn in FY18.

For FY19, BVA is currently reporting an operating deficit of (\$554K). In comparison to FY18, BVA has managed to cut its operating deficit by \$234K. Non-operating activity consisting of investment portfolio performance and depreciation is reporting a surplus of \$498K. BVA's overall bottom line is reporting a deficit of (\$56K). The overall bottom line is showing an improvement of \$192K when comparing FY19 to FY18. BVA is continuing to look at ways to increase fundraising revenue and cut expenses as they move into FY20.

The annual BVA audited financial statement for FY 2019 and the approved budget for FY 2020 will be appended to the hard-copy edition of the convention report as Appendix B and the approved Budget for FY 2020 as Appendix C after approval.

CONCLUSION

Given the numerous changes that have been made within BVA Headquarters over this past fiscal year, the National Board of Directors has continued to provide sound financial management and has been acting very

prudent and responsible in their decision making and oversight since the adjournment of BVA's 73rd National Convention. Your National Board of Directors deeply appreciates the support of the membership along with the National Headquarters staff and looks forward to serving you during the coming year.

For the National Board of Directors,

**Dr. Thomas Zampieri
National President and
Chairman of the Board**

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APPENDICES:

- A - Membership Statistics**
- B - Audited Financial Statement for FY 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019)**
- C - Approved Budget for FY- 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020)**
- D - Composition of six Director Districts**