



Full Throttle Forward to St. Louis Convention

Official Convention Letter

Pursuant to the provisions of Article IX Section 3 of the National Bylaws, all members of the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) are hereby notified that the 78th National Convention will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Grand, 800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101, from Monday, August 14, through Friday, August 18, 2023.

The following details are important for attendees to begin planning their trips and weeklong stays in St. Louis, Missouri.

Registration Information

BVA members and guests can register and pay online at <https://bva.org/national-convention/>, or by contacting Meredith Buono-DaGrossa by email at mbuonodagrossa@bva.org, or by telephone at 202-371-8880, Ext. 304. The deadline to pre-register is July 21, 2023, at 5:00pm (ET).

Hotel Information

The BVA room rate at the Marriott St. Louis Grand is \$126.00 per night (plus tax). The hotel offers complimentary standard Wi-Fi in guest rooms for all Marriott Bonvoy Members, refrigerators in each room, and use of the well-equipped fitness center.

Convention attendees can enjoy breakfast at the 8th Street Pantry, the onsite full-service Starbucks®, or at Zenia Bar & Grille (featuring contemporary American cuisine and cocktails).

You can reserve your hotel room online at <https://book.passkey.com/e/50368736>, or by telephone at 877-303-0104 (please reference code "BLINDED VETS BVA"). The hotel will honor the special BVA room rate from August 10-19, 2023 (reservations must be made prior to July 21, 2023).

Travel Information

For travel assistance, please contact Brenda K. McDaniel, Independent Travel Consultant and daughter of a BVA member, by email at brenda_mcdaniel@sbcglobal.net, or by telephone at 915-204-0101 (between 11:00am and 6:30pm (ET)).

Proposed Convention Highlights

Monday, August 14

- Registration
- Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge
- Riverboat Cruise with 3-Course Dinner (\$5 offsite registration fee)

Tuesday, August 15

- Exhibitor and BVA Member Breakfast
- Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge
- Exhibit Hall Opens
- Exhibit Hall Bingo
- Missouri Botanical Gardens (morning) and Anheuser-Busch Brewery (afternoon) Tours (\$5 offsite registration fee each)
- President's Reception Dinner

Wednesday, August 16

- Ambassador Ceremony/Coffee
- Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge
- Exhibit Hall
- Exhibit Hall Bingo
- Opening Session
- Business Meetings
- Lunch and Learn
- Special Interest Group Meetings
- Bowling and Dinner at Flamingo Bowl (\$5 offsite registration fee)

Thursday, August 17

- General Session
- Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge
- Father Carroll Luncheon
- District Caucus Meetings
- Explore St. Louis (on your own)

Friday, August 18

- Closing Business Meeting
- Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge
- Reception and Awards Banquet

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the member cancellation policy?

Fully refundable registration cancellations will be honored through July 21, 2023 at 5:00pm (ET).

How do I sign up for offsite events, tours, and activities?

You can register and pay online at <https://bva.org/national-convention/offsite-activities/registration/>, or at the convention registration desk. All offsite activities have a non-refundable \$5 registration fee.

Will the offsite activity buses be wheelchair accessible?

Yes. Please contact Meredith to ensure that BVA is aware of your need for wheelchair accommodations.

Will someone meet me at the airport/train station?

Yes. Volunteers will be available to assist BVA members and guests at the airport.

Is there a shuttle from the airport to the hotel?

No. Members should plan to use a taxi or rideshare service for travel to and from the airport and hotel at their own expense.

Do the hotel rooms have refrigerators for my medications?

Yes. All rooms are equipped with a small refrigerator.

What dining options are available at the hotel?

The hotel has an onsite restaurant with breakfast, lunch, and dinner options.

Will there be a hospitality suite?

Yes. Hospitality suite hours will be available at the hotel.

Is there a dog relief area?

Yes! New this year is the addition of a Service Dog Bow Wow Lounge serving as a respite area for our canine heroes.

What is the plan in the event of a fire drill or emergency?

Volunteers and hotel staff will orient members to the emergency exits, stairwells, and assembly areas near their rooms. Any further questions can be answered at the convention.

Can my regional group still advertise in the convention program?

Yes! We encourage it! BVA Regional Groups and Chapters can advertise by contacting Meredith and providing their full-page or half-page ad NO LATER THAN June 20, 2023. Payment must be received at the time of commitment. The regional group discounted price for a full-page ad is \$100 and a half-page ad is \$50.

What meals are included in my registration fee?

- Monday evening Riverboat Cruise (dinner)
- Tuesday morning Exhibitor and BVA Member Breakfast (breakfast)
- Tuesday afternoon Lunch and Learn (lunch)
- Tuesday evening President's Reception Dinner (dinner)
- Wednesday afternoon Lunch and Learn (lunch)
- Wednesday evening Bowling and Dinner (dinner)
- Thursday afternoon Father Carroll Luncheon (lunch)
- Friday evening Awards Reception and Banquet (dinner)

What if I have additional questions?

For other questions or concerns, please contact Meredith. We are excited to celebrate with you in St. Louis, Missouri!

Important Deadlines

- June 16—Proposed bylaw amendments must be received at BVA National Headquarters (emailed or postmarked by the date indicated).
- July 6—Regional group meeting notices to elect convention delegates sent to regional group members and BVA National Headquarters (emailed or postmarked by the date indicated).
- July 17—Proposed bylaw amendments emailed and posted to BVA website (mailed upon special request).
- July 25—Delegate credential and proxy forms must be received at BVA National Headquarters (emailed or postmarked by the date indicated).