



BVA 79TH NATIONAL 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 Association's **79th National Convention** will be held at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, 225 East Coastline Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32204, **from Sunday, July 7 through Wednesday, July 10, 2024**. BVA is partnering with the American Council of the Blind (ACB) in hosting this historic gathering. ACB will host offsite tours for interested convention attendees from July 5-12, 2024.

The following details are important for attendees to begin planning their trips and stays in Jacksonville.

Registration Information

BVA members and guests can register and pay online at <https://bva.org/national-convention/>. Alternatively, members and guests can register by calling 202-371-8880 and speaking with the National Administrative Coordinator or the National Membership Coordinator, or by emailing membership@BVA.org. The deadline to register for the convention itself is June 20, 2024. Although the registration deadline is June 20, BVA National Headquarters highly encourages members to register by the end of April to ensure accurate counts on t-shirts, meals, etc. Due to manpower limitations, if you require special assistance of a caregiver, you will be required to make those arrangements and register them as a guest.

Hotel Information

The BVA room rate at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront starts at \$99.00 per night (plus 14.64 percent tax). The hotel offers complimentary standard Wi-Fi in guest rooms and social spaces, refrigerators in each room, and use of the heated outdoor pool and 24-hour fitness center. The hotel will authorize a one-time \$50 charge for the entire stay. Each attendee will need to supply a credit or debit card for the room. The card will not be charged but authorized only for that amount. In the case of a debit card, the funds will be held by the bank until after the guest checks out if the amount in full is not used.

You can reserve your hotel room online [here](#) or call (800) 233-1234 and use Code G-ACOB. To receive the group rate, you must register prior to June 10, 2024.

Dining options include the Market, SHOR Seafood Grill, TAVERN, and Morton's The Steakhouse.

Hotel Parking

Self-parking at the hotel is \$15 per day. This fee includes day, overnight, and in/out privileges. The garage is on Newnan Street.

Transportation to the Hotel

Please note that a shuttle will not be provided. You will be required to arrange transportation to and from the airport. When you finalize your travel plans, please send your itinerary to Margarine Beaman at oleo501625@outlook.com, who will be assisting with navigation to the best of her ability. For more additional transportation options, visit the [National Convention](#) page.

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 Eastern Time).

Schedule of Events (subject to change)

Sunday, July 7, 2024

- 8:30am-5:00pm – BVA VSP Office
- 9:00am-5:00pm – BVA Registration Open
- 9:00am-5:00pm – Bow Wow Lounge (**Sponsored by Waymo**)
- 9:00am-5:00pm – Exhibit Hall Open
- 7:00pm-8:00pm – 79th National Convention Joint Opening Ceremony (**BVA/ACB**)

Monday, July 8, 2024

- 8:00am-9:00am – BVA Registration Open
- 8:30am-5:00pm – BVA VSP Office
- 9:00am-5:00pm – Bow Wow Lounge (**Sponsored by Waymo**)
- 9:00am-11:30am – BVA Opening Business Meeting
- 9:00am-11:30am – BVA Auxiliary Opening Business Meeting
- 11:00am-5:00pm – Exhibit Hall Open
- 1:00pm-3:00pm – Bylaws and Resolutions Meeting
- 1:00pm-3:00pm – BVA Auxiliary Committee Meetings
- 3:00pm-3:15pm – Break
- 3:15pm-4:15pm – Town Hall (**Blind Rehabilitation Service**)
Speaker: Nicole L. Sandlan, National Program Director
- 4:15pm-5:00pm – Break
- 5:00pm-6:00pm – BVA Gala Happy Hour
- 6:00pm-9:00pm – BVA Gala Reception

Tuesday, July 9, 2024

- 7:30am-8:45am – BVA Ambassador Recognition Ceremony
(**Sponsored by OrCam Technologies**)
- 8:30am-5:00pm – BVA VSP Office
- 9:00am-5:00pm – Bow Wow Lounge (**Sponsored by Waymo**)

- 9:00am-10:00am – BVA Board of Directors’ Membership Open Forum
- 9:00am-10:00am – BVA Auxiliary New Business Meeting
- 10:15am-11:30am –Team BVA Outreach Teams Panel
- 11:00am-5:00pm – Exhibit Hall Open
- 12:00pm-2:00pm – Father Carroll Luncheon and Awards Ceremony
(Sponsored by Dot, Inc.)
Keynote Speaker: Corporal Matthew R. Bradford, USMC (RET)
- 3:00pm-6:00pm – BVA Closing Business Meeting
- 3:00pm-6:00pm – BVA Auxiliary Speaker: **Barbara Webb, Dole Caregiver Fellow, Elizabeth Dole Foundation, Caring for Military Families**
Tricky Tray Winners Announced
- 6:00pm-7:00pm – Break
- 7:00pm-TBA – Florida Regional Group 50th Anniversary Celebration

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

- 8:00am-10:00am – BVA/BVA Auxiliary National Board of Directors Breakfast/Business Meeting
- 9:00am-1:00pm – Exhibit Hall Open

Member Voting Options

Every member shall be eligible to attend and participate in all meetings of the convention and shall be entitled to one (1) vote when present at meetings, or by proxy when absent.

- If not present or voting by proxy, the vote of the member shall be cast by their elected delegate, if any. The proxy must be a member.
- The [official National Headquarters Proxy Form](#) shall be the only proxy form recognized.
- Proxy forms must be accepted and validated by headquarters to be counted.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the member cancellation policy?

Fully refundable registration cancellations will be honored through June 21, 2024 at 5:00pm Eastern Time.

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

Offsite tours are managed by ACB and not BVA. Additional information can be found on ACB’s website at acbconvention.org. For any offsite tour questions, you may also contact Janet Dickelman, ACB Convention Chair, at (651) 428-5059 or via email at janet.dickelman@gmail.com.

Will someone meet me at the airport/train station?

Volunteers may be available to assist BVA members and guests at the airport. When you finalize your travel plans, please send your itinerary to Margarine Beaman at oleo501625@outlook.com, who will be assisting with navigation with the assistance of available volunteers.

Is there a shuttle from the airport to the hotel?

No. Members should plan to use an Uber or Lyft to and from the airport at their own expense. A taxi is more expensive. ADA transportation is also available with information located [here](#).

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 onsite restaurants with breakfast, lunch, and dinner options.

Is there a dog relief area?

Yes! ScoopMasters will provide and maintain our dog relief areas. If you would like to preorder dog food to be delivered to your hotel room, call Tim Stone at (661) 714-0749 or order online [here](#). Food must be ordered by June 20, 2024 to ensure delivery. Also, back by “popular” demand, the Bow Wow Lounge sponsored by Waymo will serve as a respite area for our canine heroes throughout the convention.

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.

What meals are included in my registration fee?

Monday- Dinner at the Gala

Tuesday- Afternoon lunch at the Father Carroll Luncheon and Awards Ceremony

What if I have additional questions?

If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact your District Director, National Administrative Coordinator, or National Membership Coordinator, or by emailing membership@BVA.org. We are excited to celebrate with you in Jacksonville.

Important Deadlines

- May 9 — Proposed bylaw amendments must be received by BVA National Headquarters. Amendments should be emailed to membership@bva.org
- June 8 — Proposed bylaw amendments will be posted at BVA.org.
- June 10 — Final date to reserve a room at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront using the group code.
- June 20 — Submission deadline for convention registration, delegate credentials, and proxy forms.
- June 27 — Virtual rules and credential meeting.