



Washington Metropolitan Area Convention

September 3–6, 2016

For its 2016 Annual Convention, the ERA will return to the Washington metropolitan area this Labor Day weekend after an absence of almost 30 years when the 1987 convention was held in Baltimore. From our convention headquarters at the **Crystal City Marriott** in Arlington's Crystal City neighborhood, we'll visit numerous rail-related sites in and around Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Norfolk, Virginia.

Our convention will feature day trips on the new DC Streetcar, expected to open in the first half of this year, the 11.7-mile Washington Metro Silver Line extension into Virginia, opened in 2014, ERA's first visit to Norfolk's 7.4-mile Tide Light Rail, opened in 2011, rides on the Baltimore Light Rail, the MARC Camden Line commuter rail and the Virginia Railway Express commuter rail, and visits to the well regarded Baltimore Streetcar Museum and National Capital Trolley Museum, both helping to preserve the Chesapeake region's traction heritage.

Since 1987, Washington has become the nation's seventh largest metropolitan area. The Washington Metro has grown to 117 miles and over 700,000 passengers per day, making it the nation's second largest and busiest heavy rail rapid transit line, surpassed only by New York City's sprawling subway system. However, the greater Washington area offers more than just being the major heavy rail, light rail and commuter rail hub that is the convention's focus. There's an astounding array of non-rail activities to enjoy such as sightseeing, museum hopping and shopping opportunities such as:

1. **Touring or shopping** in historic and elegant neighborhoods such as Georgetown, Dupont Circle and Embassy Row;
2. **Sightseeing** at the nine famous presidential and war memorials on the Mall, the White House, the Capitol, Arlington National Cemetery, the 17 world-class Smithsonian museums (including the large transportation collections at the National Museum of American History and the National Air and Space Museum);
3. **World-class shopping** at the 170-store Fashion Center at Pentagon City Mall one Metro stop away, iconic Union Station, shopping at Bloomingdales, Neiman Marcus, two Saks Fifth Avenues and countless other upscale stores on Connecticut Avenue in Friendship Heights or the 2.2 million square foot Tysons Corner Center mall with 300 stores on the new Washington Metro Silver Line;
4. **Sports**, including baseball at RFK Stadium, hiking on the C&O Canal Trail in Georgetown; and
5. **Nightlife** in the U Street area.

The region is served by three airports, one within minutes of our hotel, and extensive Amtrak and intercity bus service from virtually all directions into the spectacular 1907 Union Station. This is another fun-packed ERA convention you will not want to miss!



Convention Headquarters

Crystal City Marriott

1999 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia 22202
<https://goo.gl/DuHbFA>

Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport will be our convention headquarters and the site of our 2016 Annual Banquet. This contemporary hotel is situated in Arlington's Crystal City neighborhood, one of America's earliest and most developed high-density "urban villages" that sprung up beginning in the 1960s. The hotel is less than a five-minute walk through bustling, climate-controlled underground walkways to the more than 120 convenience stores of the Crystal City Shops, including national chain restaurants and most importantly, the Crystal City Metro station on the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority's (WMATA) Blue and Yellow Metro lines. From Crystal City Station, most tourist sites previously mentioned are only 15 to 30 minutes away by Metro.

The ERA has secured a block of rooms at the discounted rate of \$115 plus 13% sales tax per room per night (with one king bed or two double beds) available for the nights of September 3, 4 and 5, with checkout on September 6 (plus three days before and after these dates, at hotel's discretion based on availability).

Hotel amenities in our ERA package include:

- Hotel check-in is at 4:00 p.m.; checkout is at noon
- Complimentary breakfast buffet for one or two guests per room is from 6:30–10:30 a.m. each day (an \$18 per person value exclusive of tax and service charges)
- Complimentary Wi-Fi in guestrooms (an ERA contracted value of \$12.95 per day)
- Complimentary Wi-Fi in the lobby and public areas (excluding meeting rooms)
- Onsite parking fee available: \$8 hourly, \$26 daily; valet parking fee \$30 daily
- **Smoke-free policy: This hotel is 100% smoke-free in both guest rooms and common areas**
- Pet policy: No pets allowed
- Fitness center
- Indoor swimming pool
- Complimentary hotel shuttle to and from Reagan National Airport (see Logistics for details)
- One stop from Reagan National Airport on Washington Metro

Book your reservation either by calling Marriott national reservations at **800-228-9290** or the Crystal City Marriott (Arlington, Va.) at **703-413-5500** (ask for "reservations"). Mention the "**group reservation under the Electric Railroaders' Association**" room block when calling to get the \$115 per night room rate. You can also book online using the special link provided on the last page of this flyer that contains hotel reservation instructions.

The cut-off date for reservations is July 21, 2016 OR when our room block has been fully booked, whichever occurs earlier. Reservations booked after July 21 will be accepted by the Crystal City Marriott at the discounted ERA rate at the hotel's discretion based on availability. So don't be disappointed and miss out on the discount! **If you think you're going, don't delay, book today!**



Itinerary

Saturday, September 3

Arrive early! Then join us at the Crystal City Marriott for a slideshow by Jerry Kelly of the Baltimore Streetcar Museum, one of museum visits planned during this convention. Jerry will provide an overview of the history of the museum and Baltimore traction. Doors open at 7:45 p.m. with a brief welcome by the ERA board of directors followed by our featured program.

Sunday, September 4

Our chartered motor coaches will leave the hotel at **8:00 a.m. sharp** headed for Norfolk, Virginia. We will arrive shortly before lunch and stop at the MacArthur Center Mall in downtown Norfolk. The mall hosts 140 stores and an extensive food court for lunch. Our main objective is to ride the Tide Light Rail below.

- **MacArthur Center** – We will arrive shortly before lunch and stop at the MacArthur Center mall in downtown Norfolk. The mall hosts 140 stores and an extensive food court for lunch. After eating, our main objective will be to ride The Tide.
- **The Tide** (Norfolk, Va.) – Your fare for the day includes a day pass for The Tide, Hampton Roads Transit's new light rail line. The Tide stops right outside the MacArthur Center and travels 7.4 miles between Eastern Virginia Medical Center and Newton Road at the border of Virginia Beach. We will request escort with Hampton Roads staff to point out features of the line. The line is served by a fleet of Siemens S70 light rail vehicles and has connections to Hamptons Roads Transit buses at all stops.
- **Dinner and Return** – At around 4:00 p.m., we will be picked up by our chartered motor coaches and return to the hotel, with a dinner stop en-route. We should be back at the hotel by 9:00 p.m.

Monday, September 5

We will leave the hotel at **8:00 a.m.** via chartered motor coaches for our first two stops:

- **National Capital Trolley Museum** (Colesville, Md.) – Incorporated in 1959, this museum has six cars from the D.C. area ranging from a 1898 car to a PCC. It features an international fleet of cars from Berlin, Düsseldorf, The Hague, Toronto, New York City, Brussels and Blackpool. We plan to charter cars to ride and for the enjoyment of members.
- **Lunch at Union Station** (Washington, D.C.) – We will be dropped off at Union Station for our lunch stop. Union Station is a Beaux-Arts national historic landmark conceived by famous master architect Daniel Burnham (who also designed the Mall). It opened in 1908 and was rededicated in 1988 after a three-year, \$188 million restoration. The station is still cited as one of the nation's most successful examples of adaptive reuse through a private-public partnership. It hosts the services of Amtrak, Maryland's MARC and Virginia Railway Express commuter trains, Washington Metro trains underneath and intercity and charter buses behind the station in an off-street structure. There are also plenty of restaurants to choose from as well as photo opportunities of this magnificent building. With 210,000 square feet of retail space, Union Station offers full-service restaurants and small eateries to well-known national chains such as Johnny Rockets, Shake Shack, Starbucks and Au Bon Pain.



- **Washington Metro Silver Line** (Fairfax County, Va.) – After lunch, we will re-assemble downstairs at the Metro’s subway station and travel the length of the new Silver Line into Virginia on regularly scheduled service. Phase 1 of the Silver Line Expansion extends 11.7 miles with five new stations from Falls-Church Station on the Orange Line to Wiehle-Reston East Station. This line is the nation’s newest heavy rail rapid transit extension and opened for service on July 26, 2014. Phase 2 of the Silver Line expansion will add six new stations and extend the Silver Line another 11.5 miles to Washington Dulles International Airport and Loudoun County. It is scheduled to be finished in 2018.
- **WMATA SmarTrip Card** – You will receive a SmarTrip Card with \$8.00 in fares loaded on it for travel on the WMATA system. These fares are sufficient for today’s itinerary. You will be able to re-load the card if you stay in the region after the convention ends. We will ride from Union Station to the end of the Silver Line at Wiehle-Reston East Station with opportunities for photo stops. We have requested a WMATA representative to join the trip to point out key features of the new line. We will return by Metro back to the hotel before 6:00 p.m. to allow time to relax before the 2016 Annual Banquet.

Monday Evening, September 5

ERA’s **2016 Annual Banquet** will be held in a private room at the Crystal City Marriott. An hour-long informal reception and cash bar will begin at 7:00 p.m., and dinner will follow promptly at 8:00 p.m.

James Hughes, WMATA’s director of planning, will discuss the ambitious long-range transit plans for the Washington metropolitan area and invite questions at the end of his presentation. It promises to be a lively evening!

Tuesday Morning, September 6

This is the final day of the convention! For guests leaving today, please settle your charges with the hotel. Your luggage can be stored in the bus baggage compartments. We will leave the hotel at 8:00 a.m. via charter motor coaches. We will visit and ride on three traction facilities today:

- **DC Streetcar** – We will take a one-way ride on regularly scheduled service on what will be one of the nation’s newest streetcar system, the H Street/Benning Road line. At the time of this printing, the line is under test operation and is scheduled to open to the public by the first half of 2016. The line extends 2.4 miles from just east of Union Station east through Capitol Hill East on H Street and Benning Road to a terminal at Oklahoma Avenue. The line has eight stations and will be served by modern low-floor streetcar rolling stock from Inekon and United Streetcar of Oregon.
- **Baltimore Light Rail** – Our chartered coaches will pick us up at Oklahoma Avenue and drop us off at the southernmost terminal of the Baltimore Light Rail. Starting at Cromwell/Glen Burnie Station, we will travel the 27-mile, 30-station length of this picturesque line to Hunt Valley Towne Center Mall. The line, which has been operational since the early 1990s, features a variety of operating environments including private right-of-way, river crossings and extensive street running in downtown Baltimore. Lunch will be at Hunt Valley Towne Center adjacent to the Hunt Valley light rail station. This 50-store outdoor mall hosts several national dining chains including Subway, California Pizza Kitchen, Chick Fil-A, Panera Bread and about a dozen other restaurants.



- **Baltimore Streetcar Museum** – Our chartered motor coaches will pick us up and take us to the museum. It was founded in 1966 and operates one mile of double-track right-of-way. Their collection includes 13 historic Baltimore streetcars ranging from a horse car to the last PCC car, three Philadelphia streetcars, several buses and trackless trolleys. You will have approximately 2.5 hours to ride and photograph the streetcars there, enjoy the different exhibits and visit the museum gift shop.

Tuesday Evening, September 6

Our chartered motor coaches will leave the Baltimore Streetcar Museum at 4:45 p.m. and take us to Camden Yards Station in downtown Baltimore (note the additional stop options below).

- **MARC Camden Line** – We will board a MARC train (Maryland Regional Commuter) operating on the Camden line and ride it between Camden Yards and Washington Union Station. This 39-mile, diesel-hauled service traces its heritage to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad as far back as 1835, making it one of the nation's oldest railroads. It is a treat for rail fans to ride this line as it operates during weekday peak-only periods, unlike its busier cousin, the Penn Line.
- **Virginia Railway Express** – For the final leg of our journey, we will board the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) at Union Station for the short trip from Union Station to the Crystal City Marriott. **We should reach our hotel by around 7:00 p.m., concluding our 2016 convention.**

Early Departure – For those who wish or need to leave the tour earlier today, our motor coaches will make additional stops for drop-offs at Baltimore's Pennsylvania Station at approximately 5:00 p.m. and BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport by 5:45 p.m. **Please allow sufficient time between these arrival times and the departure time of your scheduled train or flight.** Though we have scheduled ample leeway to meet these arrival times, the ERA is not responsible for delays due to traffic and weather.

Logistics

Travelling to the Convention by Amtrak or Bus

From Union Station to Crystal City Marriott – Traveling via Washington Metro, board a Red Line train toward Shady Grove. Take the Red Line two stops to Gallery Place Chinatown Station. Transfer to the Yellow line train heading towards Huntington for five stops until you reach the Crystal City Metro station and get off the train.

NOTE: When you leave the Crystal City Metro station, look for directions to the **Crystal City Marriott**, not the **Crystal Gateway Marriott**. This second, similarly named Marriott hotel is about seven minutes away in another direction!

Travelling to the Convention by Air

From Reagan National Airport to Crystal City Marriott – If you are traveling light, riding from the airport to the Crystal City Marriott is an estimated 10-minute trip by Metro. The airport's Metro station is located across from the second level of terminals B and C. Board a Huntington-bound Yellow Line train or a Franconia-Springfield-bound Blue Line train for one stop to the Crystal City Metro station and get off the train.



NOTE: When you leave the Crystal City Metro station, look for directions to the **Crystal City Marriott**, not the **Crystal Gateway Marriott**. This second, similarly-named Marriott hotel is a six minute walk in another direction!

From Reagan National Airport by Complimentary Marriott Hotel Shuttle – The Marriot’s complimentary airport shuttle is operated by the Crystal Gateway Marriott. Look for a large gray and white bus with logos for all the various Marriott brands on the side OR a white van with red lettering and Crystal Gateway logo on the front door. Specify clearly to the driver that you want to be taken to the Crystal **City** Marriott Hotel and not the Crystal **Gateway** Marriott.

The Marriott Airport Shuttle operates seven days a week. **Shuttles from the airport to the hotel** operate continuously, approximately every 20 minutes throughout the day. The first shuttle leaves the airport at approximately 5:10 a.m. with the last shuttle departing Reagan National Airport to the hotel at midnight. **Shuttles to the airport from the hotel** begin at 5:00 a.m., then 5:30 a.m., 6:00 a.m. and after 6:00 a.m., every 20 minutes until midnight. Below are the boarding locations for the hotel shuttle by terminal:

- **Terminal A** – Air Canada, AirTran, Frontier, JetBlue Airways, Sun Country: From Terminal A baggage claim at street level, proceed outside and cross to the center median. All hotel shuttle services pickup and drop off in this area.
- **Terminal B** – Alaska, Delta, Delta Connection, Delta Shuttle, United: From Terminal B baggage claim on the lower level, proceed just outside of door #5. Our shuttle service picks up and drops off guests in this designated area.
- **Terminal C** – American, American Eagle, US Airways, US Airways Express, US Airways Shuttle, Virgin America: From Terminal C baggage claim on the lower level, proceed just outside of door #5 or door #9 (whichever is closer). Our shuttle service picks up and drops off guests at these designated areas.

Please Note

Scheduled event times given in this flyer are subject to change in the final itinerary or during the trip without prior notice. Daily trip itineraries may be changed without prior notice to ensure on-time return at the end of each day. Announcements will be made each day to update guests on essential information during all ERA events.

Providing your phone number (and email address) on your registration form is critical. If you have questions regarding the itinerary or accommodations, please contact **Nayan Naidoo** by e-mail at Nayan.Naidoo@gmail.com or call 718-551-8755. Email is preferred. You may also contact ERA President **Bob Newhouser** at bnnyc1955@aol.com or by phone at 917-482-4235.

Order Online

As with most ERA trips, you can view the itinerary and order tickets for the Convention on our website. We’ve added several useful links, YouTube videos and downloadable resources. The address for our Convention page is erausa.org/conventions/2016 (bit.ly/1NYqwz5) and our online order form is erausa.org/conventions/2016/ticket-order-form (bit.ly/1Q3Bots)





Making Reservations

Crystal City Marriott at Washington Reagan National Airport

The Crystal City Marriott Hotel Electric Railroaders' Association special rate is **\$115 plus 13% tax per night including breakfast (\$18 value per person) for up to two guests in the room.** The Crystal City Marriott in Arlington is a member of Marriott Rewards points program. There are two ways to book your reservation with the Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport:

1. You may register by phone by calling the Crystal City Marriott direct at 703-413-5500 or Marriott national reservations at 800-228-9290. They will either connect you with their own reservation desk or the national desk (outside normal business hours). At either the hotel desk or the national desk, **ask for “Crystal City Marriott in Arlington, Virginia” reservations and most important, book under the “group reservation of Electric Railroaders' Association”** to get the lower room rates of \$115 (king bed or two double beds). **Be careful not to be offered the “Crystal Gateway Marriott”! That is a different hotel and NOT OUR CONVENTION HOTEL!**
2. You may also register at the hotel's website containing the ERA rates by clicking on the link below:

Electric Railroaders' Association Room Reservation <http://goo.gl/E4Du27>

Going to this link will automatically bring up the discounted rates of \$115 per night for (one king bed or double bed rooms with breakfast). To obtain these discounted rates, plus 13% sales tax, please book as soon as possible. The room rates are available for the nights of September 3, 4 and 5, with checkout on September 6 (plus three days prior and post these dates, depending on availability). These discounted rates expire after July 21, 2016. Further offers of the discount rate after July 21 are at the hotel's discretion on a space available basis.

IF BOOKING ONLINE, PLEASE FOLLOW THE TWO STEPS BELOW CAREFULLY!

1. Once you have selected your dates of arrival and departure on the first page, make sure to carefully note number of guests on lower right hand corner. Breakfast coupons are handed out 1 per guest per day (maximum of 2 coupons per room) so it's important to accurately record the number of guests.
2. On the **very next screen** that comes up, “Reservation Step 1 of 3,” under **“2. Your requests,”** please press **“Edit Request(s)”** and select under **“Room & Accessibility Preferences”** whether your room should have one king bed or two double beds.
3. The remaining steps are straightforward for completing your booking.

CANCELLATIONS: Cancellations must be received 24 hours prior to check-in (6 p.m.) for refund.

Your cancellation number MUST be obtained to ensure refund. All succeeding reservations will be automatically cancelled by the system if guests fail to check-in on the first arrival date and first night will be charged on the credit card provided with no refund. In addition, if you can't make the first night of your visit, but can make the other nights, call the hotel immediately to preserve the rest of your reservation.

NOTE: The Crystal City Marriott does not accept reservations by mail. Reserve by phone or online.