

## THE NATIONAL AARP CONVENTION COMES TO LOS ANGELES

By Rand Pinsky, District Director (Highlights from an email I received from Vicki Campbell, ACBL Director of Marketing)

The AARP Convention will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center (South Halls) 1201 S. Figueroa St., from Thursday September 22 through Saturday September 24. Vicki Campbell, ACBL Director of Marketing will be manning our ACBL booth. Volunteers are needed to assist Vicki in running the booth.

Due to the size of our booth, we will only be able to accommodate 2 volunteers helping at the booth at one time. Volunteers will work in shifts of two with us for the following dates/times:

Thursday – Sept 22 – we will need volunteers helping in the booth during the time frame of 11:00 am through 6pm

Friday – Sept 23 – we will need volunteers helping in the booth during the time frame of 9:00 am through 5pm

Saturday – Sept 24 – we will need volunteers helping in the booth during the time frame of 9:00 am through 4pm (I will be there most of the day, but still will need volunteers.)

Vicki has asked me that once I have identified volunteers, I should provide her the name, phone number, email address, and date/time that each volunteer will be working. It would also be helpful to know if the volunteer is a bridge teacher, club owner, or just a player. Each volunteer will also get Vicki's cell phone number so that they can call her when they arrive at the Exhibit Hall so that she can meet them with their badge to let them into the Exhibit Hall and escort them to our booth.

Parking at the convention center is \$12 per day – which we will pay to each volunteer for reimbursement of their parking costs.

### **Expectations for the volunteers:**

- Volunteers should expect to be on their feet and engaging with visitors who stop by the booth. In years past, the traffic to the ACBL booth has been quite heavy and can become very hectic – but, also exciting if you're a "people person" and love talking with others about bridge. J Volunteers should expect to be able to answer questions about the ACBL, talk about the benefits and fun of playing bridge, to be able to show visitors how to get to the ACBL website and find a teacher and/or club (using the computer that will be available at the booth), hand out brochures, and help people enter into the random drawing at the booth. We will have a computer monitor and internet connection at the booth so we can show visitors our website and how to "Find a Club/Teacher". We will, of course, give all volunteers a quick "crash course" on all of the hand-out materials that will be on hand at the booth, as well, as inform them of the details about the random drawing. It can get quite hectic

at the booth at time, especially, when large groups of people stop by at the same time, so, this would not be a good volunteer experience for anyone not able to stand for long periods of time and/or talk with booth visitors in what can sometimes be a very fast pace environment. Since the Convention Hall is so large and the volunteers will be on their feet most of the time, it is highly recommended that they wear comfortable shoes.

### **Possible Workshop/Seminar/Game**

As mentioned, I am hoping that we'll be able to get the approval from AARP to conduct a "Welcome to Duplicate Bridge" workshop so that we can invite social bridge players to attend. We are still waiting to hear back from our contact at AARP to find out whether or not they will have a room available for us to conduct such a workshop. If so, then, we will need someone to facilitate the workshop (you mentioned that you might be able to do this and I'd be thrilled if you would!) I'm thinking of a 20-30 minute workshop, followed by sometime of "pupil game" or other "relaxed" game that would allow the players to win masterpoints and/or, as you mentioned, some type of prize. (I'd like to get these social players hooked on the thrill of winning masterpoints – I know that was really a "hook" for me when I was taking lessons – that fraction of a point only served to make me want to earn more!) J I'll keep you posted as soon as I find out more from AARP.

I've put a few of the "Exciting World of Bridge – Welcome to Your First Duplicate Game" brochures in the mail to you today – I mentioned these to you on the phone today as I think they may contain points to cover in the workshop. We always have a supply of these brochures at the booth to hand out – especially to those social players considering converting to duplicate.

I like your idea to have two separate flyers – LA area and Orange County area bridge clubs. As soon as we have a new layout for the flyer I'll forward a copy over to you again for review.

Thanks for all your help with this exhibit!