

**Winter is still here!** And will be for another couple months, so keep your bridge-playing calendar full. Yes, we’ve had some closures so you could have a day to play outdoors in the snow. We’ll likely will have another one or two, but before we know it, it’ll be Spring. Hang in there and come inside to play!

**Facility Improvements –** It’s been nearly 10 years since we opened the club. Amazing, eh! And while everyone has taken good care of the facility, the board has approved two significant improvements. One is to replace the chairs which are showing the strain of all the wonderful use they’ve seen in that time. This will be done in two phases with the first occurring this month, and the second later in the Spring.

The second improvement is to expand the parking lot. As you know, during high season we’ve had players forced to park on the lawn as no parking spaces on the asphalt nor gravel were empty. When the snow is gone, we’ll expand the graveled parking area with an additional row of parking. We’ll need everyone’s help to park in an orderly fashion as striping the gravel is not an option. We’ll keep you posted with additional details on these improvements.

**2019 Tournament Schedule –** We’ll keep reminding you about the Unit’s tournaments this year:

* May 9-11 Grand Rapids Sectional
* May 31-June 2 Kalamazoo Sectional
* June 22-23Petoskey Sectional for Future LifeMasters
* August 19-25 Grand Rapids Regional
* September 6-8 Traverse City Sectional
* September 27-29 Petoskey Sectional

Click [HERE](http://www.district12bridge.org/upcoming.html) for a complete listing of the District 12 tournaments for 2019.

**Rank Progression** – Our players continue to play, to win masterpoints and to progress in rank. Congratulations to our new:

* Junior Masters – Nancy Dykstra, Tim Dykstra, and Gail Torreano
* Regional Master – Ann Zousmer
* NABC Master – Anne Allison
* Bronze Life Master – Joe Hollis
* Silver Life Master – Dave Fowler

**Mike Sears *Sez*** – **Inverted Minors (requested topic)**

The Inverted Minors convention has evolved over time (as have many of the conventions). In today’s modern bridge, the convention enables Responder to communicate length and strength for the Opener’s minor suit opening bid by bidding 2 of that minor. Generally speaking, it describes Responder’s hand to have:

* At least 10 HCP.
* At least 5 cards in Opener’s minor suit opening.
* No 4-card major suit.

The bid is 1-round forcing.

Given that information, Opener is better equipped to assess where the partnership might take this hand. Importantly, Opener knows that they do NOT have an 8-card major suit fit! With extra values, Opener would now explore game in NT or the bid minor. Without extra values and stoppers in unbid suits, Opener would be satisfied in a 2NT or 3-minor contract and bid accordingly. Responder would now understand that Opener does or does not have extra values, and he too would bid according to the strength of his hand, and the stoppers he might have in the unbid suits. Click on this link for a good explanation of the bidding sequence: <http://www.bridgeguys.com/Conventions/inverted_minors.html>

Bottom line is that the Inverted Minor convention is aimed to quickly and accurately help the partnership maximize their score with hands that are not oriented to major suit contracts.

**In Memoriam –** We’re saddened by the recent loss of Les Atchison. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.