

August, 1991

# Bicycling Magazine Overlooks the L.A.W.

## Who Speaks for Bicyclists?

In a recent issue of *Bicycling* magazine, Nelson Pena wrote in his "Bike Advocate" column about the wonderful things that could be accomplished by the Bicycle Institute of America (BIA) if it had better support from the Bicycle Manufacturers that it represents. "Imagine," asked Pena, that "cyclists were represented by an effective team of lobbyists in Washington.

Apparently frustrated by the lack of financial support from industry members, the BIA has recently launched an *Associate Member* program to raise money for BIA activities, and to enable BIA to claim that it speaks for "consumers." What will bicyclists get for their \$15? Basically, a media guide, three issues of a newsletter, and, presumably, good feelings that they're supporting a "effective" lobbying team in Washington.

While the BIA is well-intentioned and professional in its advocacy, it should be noted that among the BIA's goals are in their own words: "for businesses we're out to build a bigger market for bikes and related products; for consumers, we're working to pro-

vide bicycle-friendly environments where there are more safe places to ride." Is it possible that these goals might come into conflict, and if so, whose interests will be given priority by BIA's voting membership?

My interest in this situation was piqued by a letter to the editor of *Bicycling* in reaction to Pena's column. The letter forcefully asserted that "the problem is that there are too many groups representing bicyclists. Bicycling needs one organization that can represent the concerns of riders at the national level." It concluded that bicyclists "have no idea who their advocacy group is."

I disagree with this letter in every respect. Bicycling benefits from plurality in advocacy; the interests of the bicycle riders is not always the same as those of the bicycle manufacturers and dealers. A serious current issue demonstrates this. The National Bicycle Dealer's Association (NBDA) has adopted a plan to limit a dealer's legal liability to their customers by having bicycle purchasers sign a lengthy checklist covering bicycle operation (quick release levers and brakes, etc.) and certain safety proce-

dures. By signing the checklists the purchaser is waiving rights to sue the dealer. The plan is similar to one adopted by the ski industry, where negligence lawsuits have been a problem.

Few would suggest that this action by the NBDA is in the best interest of riders (not even manufacturers support the idea). In this instance the dealers are trying to protect themselves against costly lawsuits by their customers, so it should come as no surprise if manufacturers some day take a position that runs counter to the best interests of riders/consumers.

"Bicycling" is too broad a term to use when discussing advocacy. Manufacturers, dealers, and bicyclists each have similar, but potentially different concerns.

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# Summertime Club Activities

*(A note from the vice-President)*

-- Marc Luoma

Due to a bizarre turn of events, I find myself in the seat of supreme power in KBC. Ex-President Steve Clarke, sniveling about increasing work and home responsibilities has abdicated the throne and left me in charge. While this Dan Quail-esque turn of events has put true fear in the hearts of those who know me and my administrative abilities, I promise to try and get the Club through to the November meeting (election of new officers) intact.

A few random thoughts about Club activities:

## Let's Ride

We've been blessed with a great summer for riding. The weather has been most cooperative. We have rides every night of the week, and attendance has been up at nearly every ride. Especially on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, there have been more riders than ever before. Let me offer a personal pitch for the Friday ride around Gull Lake. It's a fine way to unwind from the work week and the scenery is great. There have been a couple of changes in the ride listings that you may have noticed, such as...

## No More Ride Categories? (!)

The ride categories are no more.

While the goal of the categories was to let riders know how fast the ride leader was going to go, discussion and complaints about the categories popped up at every meeting. The categories seemed to dominate out of control, to the point where early in the season, it seemed that ride leaders would need to have a portable personal computer to calculate their velocity and make sure they complied with the letter of the law. Well, the ride categories have gone out the window, and the rides have been none the worse for it. Even more riders are showing up, and nobody has to ride alone; there are riders of all abilities on every ride.

## Ride Leader Roles

The duties of ride leaders have also grown out of control to the point where earlier this year, a published ride leader description read like the duties for a Cub Scout Den Mother. Consequently, ride leaders have become scarcer than Huffy bikes on a century ride. Well, now we're back to the good old days where the ride leader must provide two things: 1) a map, and 2) a sign up sheet. THAT'S ALL. 'Nuf said? Good.

## Next Year's Club Officers

I know it's only August, but it's not too early to start thinking about Club officers for next year.

As of this time, none of this year's officers will be running for re-election, so let's get some new blood, with new ideas, into leadership positions! We'll need to fill the following positions:

### President:

The President presides at all meetings and is responsible for the overall conduct of the business of the Club. The President appoints committees to plan and execute Club activities. The President authorizes spending Club funds.

### Vice-President:

The Vice-President assumes the duties of the President when the President is absent. The Vice-President is responsible for arranging for the Club meeting sites and meeting programs.

### Secretary/Treasurer:

The Secretary/Treasurer keeps minutes of Club meetings and conducts the correspondence of the Club. The Secretary/Treasurer also maintains the Club treasury, making deposits and disbursements at the direction of the President and Vice-President.

And the following appointed (read "volunteer-but-not-elected") positions:

### Newsletter editor:

Publishes this thing you're reading and takes it to the post office.

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# Spike Bike #3: The Beginning

by Bob Fishell

[In the year 1998, one man fights the tyranny of the automobile...]

"DROP YOUR WEAPON AND PUT YOUR HANDS UP! STAY WHERE YOU ARE!" An amplified voice roared from somewhere beyond the blazing wreckage of the delivery truck that had chased me in here. Instinctively, I fired a burst from my MAC-10 in the direction of the squawking and sprinted off. I heard bullets grazing off the pavement behind and winced at a loud ping from the rear wheel. The bike swayed crazily as I leaned it around the corner of a building, and I went down at the top of a ramp that led down into a loading dock. I scrambled for the only cover available, a narrow, filthy space between the building and a large dumpster. I heard several cars screech to a halt as I dove into the gap. The voice repeated, "THROW OUT YOUR WEAPON! WE HAVE YOU SURROUNDED!"

I answered with a burst of sub-machine gun fire. My situation was grim, but it could have been worse. I had a defensible position, two and a half mags of ammo, and four grenades. They wouldn't get me without paying dearly.

They weren't real cops, of course. There weren't any real cops left, just security guards employed by The Twenty. Cities contracted with them to have their goons patrol the adjoining roadways, which supposedly saved tax dollars. It was a laughable system. It was all these idiots could do to keep from shooting each other, and cooperation was virtually

nonexistent. It was one of the reasons I've been able to operate for so long. But now, they had me in a spot. Perhaps it would all end here. How did it begin?

I was born Spiro Bikopoulos on February 14, 1965 in Oak Park, Illinois, the eldest of six children. My father was a prosperous importer of specialty items from his native Greece. I played football and soccer in high school, then did a stint with the Marines, where I taught hand-to-hand combat and automatic weapons at the U. S. Naval Academy. After the Service, I picked up degrees in Physics and Metallurgical Engineering at Caltech, where I started building bike frames as a project, and later for the racing team I captained.

As a bike racer, I moved up rapidly, particularly after word got around that bumping me on purpose was a mistake. I even got to the Olympic trials in '92, but I was disqualified when a California race official detected traces of Tylenol in a surreptitiously obtained sample of my urine. "I had a headache," I told him. "besides, I took it after the race!"

"Don't serve me a plateful of irrelevant arguments, you fool!" the official countered, "it's right here on page 387 in volume 3 of the USCF rule book (revised 1992). You're out! Finished! Disqualified!"

I left the race official with volume 3 of his rule book stuck in a most uncomfortable place, and quit sanctioned bike racing forever.

That was when everything started to go to pot, anyway. The Economic Holocaust had begun, first with import restrictions, then the repeal of anti-trust and conflict of interest laws. A group of giant corporations known as The Twenty soon emerged, crushing all competition and gaining a stranglehold on the Government.

In 1992, the Congress passed all kinds of ridiculous laws designed to curb the demand for Japanese goods. One such was the Bicycle Act, which cut off federal highway money to any state that didn't strip bicycles of any claim of right of way on the public roads. Shortly after it was passed, reports of bicycle fatalities all around the Country rose sharply. The same hotheads, rednecks and hell-raisers who used to just harass cyclists had upped the stakes to what amounted to legalized murder. The nation's roads became a living Hell. As The Twenty expected, bicycle sales, and hence imports, dropped off to nothing. The nation's highways were ruled by motor-driven hooligans who killed for sport. It had to stop. I, Spiro Bikopoulos, alias Spike Bike, would make the roads a living Hell for them.

My old Marine uniform and some forged orders got me into the Joliet Arsenal, where I learned the place's weaknesses and established my secret entrance. I soon had an extensive collection of military ordnance — and I knew how to use it. I began my campaign around rowdy roadhouses and construction sites in my native Illinois, leaving a wake of fire, and destruction, as driver after driver, trying to turn me into road kill, discovered too late that I wasn't defenseless. Soon the attacks diminished, not only on me, but on the die-hard, crazy

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# New KBC Constitution

## New KBC Constitution.

The following is now the official constitution of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club:

## Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

### Articles Of Constitution

#### I. Name and Goals

A. Name: The name of the organization is the *Kalamazoo Bicycle Club*.

B. Goals: The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club is a non-profit organization whose goals are to:

1. Promote bicycle safety through education and publicity.
2. Encourage and facilitate bicycle touring, racing, and recreational riding.
3. Defend and protect the rights of cyclists.
4. Encourage the allocation and development of facilities for cycling on public lands and roadways.
5. Advocate recognition of the bicycle as a vehicle for pleasure, health, and economical and environmentally-sound transportation.

#### II. Membership

##### A. Eligibility:

Anyone who shares the goals of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club is eligible for membership. A member in good standing is one who has filed and applica-

tion for membership with an appropriate officer of the Club and has remitted the current annual dues. Membership ends on December 31 of each year. Memberships purchased after September 1 are valid until December 31 of the following year.

##### B. Dues:

The dues will be set yearly by the President, subject to the approval of the membership.

##### C. Discipline:

A member may be expelled from the Club for up to one year by the executive board for any of the following.

1. Disregard for safety during a Club activity.
2. Misuse of Club funds or property.
3. Harrassment of Club members or participants in Club activities.

#### III. Officers and Executive Board:

The following officers will be elected by those in attendance at the annual meeting or by absentee ballot received at the Club Post Office box before the annual meeting date.

##### A. Elected Officers:

1. President: The President presides at all meetings and is responsible for the overall conduct of the business of the Club. The President appoints committees to plan and execute Club activities. The President authorizes spending Club funds.

2. Vice-President: The Vice-President assumes the duties of the President when the President is absent. The Vice-President is responsible for arranging for the Club meeting sites and meeting programs.

3. Secretary/Treasurer: The Secretary/Treasurer keeps minutes of Club meetings and conducts the correspondence of the Club. The Secretary/Treasurer also maintains the Club treasury, making deposits and disbursements at the direction of the President and Vice-President.

The above officers constitute the executive board of the Club. A majority of the executive board may act on official Club business.

#### I. Appointed Officers:

I Newsletter Editor: Responsible for publishing the Club newsletter which includes the monthly meeting minutes, meeting notices, monthly ride schedule, and any other items of general interest to Club members.

I Ride Captain: Responsible for scheduling weekly Club rides throughout the year.

I Membership Database Administrator: The Database Administrator will keep up-to-date records of the Club roster and supplies this information to the Newsletter Editor on request.



# Kalamazoo Bike Club Rides - August 1991

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>All rides start at 6:30</b>						
	<b>• KBC Meeting/ Ride in Scotts</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Central High School</b>	<b>• Scotts Elementary School</b>	<b>• Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg (Marc Luoma)</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>• River Raisin Tour - Monroe</b>	<b>• Texas Drive Park</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Central High School</b>	<b>• Scotts Elementary School</b>	<b>• Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg (Marc Luoma)</b>	
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>• Assemacher 100 - Swartz Creek</b>	<b>• Texas Drive Park</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Central High School</b>	<b>• Scotts Elementary School</b>	<b>• Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg (Marc Luoma)</b>	<b>• Hastings Summerfest Tour</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
	<b>• Texas Drive Park</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Speedway (Mike Teel)</b>	<b>• Kalamazoo Central High School</b>	<b>• Scotts Elementary School</b>	<b>• Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg (Marc Luoma)</b>	
<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>

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# Kalamazoo Bike Club

## Ride Descriptions

### Mondays

- The *Deep in the heart of Texas recovery ride*:

Recover from your weekend race or century ride with an easy 20-30 miles from Texas Drive Park near the corner of Milham and 8th Street. Look for the softball field.

### Tuesdays

- The *KBC Track Series*:

Race Team ride at the Kalamazoo Speedway near the corner of Ravine Rd. and "D" Ave. Organized by Mike Teel.

### Wednesdays

- The *Wednesday Night Mountain March*:

OK, so there's no real mountain in Kalamazoo, but this ride is usually pretty hilly. Pioneered years ago by Don "Mondo Dondo" Povendo, this ride goes 20-30 miles from

Kalamazoo Central High School on Drake Road about two miles north of West Main.

### Thursdays

- The *Ice Cream Cruise*:

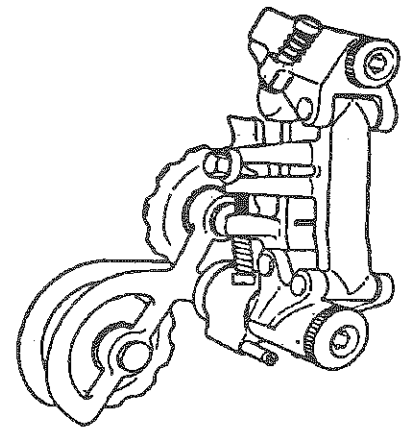
The now-famous ride and feeding frenzy in Scotts. Meet at the Scotts Elementary School for the ride, and stop in at Scooter's Malt Shop on the main drag in Scotts after your ride for great ice cream and socializing. Routes from 15-30 miles are usually offered. These rides are normally very well attended, so they're a good place to meet up with lots of Club members. Also a good start for first-timers. The school is on QR Avenue, just two blocks east of 36th Street in "downtown" Scotts.

### Fridays

- The *Tour de Gull Lake*:

Ride about 25 miles from Galesburg, around Gull Lake. The pace of this ride is hard to

predict; usually the group splits in two, with the sane group enjoying the scenery around the lake, and the young punks (of any age) using the hills for oxygen-debt orgies. The ride leaves from the parking lot behind Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg, just east of the five-way intersection in downtown Galesburg. Ride led by Bandit the Wonder Dog. Maps usually provided by Marc Luoma.



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**For more info on rides or on KBC, call the KBC ride line at 327-7767.**

## Notes from the VP (cont'd.)

### Ride Captain:

Gets ride leaders. This job should be lots easier in 1992, with the more reasonable ride leader duties.

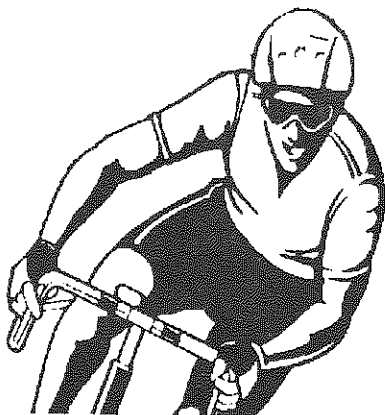
### Database Administrator:

This person keeps the memberships lists up to date and supplies the Newsletter Editor with mailing labels. If everyone in the Club tells Phil Caruso how much we appreciate his help over the last umpteen years, just *maybe* he'll keep doing this for us.

The following is the schedule for elections:

- October meeting: Nomination of candidates.
- October newsletter: Listing of candidates.
- November meeting: Elections.

If you have any opinions or input on any of this, please give me a call (778-3565). Just don't call too early on Saturday morning.



## Who Speaks (cont'd. from pg. 1)

Representing bicyclists in this equation is the League of American Wheelmen (L.A.W.). Although many L.A.W. members are well aware of our efforts to influence government policy - not only on the national but state level as well - we must do more to ensure that all bicyclists recognize the League as *their* advocacy group in Washington. When a newcomer asks "Who speaks for bicyclists?" without hesitation the answer should be "The L.A.W.!"

Bicycle advocacy groups are not being melodramatic when they discuss the future in ominous tones. The threats to access are real, and because the automobile and highway lobbies are so powerful, bicycling needs to raise as many voices as possible to achieve a bicycling-compatible environment. But bicyclists need to be informed about bicycle organizations, including whose interest the group ultimately represents.

The League is the sole group that is a true participatory membership organization. When deciding where to put their resources, bicyclists should remember that membership in the League buys not only advocacy, but the right to determine what will be advocated.

*Gilbert M. Clarke,  
Executive Director,  
League of American Wheelmen*

Reprinted from *The League Volunteer*, July/August, 1991.

## Spike Bike (cont'd. from pg. 3)

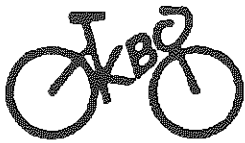
cyclists who still braved the roads all over the Chicago area. Word was out. Bikes weren't sitting ducks any more.

That was 5 years ago. Since then, I've been all over the country, hitting areas at random, leaving my grisly signature on roads in every state, and everywhere I've been, brave souls have ventured out on bikes again, to find that drivers give them a wide berth, knowing that any one of them could be me. Bicycles have become a symbol of the growing Anticorporate Movement. It is the beginning of the end for The Twenty.

Unfortunately, it might also be the end for me. Crouching behind the dumpster, my reverie is shattered by a volley of gunshots clanging deafeningly against the heavy steel. Four of the goons are charging my position, concentrating their fire to keep me pinned down. I pull the pin of one of my grenades and lob it into their midst. I hear the blast, and the gunshots stop for but a second. The hail of bullets resumes and shadowy figures stir through the smoke. How many of them are there? And where am I? A sign on the loading dock door confirms my worst fears. I'm in a facility belonging to the Chrysler-Ford-General Motors Corporation, President Iacocca's own company. The delivery van I took out hadn't chased me in here by happenstance. I'd been set up, and I'd fallen for it! I fire wildly into the smoke, enraged as much at myself as any of the uniformed hooligans out there. How many are there? How many?

\* TO BE CONTINUED \*

Downloaded from the Bikenet bulletin board of Missoula, Montana by ML.



Kalamazoo Bicycle Club  
P.O. Box 527  
Kalamazoo, MI 49005  
*Address Correction Requested*

**The August KBC Meeting will be on Monday, August 5th at the Scotts Elementary School on QR Ave. in Scotts. There will be a SHORT meeting and then a 15-30 mile ride.**

