

# Pedal Press



The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Inc.  
May, 1997

## President's Letter

May marks the beginning of what looks like a very busy and exciting summer of KBC sponsored events and activities. We need your help to make the events which are vital to the club successful. We'll be calling asking for volunteers. If you can spare some time it would be greatly appreciated, and guess what? You get to share some quality time with fellow cycling enthusiasts.

Right off the bat, we get a double whammy. On Saturday, May 10, the club will be holding a membership drive during the Kal-Haven Trailblazer ride. Our friends at the Trailblazer have given us the OK to set up a table at Kalamazoo Central, the registration point of the ride. This is a well-attended ride and should provide the club with some excellent exposure. I know this is a great ride and many of you will ride it, but if you don't or can spare some time after the ride, we could use your help.

Also on Saturday, May 10, we'll be sending volunteers to the Safe Kids Coalition Ride held at the Portage Community Center. I've committed the club to this event. Kids are an important and vital part of the cycling family and we need to ensure that they grow up knowing and using safe riding habits. If necessary I'll be there myself. I know there are plenty of you out there to help. Give me a call, get involved. The smiles and joy from kids doing exactly what you love doing, riding your bike, will be worth it.

- Gerald Blohm

## March Meeting

The meeting was held at ProSport and featured Keith Little giving us a clinic on assertive riding techniques, proper helmet sizing and cycling equipment for safe and effective cycling. Many thanks to Keith for volunteering his time and putting on a very informative meeting.

- Gerald Blohm

## Upcoming Events...

### May

- 10 Executive Board meeting, United Way Bldg., 709 S. Westnedge, 4:00 pm.
- 15 Oakley Rep talks at the United Way Bldg., 709 S. Westnedge, 6:30 pm. Good times, good stories, free Oakleys for some lucky soul.
- 20 Ride to Work Day!

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## Club News

Did you see the article recently in the Gazette outlining the KBC and its rides? It was an excellent article and special thanks go to our ride captain Randy Putt on a job well done. Super!

Our bike case has been repaired and is ready for hazardous duty again. Since this is the fourth case the club has owned, we now require you to purchase insurance on the case and your bike. This can be done through the airlines. Thanks to Bill Watt for handling the details.

The bike case can be rented by club members for \$30 per week with a \$200 deposit. Contact Bill Watt at 349-9562.

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## Thanks!

A special thanks to the following people for volunteering to be ride leaders this year: Nancy DeBoer, Jini and Phil Caruso, Anne and Paul Guimond, Sherry and Mike Higgins, Larry Kissinger, Bev and John Thome, Richard Walter, Chris Walters, Steve Vonderfecht, Harold Gleaves, Bill Watt, and Jim Wyrick. Without you the rides would not take place.

- Randy Putt

## Upcoming Tours and Things

A look at the LMB ride poster for 1997 discloses these upcoming rides within an hour's drive of Kalamazoo:

**Blossomtime Metric Century**, May 4, 1997 in Berrien Springs. See last month's *Pedal Press* for more about this very nice ride. Phone 616-684-4621.

**Kal-Haven Trailblazer**, May 10, 1997 at Kalamazoo Central High School, Drake Road. Phone 616-657-3232. Also mentioned last month. Ride the trail, the roads, or both!

**Dogwood Pedal**, Dowagiac, May 17, 616-782-5704. A metric century (with shorter routes) on largely deserted Cass County roads.

**100 Grand**, Grand Rapids, May 31, rides up to a full century, put on by the Rapid Wheelmen. Phone 616-752-8123.

**100,000 Meter Ride**, June 7, Grand Ledge, by Tri-County Bike Association. Phone 517-339-1758.

- Doug Kirk

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## Scott Parr to Entertain KBC Members

Scott Parr has done things us ordinary folk only dream of—like travel Europe as a mechanic for the now-disbanded Motorola team. He's toured the Tour, met the stars, and lived the life of a professional racer.

Besides, I hear he's a great guy. He's got to have some great stories and tales, and we're lucky to have an opportunity to hear what he has to say. Besides, I hear he's raffling off a pair of Oakleys, and your odds of winning won't be too bad.

So come have some fun Thursday, May 15 at 6:30 pm at the United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge.

- Doug Kirk

## New Members

There probably are some of you out there, but to tell you the truth, we don't know who you are.

We hope we'll get the New Membership Department to talk to us here at the Newsletter by next month's deadline.

We sincerely wish we did know, because we think you are probably very nice people.

## May Birthdays for-given this year

We admit that at first we were bummed that we received no list of birthdays for May.

Then we realized that, on occasion, a certain editorial birthday has seen fit to arrive around the middle of the month.

So we've decided this means we have no birthday this year, which, upon reflection, is just fine.

-Doug Kirk

## Classifieds

**For Sale:** Two pairs of rear panniers and 2 rack duffel bags; 1 set red, 1 set blue. Used once. \$75 each set. Call 385-2325.

## An Invitation to Ride

One of the primary functions of KBC is to offer an opportunity for club members to participate in group rides with other club members. During the 1996 riding season only about half of all KBC members rode in a scheduled club ride.

KBC offers road rides for casual riders, families, tourists, fast tourists, and racers. KBC also offers mountain bike rides for riders of all abilities. If you are a KBC member, try one of our rides. There are KBC rides suited for you. KBC offers regular rides from 10 to 30 miles at a variety of ride paces.

We also offer longer weekend rides. If you have never ridden in a group, one of the KBC weekly rides is a great way to get started. Riding with a group is great fun. Kalamazoo county is blessed with many good low traffic roads that are suitable for group cycling. If KBC does not offer a ride that suits your needs, give any KBC board member or the ride captain a call and volunteer your services to lead a new ride. We will more than happy to get you started.

You do not need an expensive bicycle or clothes to ride with KBC. We do, however, recommend wearing cycling shorts, bringing a water bottle, cycling gloves, a pump, a tube patch kit or a spare tube, and tools (especially tire levers to remove a flat tire) for minor adjustments or repair along the road.

Flats and other mechanical breakdowns do happen on occasion while riding. If you have never changed a tire on the road, there will be someone on the ride to assist you. **WE DO REQUIRE THAT ALL RIDERS WEAR A BICYCLE HELMET.** This requirement is a matter of safety and common sense.

- Randy Putt

## How to Lead a Club Ride

Ride leaders play an important role in our ride program. There is room in our monthly ride schedule for any ride. Leading a ride is your opportunity to share your cycling pleasures with the club. It is our opportunity to learn from your experience.

There are nine easy steps in leading a ride:

1. Call the ride captain (Randy Putt) at 649-1814 and volunteer to lead one of our regularly scheduled rides or propose a ride of your own (newsletter deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the scheduled ride; for example, the deadline for the May ride calendar is April 15),
2. Provide a map of the ride route (optional,)
3. Arrive at the starting place of the ride at the scheduled day and time,
4. Have all riders sign the release form (available from the ride captain) as they arrive,
5. Hand out maps after the rider has signed the release form,
6. Make needed announcements about the ride,
7. Make sure new riders feel welcome,
8. Make sure riders stay with the group, especially the slower riders,
9. And most importantly, have a great ride.

If you have any questions about ride leader duties or you would like to lead a ride, call the ride captain at 649-1814.

- Randy Putt

# May Rides

by Randy Putt

The first Monday ride took place this week and we had a great turnout, 6 riders in the 10-15 mph group and 12-15 riders in the combined 16-18 mph and 18+ mph groups. Maybe we can start riding on a regular basis.

The Saturday and Sunday rides will continue in May. These rides begin at Texas Drive Park at 1 PM on Saturdays and Sundays in May as long as the weather cooperates. The ride leader and the riders who show up can decide the route to take. Give me a call if you would like to lead one of the Saturday or Sunday rides in May. There are no rides scheduled on May 10, 11, and 18.

A full Monday schedule begins this month at 6:30 PM with three ride leaders which should provide a pace to suit riders of all abilities. Mike Higgins will lead a group for 15-20 miles at 10-15 mph, Steve Vonderfecht will lead his group for 20 to 30 miles at 16-18 mph, and Larry Kissinger, Paul and Anne Guimond will lead the 18+ mph group for 20 to 30 miles. John and Bev Thome plan to sub as needed for the 18+ group. We need additional ride leaders to help with the Monday 16-18 mph group in May since Steve will be coaching baseball. We need additional ride leaders to assist for all three groups.

The Wednesday rides meet at Kalamazoo Central HS 6:30 PM. A fitness ride for 10-15 miles on the Kal-Haven Trail will be lead by Chris Walters. This is her first try at being a ride leader, so plan to join Chris in May for the fitness ride on the Kal-Haven Trail. In addition to the fitness ride, enjoy the rolling hills of northwest Kalamazoo County for a ride of about 20 to 30 miles at 16-18 mph lead by Harold Gleaves with occasional assistance from Jim Wyrick and Bill Watt. We need additional ride leaders for these groups.

Also, a fast group also rides from Kalamazoo Central on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:30 PM. The pace of the ride is typically greater than 20++ mph and the route goes to Bloomingdale and back (about 46 miles). Since the route is well known to most of the riders, no maps are available for this ride. This group is typically large (more than 15 riders) and consists of racers and other experienced riders. There is no designated ride leader. The group typically fragments into smaller groups and the riders often times do not finish together. This ride is hard and is not suitable for inexperienced riders. Expect some

riders to be dropped from the main group. The ride is a loop and those riders who get dropped meet up with the main group on the return part of the loop.

The Friday ride meets at Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg at 6:30 PM for the Tour deGull Lake. Billy's Bike Shop has moved to a new location across the street from his previous location. The route for this ride is well established (about 27 miles). Randy Putt, Richard Walter, and John Thome will share ride leader duties. We do need additional ride leaders for this ride in the upcoming ride season.

Hey you mountain bikers, I know there are a lot of you out there!!! Are any of you interested in weekly mountain bike rides? Meet Nancy DeBoer at the trailhead in Fort Custer for a mountain bike ride beginning Tuesday May 6 and continuing on May 13 and May 20 at 6:00. Riders of all abilities are welcome, so come out and have some fun.

There is also a group of Mountain bikers from Battle Creek who meet at 6:30 PM on Thursdays at the trailhead in Fort Custer. This ride is not sponsored by KBC, but I've been told that riders of all abilities are welcome. Call 962-7688 or 1-800-841-9494 for more details.

There is also a group of road riders which usually includes several tandems that meet at Team Active in downtown Battle Creek at 8:30 AM on Sundays. This ride is not sponsored by the KBC, but I'm told that it is a fast paced ride and is not for beginning riders. Call 962-7688 or 1-800-841-9494 for more details.

We still need ride leaders for the regular club rides to make the rides successful. If anyone is interested in leading an established KBC ride or establishing a new regular ride, road or mountain, or a one day ride at another time, please contact me. Details for such a ride need to be sent to me by the 10th of the month preceding the month of the ride so that ride details can be included in the newsletter. Please give Randy Putt a call at 649-1814 to volunteer or to get more information on being a ride leader.

# May

1997

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
				<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:30 18-21mph	<b>3</b> Group Ride Texas Drive Park 1:00 Self-paced
<b>4</b> Group Ride Texas Drive Park 1:00 Self-paced	<b>5</b> Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph 6:30 19+mph	<b>6</b> Fort Custer Mountain Bike Ride. 6:00 at the trailhead	<b>7</b> Wed Night Ride Kazoo Central HS 6:30 20++mph 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:30 18-21mph	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph 6:30 19+mph	<b>13</b> Fort Custer Mountain Bike Ride. 6:00 at the trailhead	<b>14</b> Wed Night Ride Kazoo Central HS 6:30 20++mph 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:30 18-21mph	<b>17</b> Group Ride Texas Drive Park 1:00 Self-paced
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph 6:30 19+mph	<b>20</b> Fort Custer Mountain Bike Ride. 6:00 at the trailhead	<b>21</b> Wed Night Ride Kazoo Central HS 6:30 20++mph 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:30 18-21mph	<b>24</b> Group Ride Texas Drive Park 1:00 Self-paced
<b>25</b> Group Ride Texas Drive Park 1:00 Self-paced	<b>26</b> Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph 6:30 19+mph	<b>27</b> Fort Custer Mountain Bike Ride. 6:00 at the trailhead	<b>28</b> Wed Night Ride Kazoo Central HS 6:30 20++mph 6:30 10-15mph 6:30 16-18mph	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:30 18-21mph	<b>31</b>

# Serious Wind

by Axel Kleat

**D**o you remember what you did on April 6? Probably not—it's about a month ago now. It was a Sunday, the first day of Daylight Savings Time this year, and a Truly Windy Day.

It was also sunny and warm, 60 degrees at 8:30 in the morning, although it clouded up for most of the afternoon and was snowing by 7:00 that evening.

We got out by nine o'clock and headed south, praying that the gale wouldn't die down—or worse—shift. We're talking **BIG** wind here!! Wind so strong it's all you can think about. So strong you can't hear anything else. So strong you even think fleetingly of turning back—in *sunshine and 65 degrees*.

So strong you find yourself trying to spin in the flats in gears that have "*for BIG hills only*" stamped on the sides, hunkered down over the bars wishfully day-dreaming for a little break—say the KBC President magically pulling in directly in front of you in a big truck to motorpace you right down to the Indiana line.

It was a gusty wind too. Mostly from the south, but the gusts seemed more southwest. When we'd go west for a bit, the draft was all the way out beside the other rider, a circumstance which makes the old rule of not crossing wheels seem silly! Then a blast from the west would shove you back behind again.

By eleven o'clock, the first clouds were zooming overhead and the wind seemed to actually pick up. Open flats had us wishing for a granny ring *before* the gusts would hit and move us over a foot or two.

I'm not whining here. It was sunny and 65, remember? Trees had just sprouted tiny buds, a few daffodils were blooming, and I'd even used some sun-screen.

But what a wind!! We caught the northwest corner of St. Joseph County, turned west into northeast Cass County and did our very best to remember the most wooded stretches of road. We made it to Marcellus before stopping to turn around, dazed, amazed and out of breath, our ears ringing from the wind and our sweat landing a quarter mile or so back from where the wind whipped it off our noses and chins.

What goes around comes around though, and with that huge wind behind us, we were suddenly looking for gears missing from the *other* end of the rear cluster. No sooner did we turn north onto Maple Street in Marcellus than the big gears beckoned with amazing friendliness. "C'mon," those tiny sprockets at the outside of the cluster called to us, "let's cover some ground the way the boys in the peloton do."

The opportunity to turn gears that big, in early April, mile after mile, as fast as our legs would spin was training bordering on the extraordinary. And tremendous fun. The wind was so fast there wasn't really much draft—the same effort took us 35 mph regardless of who was in front.

And no noise!! 35 mph and we're spun out, doing the same speed as the wind. The whiz of the gears and the whir of the tires made a soft background for our efforts. Conversation's easy, but sparse—too much fun to be had. On occasion we could hear the wind roaring—not whistling—through trees and bushes nearby even while it's silent on the bike.

If I can ever work it out, I'm going to get somebody to drive us a hundred miles out into a wind like that so we can do a one-way, seriously wind-aided century. Want to ride along—it shouldn't take too long!

## Important Stuff

You probably know that ISTEA, an acronym that can be loosely translated as Federal Money For Bike Lanes and Trails, is before Congress again this year.

The forces working against us are rich and powerful, and their philosophy can be summed up as To Hell With Bikes, Let's Build Another Freeway.

Well, the truth is that a bunch of money will be going to further the automotive legacy the twentieth century has bequeathed upon us no matter what.

**BUT WE WANT OUR SHARE, RIGHT?**

So, clip out the bottom half of this page, sign it, make a few copies, and MAIL THEM.

Rep. Fred Upton  
2333 Rayburn Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Sen. Spencer Abraham  
B-40 Dirksen Office Bldg.  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator/Congressman:

Riding a bike should be fun and safe. Communities prosper when they offer children and adults healthy and secure transportation options. Yet traffic congestion and poor road design are keeping millions of people from enjoying their bicycles.

**We can do better.**

We ask Congress for the funding to provide **safe** places to bicycle, both on and off road. We need more trails, more bike paths, and more bike lanes. Keep good planning for bikes in the federal transportation law. Preserve funding—and add more funding—for bikes.

Sincerely,



**KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB**  
 P.O. Box 50527  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49005

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**KALAMAZOO AREA BIKE SHOPS**

Alfred E. Bike ..... 349-9423  
 Billy's Bike Shop ..... 665-5202  
 Breakaway Bicycles ..... 324-5555  
 Cycle Works & Sports ..... 353-7615  
 Milwood Schwinn ..... 349-6384  
 Parchment Bicycle ..... 343-8118  
 Portage Schwinn ..... 327-3393  
 Pro Sport ..... 381-7233  
 Team III Schwinn ..... 962-7688  
 Village Cyclery ..... 679-4242  
 Vorncamp Bike ..... 344-3599

**KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**Dues (Check One)**

- Adult Membership ..... \$15.00
- Family ..... \$17.00
- Senior (60+) ..... \$13.00
- Youth (17 or younger) ..... \$13.00

**Please Print**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Member Names**

**Birthdates**


Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature (if under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in working on KBC Events?  Yes  No

Registered Racer:  USCF  NORBA

SEND TO: KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB, PO BOX 50527, KALAMAZOO MI 49005