

Pedal Press



The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Inc., January, 1999

President's Letter

The turnout at the regular weekly rides was great this year. Lots of big groups going out. Too bad not all the riders were KBC members (See article in next column). Still, everyone is welcome, member or not. Probably the biggest increases were in the fast groups. KBC seems headed towards fast and hard riding at the expense of the more tourist type riders.

Everyone has figured out by now that KBC leaders want more member participation in organizing events. The slower groups (please don't take offense) didn't have quite the increase in popularity. These more leisurely rides are what I'd like to work on this year. When I joined KBC five years ago it was more social, with more rides just for the fun of riding. The Thursday Scooter's Ice Cream ride was just fading out. This was a popular ride and social event. The ride was very nice, but the ice cream afterwards really drew people out. Our annual Flowerfest Tour is a great way to get new and entry level riders out without making them feel like less of a rider, but it is only once a year. This kind of ride (and rider) seems to be getting lost—or should I say dropped.

KBC is what you make it. The Board is here to give guidance and generally oversee activities, but cannot create a host of new events and make them happen without the members—you—getting involved. Members (and this means all of us) can easily create new events and rides. Then KBC can help to bring it together. I would like to see one special event per week.

We need rides and events for the mountain biker, tourist, and family riders, in addition to the faster rides. We even have some money to spend for prizes, trophies, or food. Please think of a ride you would like to do, a weekly event or just a one-time happening. Would you like an evening Fort Custer trail ride? How about a kids' bicycle rodeo? Make a few basic plans. It doesn't take much effort. Then let us know and we'll spread the word.

- Richard Walter

Coming Events

January 16th: KBC's Annual Recovery Party. 6:00 p.m. University Roadhouse, 1332 W. Michigan Ave., across from the WMU track. Beer! Schwag,! Fun!

All KBC Members Listed In This Issue

This issue of the KBC *Pedal Press* includes a list of all current KBC members, all 244 of us. Please forgive me if I made any mistakes, and I apologize that the new members for January aren't on the list, though they are on page 2.

I don't know who a good half of the members are, even though I attend nearly all KBC events. This has me thinking that lots of our members don't do many KBC activities. I see lots of family memberships. Probably many families have one or two people with a special interest in biking, but the whole family is signed up anyway, which is certainly a good thing.

The most interesting thing is to think of who's NOT on this list that should be. I can think of 8 or 10 people I ride with pretty often who apparently aren't members of KBC. They will be hearing from me, and I can hardly wait to hear the excuses. Frankly, they'd better have some plenty good stories figured out, because otherwise I'm going to do all I can to take their dues and sign them up on the spot. If they refuse, I'll summon the Flat Tire Genie to pay frequent and untimely visits upon their rides.

Surely I jest, but this really is a serious point. As much as bicyclists have to struggle for whatever rights we have, there is no reason anyone who rides around Kalamazoo should not be a member of KBC. Annual dues cost less than one mediocre tire, for heaven's sake! Just reading Axel Kleat's pearls of wisdom every month is worth that much, easy!

SO I'M ASKING YOU ALL TO LOOK AT THIS LIST AND SEE WHO YOU KNOW THAT OUGHT TO BE ON IT, GIVE THEM A COPY OF THE BACK PAGE OF A *PEDAL PRESS*, AND GET THEM TO SIGN UP.

- Doug Kirk

KBC Annual Recovery Party Set For January 16th

Plans are shaping up nicely for the annual KBC Recovery Party to be held at the University Roadhouse, 1332 W. Michigan Ave. (across from the WMU track) at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday January 16th.

Your KBC Board members are hard at work using all available powers of persuasion to obtain the coolest possible schwag from the local bike shops to be given away to you...and you...and you! As in years past, the Roadhouse promises dandy food and excellent spirits, both alcoholic and otherwise.

Besides, you wouldn't want to miss our just-retired (note: NOT impeached) President Tom Cross exercising his prerogative to name the KBC Volunteer of the Year.

So throw away those pesky New Year's resolutions for an evening, and come have a good time. See you there!

- Doug Kirk

Board Informed KBC In The Black

Thanks primarily to the efforts of the many people who worked hard to make last summer's Flowerfest a success, KBC is actually in the black. Not rich, or even well off, but we have some money. Exact numbers aren't done yet, but between our past treasurer, Mike Higgins, and our new treasurer, Paul Stevens, we might just have an annual treasurer's report to reprint here in the next couple of months.

Money was one of several things discussed at the December 15, 1998 KBC Board meeting, along with how to spend it and plans and ideas for a possible new KBC jersey. There was also preliminary talk of a new design for Flowerfest T-shirts for the 1999 Tour, which will be July 18, 1999, and may well include a 100 mile route in addition to the 25, 40, and 62 mile routes—as well as the kid's route. Stay tuned for more information.

Flowerfest Tour Planning Meeting Set

Al Cergol asks that anyone in 1999 Flowerfest planning please meet at the Portage Public Library group study room on Tuesday, January 19 at 6:30. It would be great to get a head start on lining things up, so be there if you can.

KBC Needs Volunteer For Ride Line

KBC needs a volunteer to operate the Ride Line. This is not a great deal of work, and generally can be done from your home. The Ride Line is simply a means for interested people to learn what rides are happening when, or to obtain information about joining KBC. If interested, please call Richard Walter, KBC President, at 649-1944.

January Birthdays

Paul Banner
 Alfredo Barros
 Deborah Bauer
 Jeff Binczyk
 Jack Bley
 Jini Caruso
 Brad Cosgrove
 Mike Cutler
 Dan Ferrara
 Doug Gaff
 Joe Gallagher
 Jeff Kokmeyer
 John Mathieson
 Preston Miller
 Leigh Miller
 Jon Orr
 Mike Teel
 Bill Watt

New Members

Greg Bouwman
 Jennifer Bouwman
 Sandy Kimbrough
 Mike White
 Molly White
 Hope White
 Robert White

Air Express

by Zoltan Cohen

You know the way a kid often tries to imitate his parents when he's trying to learn something? So it was when I went on a nighttime trail ride with Dr. Axel Kleat recently.

I'm pretty new to biking, so I tend to watch my "elders" carefully. These are people who have put in thousands of road and trail miles a year, for more years than a lot of them can count anymore. They're a fount of knowledge, and most are willing to share their hard-won wisdom with beginning bikers.

You can also learn a great deal just by watching one of these craggy, battle scarred veterans in action. Dr. Kleat and I found ourselves riding side by side on this particular night last month, a day after a huge wind-storm. In my neighborhood, tree limbs were down on the ground everywhere, and on the trail it was worse. There were branches of every shape and size scattered about, from ones you could gnaw in two with the treads on your mountain bike, to those that we had to dismount to get our bikes over—or under, in the case of a huge, dead specimen that had fallen exactly perpendicular to the trail.

Kleat was in his usual fine fettle, as he is generally on a bike of any shape, size, age, composition, or color. However, every now and then, he'd stand on the pedals, crouch down, and then spring up violently. His bike would subsequently spring up underneath him, and he'd fly forward several feet completely airborne.

Whoa! Was that cool or what? He was hopping over some of the branches he didn't wish to ride over. What a great trick. I asked him about it, and within an hour or so, I managed to extract his opinions on the history, technique, and origin of "bunny hopping," as he called it. With his thorough explanation in mind, I felt confident I'd be able to perform this feat of magical levitation myself with a bit of practice.

Unfortunately, by the time he completed his dialogue, we were already slouched in the bar area of a certain notorious hangout, fingers laced around beer steins, not handlebars. I'd have to be patient.

Well, the next day I awoke determined to master bunny hopping, and to show the good doctor that I was quick learner on our next ride. I hotfooted it over to the Kal Haven Trail, which also was littered with storm debris.

There were literally millions of great obstacles to avoid by the magic of spring loading my legs and jerking the bike up at the same time. I was all a-tingle with excitement and anticipation.

The first couple of hops went pretty well. I managed to get at least the front wheel off the ground, although I still could feel the back tire dragging over the branch I was attempting to elude. Hm, I thought, maybe I need a bigger leg spring. I spotted a likely branch on the trail ahead and revved up the bike to screaming speed--12-13 miles an hour. Gathering my legs under me, I emulated Dr. Kleat's expert crouch, and sprang. Hard.

Ever have one of those "Uh oh" moments? Those times when you know you're really in for it? That your worst fears are about to not only be realized, but expanded upon?

With Presidents, it's the growing knowledge that you've painted yourself into a corner, and that you're going to have to appear on television to confess what you never really wanted to become public. With bikers, there's an airborne moment of freedom before the fall that is painless--perhaps pain-free--by the anticipation of the pain that is to come. I had such an airborne moment.

But, like all objects under the influence of gravity, I eventually came to earth. Or rather, I "become intimately acquainted with" might be a better description, the top tube on my mountain bike. So, because I think it's important to learn from the mistakes of others, I pass along this warning. And I've made up a sticker containing this information that I'm screwing to the handlebar of my bike:

NEVER bunny hop while wearing white, smooth soled, athletic shoes, on a bike equipped with aged Campy smooth soled pedals with toe clips.

Your feet will slip out of the pedals, giving you no control, and leaving you no way to arrest your fall. You will become a human tubing-bender.

Well, I've managed to hammer most of the bend out of my top tube by now. At least it doesn't interfere with the cranks anymore. And the bandages are due to come off before Y2K really becomes a major issue. I've been ruminating on this experience, and flashing back to that trail ride with Dr. Kleat. Hey, he was clipped into his pedals! He wasn't in toe clips at all! Details, details. Man, you've really got to home in what you're seeing, or you'll get it all wrong.

KBC Member List as of December, 1998

Arthur Albin	Phil Caruso	Rebecca Gaff
Lee Anderson	Brian Clissold	Peter Gaff
Kathy Appledorn	Libby Heiny-Cogswell	Doug Gaff
Alex Appleman	Adam Cogswell	Brendan Gaff
Duva Appleman	Jack Cogswell	Joe Gallagher
Paul Banner	Vince Cogswell	Clayton Gallap
Brent Barker	Ken Cogswell	Judy Gapp
Adrienne Barker	Zolton Cohen	Liam Gapp
Jeff Barker	Mary Cohen	Mike Gapp
Sandy Barker	Becky Copenhaver	Rich Gellert
Betsy Barnes	Brad Cosgrove	Casey Gershon
Christopher Barnes	Charles Crawford	Richard Gershon
Stephen Barnes	Rhonda Cross	Matthew Gershon
Miriam Barnes	Thomas Cross	Terri Glass
Kathy Barrett	Michelle Cudahy	David Goldenberg
Alfredo Barros	Mike Cutler	Sue Goldenberg
Sean Bauer	Mary Dawson	Mike Goodrich
Jack Bauer	Bruce DeDee	Mary Goodsett
Deborah Bauer	Rosanne Degen	Sherry Gordon
Andrew Bauer	Don Degen	Paul Grabowski
Megan Bauer	Diana Degen	Jeanette Greselin
Meghann Beauchamp	Dan Degen	Beatriz Gronert
Kate Beauchamp	Carl Degen	Brian Gronert
Michael Beauchamp	Joe Dill	Mona Gronert
Robert Bell	Julie Dill	Eve Gronert
Jeff Binczyk	Ron Doering	Paul Guimond
Chloe Binczyk	Laurie Doering	Anne Guimond
Alyssa Binczyk	Danna Downing	Tom Gushurst
Kellie Binczyk	Stephen Dunyaiak	Claire Gushurst
Tam Blackstone	Amy Ferguson	Colette Gushurst
Jack Bley	Gabrielle Ferrara	Eric Gushurst
Gerald Blohm	Christina Ferrara	Jodi Hansen
John Brady	Karen Ferrara	Janice Herrick
Lauren Brady	Dan Ferrara	Jim Herweg
Alyce Brady	Patricia Frye	Sherry Higgins
Kathryn Breese	Cara Fuentes	Mike Higgins
Ron Bush	Toni Fuentes	John Hoek
Kim Cameron	Charles Fuentes	Jeanette Holm
Jay Campbell	Pat Fuentes	Laurie Holmes
Jini Caruso	Clarissa Gaff	Tom Holmes

KBC Member List as of December, 1998

Terry Hutchins	Will McWhorter	Rollin Richman
Kathy Hutchins	Mary Meagher	Beatrice Ritchie
Mary Ellen Jachec	Barbara Miller	William Ritchie
Terry Jackson	Greg Miller	Ernst Roeseler
David Jarl	Carrie Miller	Greg Sackett
Joe Jewett	Leigh Miller	Diane Schlanser
Ann Johnson	James Miller	Jackson Scholl
Chris Jones	Preston Miller	Clara Scholl
John Jones	Patricia Morales	David Sluyter
Mike Jones	Roma Mott	Daniel B. Smith
Sheri Jones	Juliette Mott	Leigh Smith
Robert Kennedy	John Mott	John Sorenson
Roscoe Kennedy	Alyssa Muller	Isaac Standish
Stephanie Kennedy	Robin Muller	Rick Standish
Doug Kirk	Cliff Muller	Tyler Stevens
Nick Kissinger	Joseph Nuismier	Paul Stevens
Larry Kissinger	Terry O'Connor	Jill Stewart
Susan Kissinger	Amanda O'Leary	Harriet Swanson
Kerri Kissinger	Helen O'Leary	Janet Teel
Jim Koehler	Grace O'Leary	Zachary Teel
Tammy Koehler	Chris O'Leary	Mike Teel
Jeff Kokmeyer	Erin O'Leary	John Thome
Mark Krook	Renny Oas	Beverly Thome
Ruth Krueger	Donna Oas	James VanBuren
Dale Krueger	Vincent Odenwaller	Judy VanFleet
Lucian Leone	Joan Orman	Victor VanFleet
Melissa Lively	Jon Orr	Kevin Vonderfecht
Gary Lewandowski	Kathy Orr	Carolyn Vonderfecht
Bryan Lewis	Rebecca Pearce	Steve Vonderfecht
John Looman	Susan Peterson	Tyson Vonderfecht
David Lowery	Harley Pierce	Laurie Walsworth-LeMieux
David Luce	Sally Pitt	Richard Walter
Richard Lutz	Don Povendo	Bill Watt
Spencer Mack	Mark Prairie	Sam Watt
Amy Mack	Linda Prescott	Susan Watts
George Mack	Henry Presseller	Libbie Wetters
Arielle Mack	Andrew Price	Tyler Wetters
Robert Martin	Randy Putt	Jeff Wetters
John Mathieson	Mary Rass	Rick Whaley
Rose McKenna	Jim Ratliff	Jim Wilson
J. S. McNutt	Angie Richman	James Wyrick

What A Year

by Axel Kleat

Everyone else has raved about the weather, this year, so why not me? Never, ever, has the weather been so cooperative for riding as in 1998.

Maybe the warm winter and early spring, together with a dry but not-too-dry and hot but not-too-hot summer, AND a fall that lasted nearly to Christmas were all courtesy of El Nino. Or maybe the dreaded global-warming finally happened, and it's not so bad after all. Yet. Or maybe it was just a really nice year, an aberration, a once-in-a-lifetime statistical anomaly. I don't know, but I do know it was a year I'll long remember for fabulous riding weather.

Looking back at my calendar, I see that I got out and rode twelve days in February. That means nearly half the days in the second worst month of the year for riding met my minimums of clear and mostly dry roads and temperatures over 40 degrees! Four of those rides were over 50 miles—figure at least three hours on the bike. It's gotta be amazingly nice in February (and definitely over forty degrees) for me to ride that far. Heck, I got out seven times in January!

March was only a little less amazing, but I rode twelve days again. The calendar shows an 82 mile ride in 75 degrees, one of four 70+ degree days. This was March, in Michigan, for heaven's sake! I averaged over 100 miles a week, which means there had to be lots of nice days, especially since daylight savings time didn't start until April.

By April, it was so nice, I quit bothering to write down the temperature. I rode two thirds of the days, with a long ride every weekend. Of course, by May it was rideable outside nearly every day. I was having so much fun I did five centuries. Seriously good weather was available nearly every day for the next five months.

Summer was simply great, so fast forward to fall. I rode two-thirds of the days in October, and passed up a few to get some rest. November and December were truly amazing, with over twenty rideable days in November, and only three days below forty degrees (and many over 55) from December first through the fifteenth. I absolutely, positively would not have

believed the weather could be this nice, this long, around here.

Assuming every day is rideable June through September (which is not entirely true, but it's close enough), I figure over 265 days were good riding weather in 1998—at least in the low forties and dry roads—something over seventy percent of the year.

How great is this? Here's how great: I did some riding with a bike tour guide from south Texas this fall. He says that five full months in the summer down there are simply too hot to ride, unless you go out at dawn and are back in an hour or so. Think about it. He got far fewer good riding days than we did this year.

There is indeed such a thing as living too far south for optimum riding weather, where it's too hot, especially at the times you might like to get out. There are plenty of places down there that sound good this time of year but are steam baths in the summer—lots hotter than around here. Nice places to visit, but...would you really want to live and ride there? Yes, the weather here was pretty terrific this year

I'd like to know who—or—what to thank for all this great weather this year. If it's El Nino, well, I'm hoping this isn't just a one year sort of thing. I could get spoiled about this stuff pretty easily—already am in fact. El Nino has made a big friend here, and is welcome in my neighborhood for as long as it wants to stay. Heck, I'm going public right here offering El Nino our spare room upstairs rent free.

If it's global warming we have to thank, well, I've got mixed feelings. This would mean continuing warm weather, maybe even warmer yet, and the splendid riding that comes with it, but when the ice caps melt and the oceans rise, I'll have to admit there would be a down side. All those people living on the coasts would have to move someplace, presumably inland, which would create all sorts of problems. Not the least of which would be more traffic clogging my favorite roads.

Or maybe it was just dumb luck. Statistically improbable, but something that happens every fifty or hundred years. The next year or two ought to give us a clue, but for now, I'm just grateful. And ready for a little rest. What a year for riding!

My First Dalmac by Randy Putt

(Continued from last month. - Ed.)

DAY 3

Another gorgeous day. Riders breaking camp about 5:30 AM again, but when you're asleep by 10:00 PM getting up by 6 AM isn't so bad. I could get used to this new schedule. Plus, I suffer fewer taunts from my partners. Al, Larry, Rollin, and I started at 7:55 AM today, but still missed Doug and Kathy. Maybe tomorrow we'll make it in time to start with that tandem.

The hills have started to pick up, but there was more downhill today, especially between Cadillac and Traverse City. The view north as we dropped down to Grand Traverse Bay was fabulous. The big lake at last! After a quick half a mile on US 31, we took a quick right and were rewarded with the biggest hill so far as we climbed away from Grand Traverse Bay on our way to Elk Rapids.

At a check point near Elk Rapids, we met THE Dick Allen. Dick is a retired member of the Michigan Legislature, and originated DALMAC (which is short for Dick Allen Lansing to Mackinaw). He still rides it, too, 28 years later! We lunched at the 64 mile mark in Elk Rapids at pizza place recommended by Kathy and Doug. The pizza was good and the view of Lake Michigan from Elk Rapids was even better.

The scenery the third day was great, with fine views of Elk Lake, Torch Lake, and Lake Bellaire. The turquoise blue water color reminds me of the Caribbean. The beauty of the lakes in northern Michigan still amazes me. At the south end of Torch Lake we headed for a little known public access that Rollin remembered from a previous DALMAC and took a swim in Torch Lake. Talk about refreshing, after 80 miles of riding! Then on to Bellaire, only about 10 miles, to set up camp. Since we only had 90 miles, Rollin and I took off on our own and logged another 10 to get our century.

I got camp set up in no time. Showers at the high school were cold (that's what happens when you get there late), so that was fast too. An all you could eat barbecue chicken dinner made up for the cold shower. We took another walk in search for ice cream, and sleep came easily once again.

DAY 4

I was up before 6 AM, stuffed my tent, and had my

gear packed away with no help! I actually waited for one of my riding partners. And yet another beautiful day. We left Bellaire at 7:30 AM amazingly enough before Kathy and Doug. Their tandem was still parked at the bed & breakfast they'd reserved when we coasted by.

The first few miles started out flat, but that all changed with several long climbs. Our group of four broke up a bit in the hills. So I hooked up with two other riders and took turns drafting and sling shooting past one another during a fast and beautiful descent into Boyne City. What a blast!

We regrouped in Boyne City and found an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast where Kathy and Doug soon turned up. After a long climb out of town, we hooked up with Kathy and Doug between Boyne City and Harbor Springs and they led us on a wild ride through the Seven Sisters, a technical series of short, steep hills and curves around Walloon Lake.

Then to several rolling hills known as the "Mounds" into Petoskey. I could not stay with the tandem through this section. We found the toughest climb of the tour leaving downtown Petoskey, believe or not.

After Petoskey we rode along Lake Michigan into Harbor Springs past some fabulous summer homes. We picked up sandwiches, and had lunch in a park on the bay, drinking from the convenient artesian well across the street.

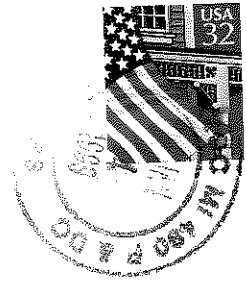
Refueled, Rollin and I set off to ride the famous "tunnel of trees" between Harbor Springs and Cross Village.. What a gorgeous stretch of road! It's about 20 miles long with a speed limit between 25 and 45 mph, uphill, downhill, curves, and scenic vistas overlooking Lake Michigan. Then the route finally flattened out along the sand dunes heading north to Wilderness State Park. Rollin and I hooked up with another rider for the final push in to Mackinaw City. It was flat with the wind at our back, so we hammered in a pace line the last 15 miles.

We stopped when the Bridge came into view. What a beautiful sight. Al and Larry turned up, and I've never seen so many bikes in one place. We all lined up two abreast and away we went. The pace for the Bridge crossing was tedious, led by State Troopers, but what an experience. We finally arrived at St Ignace high school after 110 miles.

What a great feeling to finish such a great ride! The fourth day was the best with the third day a close second. The ride had everything, the weather was fabulous, I had great riding partners, and I rode through some of the most beautiful scenery I've ever seen. I had a great time and would highly recommend DALMAC. I'm sure I will ride it again.



KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB.
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 Kalamazoo, MI 49005



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Expires 00/02

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 Newsletter Editor: Doug Kirk 388-5045
 E-Mail: Kirkdoug@aol.com
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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 Active 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