

NEW PRESIDENT’S LETTER—DOUG KIRK

Winston Churchill advised England’s House of Commons in 1945, “Those who fail to learn from history are condemned to repeat it.”¹ Apparently this tidbit of wisdom has been lost on you, the members of KBC, as you’ve once again elected me president.

Which is proof, as if more is necessary, of my favorite universal truth, “What goes around comes around.”²

Newer KBC members can be forgiven for not knowing I presided over this august organization back around the turn of the century.³ I’m pretty sure I ran unopposed then too—a handy method to assure victory. It also saves the hassle of campaigning.

My memory of what KBC actually did back then—other than sponsor Monday & Wednesday rides and Kaltour (Flowerfest, as it was known back then)—is essentially non-existent. I’d like to blame this black hole on the memory loss that seems to be endemic to those of us well into our seventh decade, but truth be told I don’t think we really did do much else.

Oh sure, a few of us raced, but the old KBC Race Team had long since led out its last sprint. We had monthly meetings, but 10 people was a decent turnout. I cannot deny that I did my level best to be emulate Dwight Eisenhower, doing as little as possible to keep the ship afloat and generally upright.⁴

The club has grown in so many ways since I turned the controls over to...

someone! (I honestly cannot remember who.) Membership has roughly doubled. We have a terrific and constantly evolving website. Bike Camp is a fixture each spring. Our rides are far more organized and accessible to riders of all abilities—and are also two or three times as well attended. We are a non-profit corporation. We offer insurance. We donate money to deserving cycling-related causes. We are closely allied with the vibrant and very successful Team Clark Logic race team. We work with local governments to enact bike-friendly legislation and improve bike-related infrastructure. We educate the public about bicycle safety.

In short, KBC is a much more mature organization than it was fifteen or twenty years ago. This is a very good thing. Not so good is all the maturity all those intervening years have bestowed on me.⁵

Exactly what must I do to fulfill my presidential obligations besides chair the monthly meetings, occasionally scribble something for the *PedalPress* and emcee the recovery party? I figure I’d better go find out, then get to work acting presidential—which I assume means sending everybody else off to do whatever needs to be done!⁶

In the meantime, if you have something on your chest you’ve been dying to beef to the president about, but couldn’t bring yourself to unload on someone as nice and polite and gentle as Renee, looks like I’m your target.

And if you’re wondering what the heck all those dang footnotes are for, hey, give me a break—I’m a lawyer!⁷ [End notes p. 7 –Ed.]

Doug Kirk, President@KalamazooBicycleClub.org



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Recovery Party! Your input needed. See p. 7
- Come VOTE for annual FRIEND of BICYCLING award—see p. 8
- Do you take pictures? Send some cycling pics for inclusion in future *PedalPress* issues! [edi-tor@kalamazooBicycleClub.org](mailto:editor@kalamazooBicycleClub.org)

KBC MEETING NOTES—NOVEMBER 13, 2018

Finance report:

As of 11/12, the club had the following balances:

\$3,980.24 in PayPal

\$7,453.95 in PNC Checking

\$6,176.12 in PNC CD

Special funds: Jeremy Smith: \$560, Education: \$3,843.75,

undesignated donation: \$250

Total: \$4,653.75

Total general funds: \$2,800.20

There will be some larger expenses in the next several months including the club's insurance payment, education club expenses for 5' education materials, recovery party expenses and the sponsorship for Team Clark Logic.

THANK YOU DONORS!

Pedal North Bicycle Shop
Pedal South Bicycle Shop
Zoo City Bicycle Shop
Arienne Associates
Village Bicycle Shop
Tomme Maile
Karen Chapman
Doug & Kathy Kirk
Thom Brennan
Paul Sotherland
Paul Selden
Mike Boersma, in memory of Garrett Boersma
Julia Bates
Dennis Lundgren
Rick Whaley
Barbara Hart
Ryan Heidenfeld
Richard Rumsey
Paul Runnels
Teri Olbrot
Steven Stapleton
Marriann Litznerski
Dale Abbott
Bruce Withers
Andrew Foster

The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are tax deductible. You may donate here: <https://www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/donate-to-kbc/>

You may also designate how you wish your donation be used: general KBC activities, 5 foot passing education, or the Tuesday Night Time Trial series.

You may also donate by check by sending your donation to Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 50527, Kalamazoo, MI 49005. Please write "Donation" in the memo line.

Thank you, Mike Boersma
KBC Treasurer

KBC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Terry Butcher, Ride Captain, thanked the club for their support and encouragement as he acted as ride captain. He also mentioned that he was happy to see 8th St temporarily opened. He mentioned that the club rides continued to be attended in large numbers through the month of October. Gordy mentioned that this was a record year for ride attendance with new riders showing up to rides after Labor Day. Gordy felt that Bike Camp attendees participated in the rides throughout the season more than previous years and also that women who previously did only the women's rides are attending the co-ed rides in higher numbers

Paul Guimond, TCL Delegate. Thanked the senior leadership for the dedication and service. Renee asked if the team races through the winter. Paul mentioned that the team is doing group rides through the winter. The Frosted Fat BIke race is coming up in January. Renee thanked the team for their involvement and participation.

Pam Sotherland, KBC's Friend of Bicycling Award. Three nominations were submitted prior to the meeting. Doug Kirk nominated Kzoo Swift making bicycling available for a segment of the community not served by other bike shops during the meeting. Doug was instructed by Pam to send the nomination in writing via email prior to the end of the meeting to have the nomination submitted according to the rules by the deadline. The committee will vet the nominations, publish information about the nominees in the December PedalPress, and they will be voted on during the December meeting. Gordy asked if anyone has been rewarded twice, and Pam clarified that no one has been rewarded twice. Paul Selden mentioned that the intent is to give the award to a party outside of cycling to reward them for their support and to encourage their continued engagement with the cycling community.

John Idema, Recovery Party: The recovery party will not be at Eckert Wordell as the venue will not be available this year. The event will take place at WInd and James, owned by Jamie Clark of Team Clark Logic this year. It is a larger facility and there will be ample parking at the facility. Jamie has generously accepted a nominal fee for the reservation. John Idema may reach out to club members for assistance in planning and volunteering during the recovery party.

KBC MEETING NOTES CONTINUED –NOVEMBER 13, 2018

Paul Wells, Education Committee: The education committee has received 1,000 magnets to support the 5' passing law. Paul hopes to widely distribute the magnets in the spring as greater numbers of cyclists start riding on the roads again to call attention to the need to drive safely around cyclists. The signs are being distributed in Team Active in Battle Creek, PFC, and the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. Paul wants to remind people to put their yard signs out as soon as the weather gets nicer. Thom Brennan mentioned that we should mention this in the March PedalPress. Paul Selden mentioned that Bike Week will be happy to support the increased distribution of the signs. More "What Every Bicyclist Should Know" booklets have been ordered. Renee mentioned putting a label on the booklets to let recipients know that the booklets are from the club. Paul mentioned that it's important to communicate that the state law does not supersede the local 5' passing ordinances. There was an extensive conversation about whether or not this is the case. Paul Guimond mentioned that he felt the signs in Portage are difficult to read. Paul Wells mentioned that the signs were designed by Chris Barnes. Paul also felt that the text was too small to read. Doug Kirk mentioned that we could reach out to the traffic director of the city of Portage. Thom Brennan and Paul Wells are going to do a presentation for Kalamazoo Metro Bus Drivers similar to what was done for the school bus drivers during the next training for the drivers. The transportation director would like a video for newly hired drivers to watch. Doug Kirk recently filed a complaint which led to a conversation with the director. He followed up on an incident and there was footage of a bus passing him very closely. Doug stated that it was a teachable moment and offered to provide the education. For Bike Camp, the listing is up on the LMB ride calendar. The YMCA in Portage is being booked again for some of the Saturdays. Other Saturdays will be at Texas Township Park. Orientation will be Thursday, May 9th. The location is to be determined. Paul Sotherland will open registration on the website in January. We will likely print and distribute posters again.

Vote for Executive Committee. The 2019 nominees (all unopposed) are as follows:
Doug Kirk, President * Paul Sotherland, Vice President * Mike Boersma, Treasurer *
Valerie Litznerski, Secretary

John Olbrot motioned to accept the four nominees and Dave Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously. As his first act as president-elect, Doug Kirk asked that the candy is passed around again. Paul Selden thanked the current EC for their service. Also the EC has introduced a number of innovations, including surveying the membership for feedback. The outgoing EC also created a budget that was released to the board of directors laying the groundwork for a working budget. The ride experience for attendees has been enhanced with lots of support from John Olbrot. Paul feels like the membership is more engaged and involved in the club's decisions.

Ride Leader Sanctioning. No one was sanctioned because sanctioning would expire shortly.

New business

Mike Boersma: the club is looking for some with experience integrating Quickbooks Online and PayPal. Also now is a great time to consider making a tax-deductible donation to the club. Donations can be made online and you can designate funds to current club activities. There is no active year-end campaign as defined under 501(c)3 annual campaigns. Doug Kirk: not all members are receiving newsletters if they are under family membership. If you are having a problem, please reach out to Dave Jones. Renee: does not know how to send mail through MailChimp to have the messages to all members. Paul Selden: Doug's [Kirk] is now the PedalPress editor emeritus. John Olbrot said that the next newsletter editor will be announced soon. Paul Guimond: the club should reach out to the team to encourage volunteering and to increase engagement. John Olbrot: mentorship from club members might help new riders and volunteers. Renee: past participation by team members is Bike Camp was always appreciated.

Old business: None.

Paul Sotherland motioned to adjourn. John Olbrot Seconded.

ATTENDEES

Valerie Litznerski

Terry O'Connor

Kathy Kirk

Paul Sotherland

Doug Kirk

Rick Whaley

Scott F. Powers

Thom Brennan

Bonnie Conway

Dale Abbott

Andrea Melchiori

Gordy Vader

Paul Selden

Pam Sotherland

Renee Mitchell

John Idema

Dale B Krueger

John Olbrot

Marc A Irwin

David Riggs

Ryan Heidenfeld

Teri Olbrot

Paul Wells

David Jones

Ted Robinson

Kevin Wheeler

Kevin Oostema

Paul Guimond

Terry Butcher

Mike Boersma



RACE REPORTS

Iceman

Matt Gunderson Iceman fatbike 40-49AG 14th of 126

Paul Bonar Iceman 9th AG 238 Overall

Dan Kannegieter 1st in AG 77th overall

Tory Cane 2nd Fatbike Women

Elliott Parcels Iceman 4th age group, 151st overall

Chris Mowell 10th Age Group 271st Overall

Mike Jones 3rd 56-57

Tyson Gilmore 5th Men's 41

Scott Steure: 12th 50+ Men - Fat Bike

Ray Fulkerson -3rd Age Group

Greg Worsnop – 12th AG

Custer Last Stand

Dan Kannegieter Elite/ Pro 2nd

Paul Bonar - 2nd expert AG

Chris Mowell Elite / Pro 4th Place

Ray Fulkerson -1st 50+

Note: The Prize Purse that Dan K received at Custer's Last Stand was donated directly to the fundraiser. The rest of the podium followed suit.

Lord of the Springs

Dan Kannegieter 1st age group

The Pit cyclocross

Dan Kannegieter A Race 2nd

Chris Mowell A Race 6th

Markin Glenn cyclocross

Dan Kannegieter - A class 4th

Senior Olympics

Jim Kindle – 10K Time Trial - 6th AG

Jim Kindle — Road Race 3rd AG

Michigan Mountain Mayhem

Elliott Parcels 13th overall, 3rd AG.

Matt Gunderson -. 5th AG

Lowell 33

Elliott Parcels 17th overall, 3rd in AG.

Chris Mowell - Lowell 33mi 1st 30-34 AG 4th Overall

Dan Frazier - 5th in AG

Mike Jones - 3rd Men 55-59 AG

Scott Steurer – 7th – Men 50-59 AG

Dan Kannegieter – 5th AG

Peak 2 Peak

Chris Mowell - Expert 12th AG 52 Overall

Kisscross - October 21

Dan Frazier - Race #3 - Sport Men 40+ - 7th Place

Kisscross - October 28

Dan Frazier - Race #4 - Sport Men 40+ - 6th Place

Great Turtle Half Marathon

Paul Guimond 2nd AG

Bike Racing is a team sport – Dan Kannegieter had a mechanical issue which dropped him out of the lead group of riders and podium contention. Dan then sacrificed himself to help both I would also like to give a huge shout out to Dan Kannegieter for sacrificing himself to help two teammates (Scott and Frazier). Dan fell back to a group of more than 20 riders that Scott and Frazier were a part of. He worked the front and pushed the pace hard for the last several miles of the race. In the last half mile or so, when it became evident that there were going to be around 20 people remaining for the sprint finish, Dan went to the front with Frazier on his wheel and did a great lead out for the final sprint. Frazier jumped off his wheel just a little too late, but still held on for second in the group sprint.



Paul in his winter commuting kit

MEMBER PROFILE: PAUL GUIMOND, YEAR—ROUND COMMUTER

How did you get into cycling? I rode in college just to get back and forth. My sister came back from the Peace Corps and needed a car so I let her use the car and I rode to work. It was only 4 miles. I started riding in the winter and bought a cheap bike. Then I just realized that I could keep riding all year round. My job moved farther away and I still rode most of the time. I got smarter about commuting safety: two front lights and two back lights. I picked safer routes and added better clothing. I changed my bike to a single speed to limit repairs. Once the snow hits I switch my wheels: older studs year round, then switch to newer studs to get better grip if there is snow.

What do you enjoy most about it? There are some real benefits. I ride 12 miles in the morning, 4 miles home. I get a little exercise, and save gas. My 2004 car has only 85,000 miles on it. I don't have to decide if I am riding or driving. The only questions I ask are which clothes am I wearing and which tires am I going to ride?

What is your annual mileage? According to my Garmin data in 2017 I rode 8,402 miles and so far in 2018 I have 8,802. I have also run more than 400 miles and over 200 yoga classes in each of those years.

How do people respond when they find out you ride in the winter? I get a lot of stares from drivers and people at work are bemused by it. But I have gotten some people into riding because of it. It is a little crazy sometimes, especially when it is raining hard. You definitely have to think through the logistics of which clothes to wear and which clothes to pack. I leave some clothes at work in my locker. Fortunately I don't have to dress up at work. I pack my backpack full of clean clothes on dry days. I have a shower and two lockers at work; one for clean clothes and one for dirty.

What suggestions do you have for other KBC members to extend their riding season? Plan ahead. You have to lay out your clothes the night before.

Equipment and clothing tips? The most important thing is lights. This time of year it is dark in the morning and dark at night. Lobster gloves help keep your hands warm. Buy a good pair of tights and jacket. Add base layers to increase warmth. I have insulated Lake cycling boots. If your feet really get cold, hop off the bike and run for a little while. Lights are super important this time of year. Two back lights are important because one might go out. Our job is to be seen, and it's the cars' job to avoid us.

[Editor's suggestion: Hot Hands makes insole-shaped foot warmers; see picture at rt.]

KALTOUR COMMITTEE

All KBC members are invited to a meeting of the KalTour Committee which will take place before the KBC general meeting on Tuesday December 11 at 6 pm at the Maple Street Y.

KalTour 2019 will take place on Saturday June 29 and will start from Schoolcraft High School.

This will be the second year that KalTour is based in Schoolcraft and the first year that KalTour takes place on a Saturday.

There are several important issues that will be open for discussion. Among them are the possibility of a gravel-road option on the 62 mile ride (or even a completely separate gravel route) and possible changes to the century route to improve the spacing of rest stops.

I would also like us to set up a subcommittee system for the KalTour Committee based on the four main areas of responsibility. These include publicity, routes, food, and volunteer recruitment.

Please let me know if you plan to attend as well as suggestions for any other topics to be discussed.

Mike Krischer

KalTour Director

mkrisch@chartermi.net



BTR RACE SEND-OFF

BTR Race sendoff: It is with bittersweet emotions that I have to report that after 13 years of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's partnership with and sponsorship by Western Michigan University, the BTR race has been cancelled. This is in part due to Bob Miller's, the WMU vice president for community outreach and key booster for the BTR race, plans to retire in June. It also is in part because participation in the race has been slowly declining, like many other races. The original BTR organizing team (and some new faces) of Tim Mitchell, Jon Ballema, Cheryl Sherwood, Margaret Von Steinen, Bob Miller, and myself met at Arcadia Brewing on November 29 to reflect on the original meeting back in 2005 where Tim, Bob, Greg Lawford, and I planned the first BTR race and to reflect on the good times in the 13 years since then.

This is not the end of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's sponsorship of local bicycle racing events, so stay tuned. **There may be a KalFondo in the future...**

Mike Boersma

GIFT IDEAS FROM LOCAL SHOPS

[Ed. Note: I had a great idea of gathering holiday gift ideas from local shops. I invited several to participate. However, I may not have communicated how awesome this idea really is, so I got two submissions. Thanks Joan and Tim!]

Tim Krone of Pedal Bikes:

Small gift: A pair of good socks is always a welcome gift and makes for a very nice, subtle pun when placed in a stocking.

Large gift: We kicked this one around the shop for a while. Smart trainers are the hot item

these days. Combined with a subscription to your favorite online workout service, you can get a great workout without the con-signed-to-the-dungeon feel of a regular trainer.



Gazelle Sports suggests a Gazelle Gift Certificate!

PROFILE SUGGESTIONS; WOMEN'S ISSUE

Each month the Pedal Press will feature a member of the KBC. In addition to the ultra cyclists, we want to learn about commuters, tourists, and newbies. Who did you meet this year at a KBC event? Who do you want to know more? Please let me know who we should feature: editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org.

February's edition will include a focus on women cyclists. Dale Abbott got this idea rolling with a request to feature women's rides. We expanded the idea to include women's clothing and bikes, a review of Selene Yeager's Big Book of Cycling for Women, etc. If you have a submission around the issue of women and cycling, please sent it to the editor as well.

KBC STATISTICS

Total Memberships: 344

Total Individuals: 565

November Expiring Members:

Rebecca Martinez • Joseph Williams • Kevin Abbott & Kelly Abbott Family • Paul Marquardt • John Shubnell & Maureen Shubnell • Rob Schell

Allison McKenna • Audrey Negro • Cassie English • Gabe Lagina • J'son Lechner • Jack Sosville • Jason Rutgers • Jeff Kahler • Jess Weir • Kalyn Campbell • Ken Derrico • Marco Pastrana • Matt Jensen • Mike Cutler • Nick Hampton • Rick Stubbs • Ryan Maguire

New or Renewed Members: No New or Renewed Members

RECOVERY PARTY AND AWARDS

KBC's annual recovery party will be held Saturday January 26 from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Wind + James, the Clark Logic event center. The address is 555 Eliza St. (W Ave.), just 5 blocks East of 131. Visit www.KalamazooBicycleClub.org for details. (Basically it is just an excuse to see our cycling friends during the winter.)

One tradition of the recovery party is the presentation of awards. Typical categories include most improved male; most improved female; why warm up (given to the person who jets out of the parking lot), last to show up (given to someone chronically late), best wheel to suck. If you have candidates for awards or an idea for a new award and recipient, please send your ideas to El Presidente Kirk: president@KalamazooBicycleClub.org.



“The KBC Recovery Party is the CAN’T MISS event on EVERYONE’s winter calendar!” January 26, 2019 from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT’S LETTER ENDNOTES

1. Churchill was paraphrasing George Santayana.

2. This deceptively simple saying isn’t just true for wheels and pedals, it’s a universal truth applicable to virtually every aspect of life.

3. We’re talking about the 21st century, not the 20th. I’m not THAT old!

4. But Ike was the driving force behind the creation of the interstate highway system, an accomplishment that truly dwarfs the bike routes and passing ordinances I’ve championed.

5. Ponce deLeon came up empty searching for the

Fountain of Youth, but I’ve had some middling success chasing it by bicycle.

6. I’m pretty sure that’s what head honchos are supposed to do. Actually, I really do intend to lead, not just suck wheel.

7. Oh No! The president’s a lawyer! No good can come of this!



FRIEND OF BICYCLING ANNUAL AWARD VOTING!

All current KBC members are invited to the club's meeting on Tuesday, December 11th, 2018 to vote for KBC's annual Friend of Bicycling award. Valid nominees submitted by the November 13 deadline and listed in randomized order are:

Kalamazoo Bike Week

Kalamazoo Bike Week is an annual community event that was started in 2012 as an initiative between the Parks Foundation, Discover Kalamazoo, Downtown Kalamazoo Inc., local bicycles shops and cycling enthusiasts. The purpose of KBW is to raise awareness of cycling and cyclists, promote the use of the bicycles (and other human powered vehicles) as a means of transportation, and to celebrate the possibilities cycling has to offer in terms of enjoyment, health, fitness, and its many social environmental, economic and place-making benefits. This year's Bike Week featured among other activities a KRVT/Kal-Haven Trailblazer Ride, the Kalamazoo County Ride of Silence, Yoga for Cyclists, the Mayors' City to City Ride and Bike-a-Palooza. Kalamazoo Bike Week has become an eagerly anticipated event that brings together area businesses, local officials, and riders of all levels, to celebrate the joys and benefits of bicycling. Because of what Kalamazoo Bike Week (KBW) has accomplished over the past six years under the direction of Dave and Mary Jo Warwick, because of KBW's enrichment of the lives of cyclists in the Kalamazoo area, and because of its prominence in Kalamazoo's annual riding calendar, KBW deserves to be considered for the Friend of Bicycling Award.



Kzoo Swift



Kzoo Swift is a local bicycle shop that opens bicycling to a cohort of bicyclists (students and other economically fragile individuals) that is not well served by other local shops by offering used bikes and other less pricey biking needs.

Silent Observer

Silent Observer of Kalamazoo County continues to remind the public about their special fund for reporting tips aimed at solving serious crimes against bicyclists. They established the fund after four Kalamazoo Bicycle Club members were involved in a hit and run incident with the motorist failing to stop at the scene after striking and injuring two of the cyclists during a ride in November of 2016. The idea to involve Silent Observer came from a KBC member responding to a survey requesting ideas about how to reduce such hit-and-run incidents that was conducted by another KBC member. (The motorist was apprehended, prosecuted and found guilty earlier this year.) Anonymous donors have helped the fund to grow to more than six times its original size since it was first established in 2017. The fund has reached \$3,100 according to County Prosecutor Jeff Getting, a Silent Observer Board Member, as confirmed by Janine Dales of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Department.



John Dunlop and Portage Central Middle School

Portage Central Middle School gym teacher John Dunlop has trained some 700 middle schoolers on how to safely ride bikes. Mr. Dunlop used a grant from Specialized bicycles to purchase 50 mountain bikes and helmets for teaching a well-structured program during Central Middle School's gym class. The syllabus included basic skills training as well as ride etiquette. If all goes well the program may expand into other Portage middle schools. One of the key obstacles to teaching bicycling skills in a public school is finding a way to fit such education into an already jam-packed curriculum. This is very likely the largest program of its kind in the Kalamazoo/Portage area and suggests many possibilities. The program grant included funds for a local bike shop (Pedal) to assemble and maintain the bikes. Portage Central Middle School supported the effort by providing storage facilities for the 50 bikes, which was no small undertaking in itself.



ABOUT KBC

Recognizing that Southwestern Michigan offers a rare combination of good bicycling roads and great scenery, several cycling enthusiasts got together in 1971 to form the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

They wanted to support and encourage other riders in the area, to promote the sport of bicycling, and to have fun. As shown in the Club Mission, that tradition continues today in the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

Club Mission

The purpose of the Club shall be to promote bicycling; to encourage and facilitate touring, races, bicycle outings, and all forms of recreational bicycling activities; to defend and protect the rights of bicyclists; to secure a better understanding and recognition of the need for safer riding conditions; to encourage the allocation of facilities for bicycling on public lands; to cooperate with the public authorities in the observance of all traffic regulations; to provide an opportunity for members to socialize with others who have an interest in bicycling; and to recognize bicycles as vehicles used for pleasure, fitness and transportation. The Club will cooperate with other organizations with a similar goal and purpose. The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club [Constitution is viewable here.](#)

EDITOR'S LETTER: WHY I PAY FULL PRICE AT LOCAL BIKE SHOPS

My kids think I'm crazy.

That in itself isn't a revelation; yours probably think the same about you. Among the many reasons they have this opinion of their father is the fact that I pay full price at local bike shops.

I bought a mid-fattie Specialized Fuse a couple of years ago. It has 27.5" X 3.0" tires. I was excited to try riding in the snow. I discovered several things:

1. There is such a thing as too much snow. Despite fat tires, I can't glide easily over deep snow.
2. I should probably buy a fatter bike for deep snow. However, Mrs. Knowlton has appointed herself the minder of bike proliferation in our household and I have yet to convince her that I NEED another bike. Allegedly I have enough bikes already. Despite having an earned degree in mathematics, she doesn't yet understand that the proper number of bicycles is $n+1$.
3. When riding my not-quite-fat-enough bike in deep snow, pedals fill with said snow and become unusable. The snow jams in the space where the shoe cleat should go, preventing the cleat from engaging.

In seeking to remedy this snowy pedal condition, I visited a local bike shop (henceforth designated LBS) looking for suggestions from more experienced riders. "How," I asked, "Do you keep the snow out of your pedal when riding in snow?" (I realize that's kind of a dumb question now that I write it down.) The answer is, you don't. The best solution is to use a platform pedal and regular winter boots rather than try to keep snow out of a typical cleat-clipless pedal combination. So, I asked the LBS representative to show me some platform pedal options. One of my children was with me during this particular LBS visit, observing the pedal selection process. I ended up with an \$80 set of Specialized Bennies which are sturdy, large and studded for grip. Despite all of these wonderful features, I mostly bought them because they are green and match the bike.

We got into the car to drive home and my child informed me that I could buy similar pedals from an online retailer for less than \$25 and I was foolish to pay \$80 for green pedals.

Maybe.

The pedals are wonderful and I am now able to enjoy riding my not-quite-fat-enough bike in all kinds of conditions, plus keep my feet warm in nice winter boots. My kid is right. I could have purchased some pedals online for less. But the reason I paid full retail price is because I was able to go to the LBS and talk to a human being who rides bikes in the snow. He understood my problem and presented a solution. That interaction holds immense value for me. And I think the \$80 holds value for the LBS. Because when my brakes rub or my hands hurt or my crank creaks or I can't get my tubeless tires to seal or any other of a million things I can't do or don't know. . . The LBS is there for me.

I don't ride bikes to save money. I ride bikes to save my sanity. I pray and read scripture and ride bikes. These are my spiritual disciplines. The LBS is there to keep this brother in his right mind. And that's worth at least \$80. If I buy the \$25 alternative from some Chinese website, the LBS might not be there. And that's why I pay full price at LBS. And I think you should, too.

John Knowlton, editor - johnrom719@gmail.com

