



November 2024

PRESIDENT'S LETTER — JOHN KNOWLTON

Failed Experiments and JWR!

KBC held elections this month and we are super happy to welcome Jacinda Roedel as Secretary! Treasurer Pam Sotherland, VP Paul Guimond and President John Knowlton were also re-elected. Thank you for your support.

Over the past three years that I have served as president, we have initiated some experiments. In an effort to engage the club with the community we tried some new things:

- Encouraging members to participate in infrastructure planning meetings at the Kity of Kalamazoo, City of Portage, and Kalamazoo County
- Launching Cycling Shorts, which saw us invite leaders to speak to the club meetings. We had visits from bicycle promotion organizations, municipal leaders, a bike mechanic, and representatives from a homeless advocacy group.
- Organizing a slow roll on the Michigan Avenue bike lanes

When trying something new, I like to frame the new thing as an experiment. There are a couple reasons for this approach: 1) We don't know how it will work, so it is experimental. 2) If it doesn't work, we can simply end the experiment. It is the nature of experiments that some work and some fail.

KBC has between 450 and 500 members, depending on the year. A KBC member team recently reviewed meeting attendance reported in the Pedal Press. Over the past 13 years the numbers have ebbed and flowed, but there are a steady dozen or two in attendance. The outlier in November 2017 saw a contested officers' election.

These facts have prompted self-reflection and I want to share an insight: 95% of KBC members aren't interested in club meetings.

Year	May Mtg	Nov Mtg	Location
2012	17	15	YMCA
2013	18	15	YMCA
2014	NA	18	YMCA
2015	14	22	YMCA
2016	(June) 24	20	YMCA
2017	22	40	YMCA
2018	(Apr) 27	30	YMCA
2019	(Apr) 33	26	Shakes
2020	covid	(zoom) 16	covid
2021	TxDP 24	17	Shakes
2022	17	(Oct) 19	Shakes
2023	11	19	OCC
2024	17	13	OCC



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Please send stories and photos of your rides to:

editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

Regardless of location or agenda we mostly want to ride our bikes. That might seem obvious, but I can be somewhat resistant to obvious conclusions! Thus, I have adopted a new guiding principle: JWR. Mostly, KBC members **Just Want to Ride**. Led by that principle, I am committing more deeply than ever to see KBC offer **the best group road rides** around.

You have ideas, suggestions and insights that can help us get even better at that objective. Watch for a member survey in early December, or send me a note at President@KalamazooBicycleClub.org. Ride on!

KBC Business

The next KBC meeting will be **Tuesday, 11 March** at **7:00 p.m.** at **Oshtemo Community Center** (North Room), 6407 Parkview Ave, Kalamazoo MI .

Kalamazoo Bicycle Club 11 November, 2024 Oshtemo Community Center

Meeting attendees

John Knowlton, Paul Guimond, Pam Sutherland, Paul Sutherland, Mike Boersma, Thom Brennan, Bill Price, Jacinda Roedel, Paul Runnels, Paul Seldon, Charlie Grdina, Pete Coles, Michael Krisher,

2025 Meeting Schedule (no longer monthly)

March 11th, 2025
May 13th, 2025
June 10th, 2025
October 14th, 2025 – Nominations
November 11th, 2025 – Elections

Club Elections

Elections were conducted and it was unanimous confirmations for Executive Committee nominations of: President - John Knowlton; VP – Paul Guimond; Treasurer - Pam Sutherland; Secretary - Jacinda Roedel.

Current KBC Open Positions:

Ride Captain
Social Director
Communications Director

Future KBC Open Positions

President (Fall 2025)
Vice President (Fall 2025),

Consider volunteering for one of these open positions and helping KBC pedal into the future.

Suggestions from rider leader survey: In reviewing f the Ride Leader Survey results most people recognized the efforts to keep rides safe and manageable (limit of appox 12 per group). Feedback was also to increase number of rides, varying of routes and new departure locations (6th Street, H&3, Swan and Kindleberger Park) - CONSIDER BECOMING A RIDE LEADER IN 2025 !

Pedal Press will be published after each scheduled meeting (or as needed). Facebook, Discord and email will cover time-sensitive and immediate communications.

2025 Ride start times

March and October 5:30pm. April thru September, 6pm
Ride leaders emphasis on safety is appreciated and essential

Member comments

Paul Seldon approved a BFK contribution to KBC.

Ambucs – Donna Witcombe donated Amtryke adaptive trikes for a fundraiser. The event was held at the pediatric cart in the Pediatric therapy area at Bronson Athletic club. Proceeds that were shared with Ambucs 2 kids were gifted hand bikes.

Paul Runnels gifted Open Roads to help recover from the break-in and theft. Most bikes were recovered and Open Roads is looking for a new location (space issues).

There is a [Forever Strong](#) gala on December 5th, 7pm. Raddison hotel and hosted by Lori Smith whose husband and son killed by uber driver killer. Some proceeds will go to Open Roads.

Discussion to have Anniversary Party in the Spring of 2025 and kick off bike season with a party.

Survey monument on 8th street - still a big hole. Needs to be filled

Cycling Shorts, educational program of guest speakers, will be discontinued for the time being.

November 2024 Membership

Total Memberships: 274

Total Individuals: 443

New or Renewed Members: Nick & Kelley Hampton; Sam Lewis

October Expired Members: Joe Shorb

November Expired Members: Tom Holm & Family; Adam Rafels

December Expired Members: David Anderson; Suzie & Michael Flood; Lacie Lafler & Family; Aaron Marx & Family; Jason Nicolai & Family; Abby Wheeler

Rick Whaley, Membership Director

2024 KBC Anniversary Party

Another great cycling year is celebrated at Wind+James ! It was a great to see everyone and thank you all for bring a dish to pass as the food was awesome. Many thanks to the Vice President, Paul Guimond, for coordinating this years event and all who assisted.

If a picture says a 1000 words then the smiles in the montage speak to what a good time everyone had at this event. See you all at the next one.



2024KBC Anniversary Party Awards

Both “Volunteer of the Year” and the “Old Crank” awards were presented at this year’s anniversary party. KBC President John Knowlton recognized the stellar efforts of these three individuals for their dedication and many contributions to the club and over the past 48 years. KBC would not be the club it is today nor would the Kalamazoo cycling community have many of the dedicated & posted routes, bike infrastructure and bicycle education and safety training programs without their tireless efforts.

Volunteer of the Year Award: Presented to **Thom Brennan** and **Mike Boersma** for their years of work interfacing with the Kalamazoo Road Commission and helping ensure Non-Motorized transportation infrastructure is accounted for in local road development. When you are cruising down a black ribbon of smooth asphalt on a dedicated bike path or extra wide shoulder here in Kalamazoo County, these are some of the KBC members to thank. Nicely Done !

Old Crank Award:

Mike Boersma: Since 2004, Mike's name appeared 12 times in the KBC History as a KBC Officer, serving in all four lead positions. He is someone who did a lot of work on KBC's behalf over the years. His steadfast commitment to KBC was manifest when he painted roads and did SAG duty at Kaltour, picked up trash along 12th St, and did the paperwork needed to set up KBC's non-profit status. His council and wisdom greatly benefited KBC and its leadership for many years.

Paul Wells: Since 1977, Paul's name appeared 14 times in KBC History. Back when Paul owned Breakaway Bicycles, he regularly offered up a mechanic to work on bikes for KBC events like FlowerFest/KalTour. Plus, he always donated many items from his shop for the giveaways at the Recovery Party. For many years at Bike Camp, he helped do bike fitting for the participants. Paul's been Education Chair for several years now, and plays an active role in guiding the club's educational offerings. Paul completed the LCI training a few years ago, and recently taught the LCI class. Paul has been the key to getting so many of the 5-Foot Signs distributed in the area. Paul has participated in KBC club rides and events for decades! Plus, Paul has the right personality to honor the "Old Crank" designation. ;-



(Thank you Paul Sotherland for the historic research & write-ups)

Thank You To KBC Members—Fall Bike Celebration

Thank you from Bike Friendly Kalamazoo to the many KBC members who helped make our Fall Bike Celebration a success this year. There are too many KBC riders and volunteers to mention every one by name in this space, but we think you'll easily recognize John and Julie Knowlton, Tom Hohm, Barb Hart, Robin Sides and Paul Runnels in these photos.



We hope to see everyone again next September!

Regards,

Paul Selden, Chair at Large

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo

Garmin Varia Radar Review

I picked up the Garmin Varia on sale at the local bike shop. A trusted friend said that his radar was the one piece of technology that if he forgot to put it on his bike, he would turn around and go home. I got the mid-range model, radar plus light. The radar paired easily with my Garmin bike computer. I have used the radar for 3 months. Here are my thoughts.



Some background. I do some road riding, some gravel riding and some mountain biking. We will focus on road and gravel riding as very few cars come up behind you on mountain bike trails.

Road riding – very helpful to know if there is a car behind you. When making a lefthand turn and needing to move into the lane to make the turn, looking at the radar gives you solid knowledge if there is a car in close proximity. I still look over my shoulder but I do so with some confidence that there is not a car close behind me. Also very helpful to know when a car is coming behind you so you are aware and can alert others in the group that there is a car coming.

Gravel riding – the radar is pure money on gravel rides. One of the reasons we ride gravel is the low census of cars once out on the country gravel roads. The issue with gravel is sometimes the gravel to the far right is a bit loose so we have a tendency to ride in right tire tracks for smoothness and safety. Riding on gravel can be louder than riding on the road and that makes it harder to hear if a car is coming from behind. The radar gives you the ability to know a car is coming and move as far to the right as safely possible. When riding gravel roads when it is windy it is very difficult to hear a car, the radar allows the cyclist to be both safe and courteous to the cars. I purchased an extra mount so I can easily move the radar between my gravel and road bike.

Sometimes the radar will pick-up a cyclist coming up from behind and give you a false positive. But I have never had the radar not show when a car is coming (no false negatives).

In my opinion, a solid piece of gear to add to the arsenal.

You can also checkout this review from DC Rainmaker. <https://www.dcrainmaker.com/2020/05/garmin-rtl515-cycling.html>

Paul Guimond, KBC Vice President

The High School That Self Selected KBC Members Attended, Its Location, and Nickname

Here are the high schools that 26 of our KBC members attended, 25 high schools from 11 exotic and not-so-exotic states, mainly in the Midwest. No high schools from any state on the east coast or in the deep south, but North Dakota and Wyoming are represented. The name and location are the same or similar for 17 of these 25 high schools. Three high schools are nicknamed the Tigers, although one of these is the “Fighting” Tigers, which leads one to believe that the other two high schools have tigers of a Gandi-like disposition. Other nicknames used by more than one high school are Bulldogs, Oilers, and Trojans. The two high schools with the nickname Oilers, as well as the high school with the nickname Steelmen, were likely named after prominent industries in the area, which luckily were not fertilizer plants. A particularly noteworthy nickname is the Our Lady Star of the Sea Tunas.

First Name	Last Name	High School	Nickname	City	State
Sandy	Blix	Lake Mills	L-Cats	Lake Mills	WI
Sue	Bourget	Our Lady Star of the Sea	Tunas	Grosse Pointe Woods	MI
Rudy	Callen	Loy Norrix	Knights	Kalamazoo	MI
Peter	Coles	Grosse Pointe South	Blue Devils	Grosse Pointe Farms	MI
Dan	Goldberger	Lorain	Steelmen	Lorain	OH
Charlie	Grdina	Whiting	Oilers	Whiting	IN
Paul	Guthrie	Centerville	Bulldogs	Centerville	MI
Barb	Hart	Traverse City	Trojans	Traverse City	MI
John	Hart	Portage Northern	Huskies	Portage	MI
Michelle	Karpinski	Campbell County	Camels	Gillette	WY
Tom	Keizer	Benton Harbor	Tigers	Benton Harbor	MI
Doug	Kirk	East Lansing	Trojans	East Lansing	MI
John	Knowlton	Mt. Pleasant	Oilers	Mt. Pleasant	MI
Julie	Knowlton	Parkway South	Patriots	Manchester	MO
Tom	Noverr	St. Philip	Fighting Tigers	Battle Creek	MI
Jessica	Opfer	Henry M. Gunn	Titans	Palo Alto	CA
John	Opfer	Henry M. Gunn	Titans	Palo Alto	CA
Joan	Orman	Kalamazoo Central	Maroon Giants	Kalamazoo	MI
Leah	Peterson	Underwood	Comets	Underwood	ND
Bill	Price	Grant	Tigers	Grant	MI
Paul	Runnels	Darlington	Indians	Darlington	IN
Pam	Sotherland	Northglenn	Norsemen	Northglenn	CO
Sharon	Surna	Senn	Bulldogs	Chicago	IL
Valerie	Vuk	L'Anse	Purple Hornets	L'Anse	MI
Mike	Waldrop	Schoolcraft	Eagles	Schoolcraft	MI
Rick	Whaley	Tates Creek	Commodores	Lexington	KY

And finally, I'll allow myself to reminisce about an incident concerning the name of my high school. It was in chemistry class my sophomore year when one of my buddies told a few of us that a university from somewhere out west sent our guidance office a college catalog addressed to “Tater Creek.” Well, that got us going. We decided that the nickname of this mythical high school would be the Spuds and the mascot would be a giant Mr. Potato Head. Of course, the football team would be awful, leading to newspaper headlines, such as “Spuds Mashed,” “Spuds Fried,” “Spuds Whipped,” and so on. Just the sort of sophisticated humor that you’d expect from a bunch of 15 year old boys. We didn’t learn much chemistry that day.

Rick Whaley, KBC Membership Director and High School Data Collector