



**Kalamazoo
Bicycle Club**

June 2025

PRESIDENT'S LETTER — JOHN KNOWLTON

June is here, and I hope the wind goes away with May! In addition to great weather, June brings **Kal Tour** to West Michigan. Kal Tour features beautiful routes around the county, well-stocked rest stops and lunch with root beer floats. And no porta potties; we have bathrooms with running water! This is a great chance to find new roads and meet new people to ride with. Please [register](#) to ride, volunteer, or both!

Becoming a **Great** group rider. One of KBC's main deliverables is to conduct the best group road rides in the area. I'm proud of all the rides we offer each week to hundreds of cyclists. As a club we recruit and train leaders, buy insurance, and manage the calendar. And each rider participates in making the ride great. Here are some of the ways you can make the ride safe and fun for everyone:

- Show up early and have your **bike and yourself ready to ride** at the published start time

- **Join the pace group which matches your plan** for the ride. Riding faster than the group can be chaotic as other riders may try to keep up and the group can get spread out over a lot of road. This makes it harder for cars to pass safely. And remember that a "16 mph" ride may be moving faster than 16 on the flats and slower than 16 when climbing. It doesn't mean 16 is the maximum.

- **Ride smoothly and predictably.** By smoothly I mean a nice steady pace. Give the rider behind you the sweetest wheel to follow. And ride in a straight line. If you need to go around an obstacle, point or call out the reason, and smoothly ride around it. Then smoothly get back to the original line.

- **Peerless pulling.** When you're at the front of the line, be mindful to keep the pace steady. You may have to push harder on uphill and keep pedaling on downhill. After a turn or a stop sign get back up to speed slowly. The larger the group, the more it gets strung out. If you hit the full gas right after the turn, you might splinter the group.

What did I miss? How would you improve this list? Send me a note: President@KalamazooBicycleClub.org.

See you on a ride and I'll be working registration at Kal Tour. If we haven't met, please introduce yourself. Be safe!



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**Please send stories
and photos of your
rides to:**

[editor@kalamazoobicycle
club.org](mailto:editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org)

KBC Business

The next KBC meeting will be **Tuesday, 10 June 2025** at **7:00 p.m.** at **Oshtemo Community Center** (North Room), 6407 Parkview Ave, Kalamazoo MI .

Kalamazoo Bicycle Club Oshtemo Community Center 13 May Meeting

2025 Meeting Schedule (no longer monthly)

May 13th, 2025

June 10th, 2025

October 14th, 2025 – Nominations

November 11th, 2025 – Elections

**** **This is The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's 54th year!** ****

- Current KBC Open Positions:

Ride Captain

Social Director

Communications Director

Near Future KBC Open Positions:

President (November 2025)

Vice President (November 2025)

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

In attendance were Pam Sutherland, Mike Kirschner, Paul Wells, Mike Boersma, Peter Coles, Joanne Beverage, Charlie Grdina, John Knowlton, Jacinda Roedel and Paul Guimond.

KalTour – Mike Kirshner discussed relevance of the distribution KALTOUR. Decision was to reach out to the bike shops in the area for flyer distribution.

Volunteers are needed for KalTour – Basics needed: painting the routes, driving the U-Haul, SAG, getting the food to Scotts Mill Park, cleanup after the event etc. Refer to KALTour article for signing up to volunteer to help support this event.

KALTour routes are completed and are now available on RideWithGPS. Mike Kirshner will be meeting with John Olbrot to refine printed maps to include street name details for paper maps.

AMBUCS is still on board to support KalTour 2025. Scotts Mill and the county park system have resolved in terms of existing riders being paid for the riders having separate wrist bands. KBC EC reviewing limit to donate to AMBUCS.

Wind and James Event Center in Schoolcraft was reserved after KalTour last year, for 2025. The agreement needs to be signed and will be resolved soon.

Stoney Creek has been promoting KalTour for past 3 years on both Instagram and Facebook

John Knowlton will be contacting Hugo at the Thunder Cats organization offering a discount for those under 18.

KBC will be reaching out to various bike clubs to promote KalTour - WMU bike and recreation Sustainability shop, Chili Cats, Athletic Mentors, Kalamazoo Area Runners, Rapid Wheelman in GR.

Bike Week: A **BIG** Shout out to everyone that stopped by the event: Mike Krisher, Rick Whaley. Bill and Sharon Surna. Doug and Kathy Kirk, John and Julie Knowlton and Mark Irwin stopped by. Many flyers were handed out, thanks to Pam Sotherland, with listed rides, and a general KBC flyer were also handed out. Several "Give em 5ft" yard signs were distributed. It was estimated a couple hundred people came through. The KBC table was situated next to the Knights Bike Shop. There was interest in the club rides but people were not sure they would qualify because they are to slow or have not been on a long ride (20+ miles).

Pedal Press: Requesting feedback on points for improvement for content and design of Pedal Press. Also, requesting any inputs for new articles, pictures, thoughts or ideas to editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

Knights Bike Shop: There is a new bike shop in town and the owners are Shawn and Mary. Check out their shop! 1500 S. Burdick, Kalamazoo, MI 49001 [Knight's Bike Shop | Kalamazoo Bike Sales Shop - Sales and Service](#)

Photo Contest – Back by popular demand KBC will be conducting another photo contest this year. Grab the that camera out of your pocket that occasionally doubles as phone when needed and start to collect your favorite bicycle related photos. Submission of photos will be in late summer with voting for winners in the October meeting. Winners will win big with accolades of prestige and take home a KBC hat or T-shirt. Request for photo will come out in late summer.

League of Michigan Cyclist: Have you ever considered becoming a member of the League of Michigan Bicyclists – now is the time. LMB is the statewide advocacy organization and is under the umbrella of the League of American Cyclists. Click on the link above

RIDES:

- The Friday women's ride is looking for a ride leader for the more casual route. 13/14mph pace 20 – 25 mile ride.
- KBC is no longer conducting a time trial (TT) event every other Tuesday (normally conducted at the Pavillion Township Hall). There is discussion of KBC organizing and hosting at least one TT event this summer w/prizes and snacks. Stay tuned.

KBC EC met earlier in the month, and each member agreed to reach out to people they think might be interested in the soon to be available positions of President and Vice President. Joanne Beverage joined the meeting to hear about the club. John Knowlton spoke - The law requires a meeting each year for a 501c. Club has organized group rides with the Mission Statement supporting, commuting, cycling for recreation and transportation. We work with other organizations in the area to promote access to recreational opportunities and create infrastructure. It's the broad mandate for the club.

Club Meetings: March, May, June, October and November are the new meeting months. March is the Kick Off party. June is KalTour, October are the board nominations and November is the election of board members.

Rick Whaley is concerned there are too few meetings. It was agreed that the EC would have ad hoc meetings for items that don't require a full meeting. Rick is also looking for a new ride organizer for the South Haven ride.

John Knowlton suggested that Joanne Beverage, if she is interested in the role of club President, she can choose some she is comfortable to be a candidate for Vice President if she is elected.

Michigan Athletic Blind Camp will be held at WMU on May 14, 15 and 16 and volunteers are requested.

Jacinda Roedel, KBC Secretary

June 2025 Membership

Total Memberships: 259

Total Individuals: 408

New or Renewed Members: Jay Berkow; Gene Decker; Hugo Galvez & Family; Kris Green; Bryan Gruizenga; Susan Juzwiak; Dean Kindler; Michael Kluz; Joe Kucharski & Family; Molly Lacy; Ann LaPoint & Family; Mostyn Lombard; Todd Macguire; Autumn Monaweck; Jacinda Roedel; John Ryder; Madeleine & Bradd Schultz; Timothy A. Stewart; Alan Sylvester; Kim Tabor; Richard Voorman & Mary Lagerwey; Mitch Wilson; Laurel Yoder & David Goodsell

June Expired Members: Regina Alleman; Randy Button; Maureen Corts & Family; R.G. Cox; Colleen Doonan; Angela & David Erdman; Dawn Hitz; Mike Hughes; Neil Larson; Jeanine Michael; Grace Purdue; Austin Root; Daniel Schwartz; Emily Smith; Libby Subers; Kitty Vader; Daniel Victor; Brandon Visser; David Warwick & Family; Ryan Wielenga

Rick Whaley, Membership Director

The 2025 25th (Almost) Annual W Ride

At last, the wait is over! The W Ride will be held this year on **Saturday, June 14**. And for those of you not doing Mountain Mayhem that day, this will be the perfect opportunity to instead experience Straight Line Mayhem!

We'll begin our ride at the east parking lot of **Vicksburg High School at 9:00 AM**. We'll be doing the alternative East-West-East route this year, riding on W Avenue to the Calhoun County line, searching for all the mayhem that we can find on the hills just west of Fulton. Then, we'll turn around and ride back to the high school. At this point, you'll have the opportunity to buy delicious snacks at the Shell station.

This will be the finish for those of you doing the 24 mile ride, but for those of you who want the full 48 mile W Ride experience, we'll continue to ride on W Avenue through Schoolcraft and to the Van Buren County line. Then we'll turn around and ride back to the high school, where we can dine on more delicious snacks (but not donuts, you can save room for them at the Dirty Donut Race the next week) and Gatorade.

Map will be provided, once again, due to force of habit. The Ride Leader will lead a 14-15 mph group, but slower and faster groups are also welcome to test their directional aptitude.

Can you handle the straight line????? Well, there's only one way to find out!

Rick Whaley, W Ride Leader

Huge Thanks to KBC For Its Support of Bike Week 2025!

Isaac Green, KABW 2025 Chair

By the time you read this article the 14th Annual Kalamazoo Area Bike Week (KABW) will be in the rear view mirror. The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club and its members played a huge role in organizing, volunteering for and participating in the events on the KABW 2025 calendar. All showed an ability to make Bike Week a celebration of the role bicycling plays in our greater community.

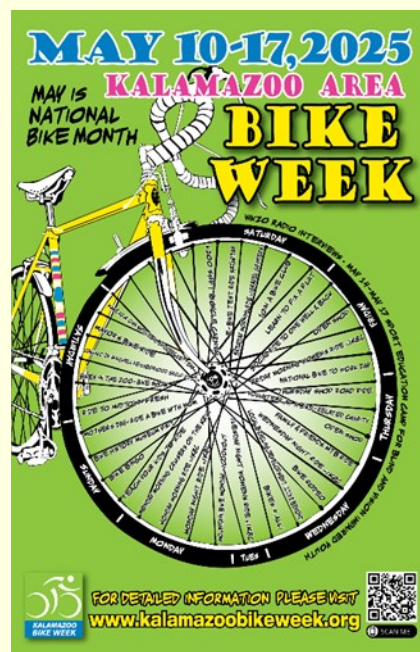
Here's a quick recap of current KBC members who deserve extra thanks and recognition. (Please accept my apologies if I leave someone out.)

Paul Wells was the event organizer of record for all the KBC-sponsored events listed on the KBW calendar. He could not have done so without the support of **KBC's top leadership**. **Paul Wells** and **Jacinda Roedel** were special guests during the series of WKZO Morning Show interviews arranged by **Paul Selden**. **Tim Krone** and his team at Pedal Bicycles led a number of rides for his shop.

Throughout Bike Week, the educational message that **everyone must follow the rules of the road** was delivered repeatedly via a variety of media channels to an audience numbering in the hundreds of thousands.

Please join me when you can in thanking all the event organizers, event sponsors, civic participants, in-kind supporters and generous donors whose names are listed on the www.kalamazoobikeweek.org website. We are already looking forward to the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club helping to make the 15th Annual Bike Week in 2026 the best ever!

All of us at KBC appreciate the fine work Open Roads does for the cycling community of Kalamazoo. Just an awesome organization ! They have recently moved and click on link below to read the entire M-Live article.



KALAMAZOO

Open Roads Bike Program to relocate, expand offerings, space in Kalamazoo

Published: Apr. 18, 2025, 2:45 p.m.



Advertisement

by ryan@roarey.com | roarey@mive.com

KALAMAZOO, MI — Kalamazoo's Open Roads Bike Program is relocating this summer to a new, larger location in the city's Edison neighborhood.

The new space, at 914 E. Vine St., will allow the nonprofit to expand its services and programs, organization leaders stated in a news release.

FRUIT BELT TRAIL

Excitement is building on the west side of Kalamazoo as Oshtemo Township moves closer to opening its “Fruit Belt Rail Trail” adjacent to Flesher Field Park, near the intersection of 9th Street and Stadium Drive.

The Kalamazoo, Lake Shore, & Chicago Line... “The Fruit Belt Line”... was a phoenix formed out of ashes and iron left behind by the Michigan Central Railroad in the early 1900’s, when it decided to re-route a little farther north of Oshtemo (the current Amtrak route). A visionary, Samuel J. Dunkley, (son of Kalamazoo’s “Celery King” Joseph Dunkley and heir to the agricultural empire) scooped up the abandoned rail and planned to electrify it, creating an electric interurban train that could take his Kalamazoo produce to his docks in South Haven. While a flurry of conceptual plans for electric interurbans blew around Kalamazoo, only Dunkley’s K, LS & C ever saw a flanged wheel roll across it. And it was never electrified.

The people, however, were electrified by the prospect of being able to take Dunkley’s interurban to not just neighboring Mattawan, Paw Paw, or Hartford, but all the way to South Haven where they could get on Dunkley’s steamships and sail to Chicago!

(Visit this KPL website for a detailed and fascinating history of the Fruit Belt Line.

<https://www.kpl.gov/local-history/kalamazoo-history/transportation/kalamazoo-lake-shore-chicago-railway/>)

Now, after more than a century, a phoenix rises again from the ashes of this railroad. This time Oshtemo Township is the visionary, converting its two-mile section of the abandoned railbed into a scenic, 10-foot-wide, crushed limestone, non-motorized trail. It joins the popular Kal-Haven Trail and other “rails to trails” projects crisscrossing the state and nation in revitalizing the networks enjoyed before the days of the automobile. The Fruit Belt Rail Trail will include trailhead parking areas near 9th St and 6th St, respectively (the space at 6th Street being a station formerly known as “Brighton Crossing”), a bike repair station at the 9th St trailhead, and will feature benches, wayfinding signs and distance markers all along the trail.

If other agencies develop their sections of the overgrown and mostly forgotten path (in a hoped-for future), the Fruit Belt Rail Trail will connect to the Van Buren Trail State Park that links Hartford to South Haven. Bicyclists and hikers would then be able to traverse a loop that heads west to South Haven on the Fruit Belt Rail Trail and return east to Kalamazoo on the Kal-Haven Trail. Just imagine a “phoenix” century ride from Kalamazoo to South Haven and back without having to flip and retrace your tread marks!

Work on the Fruit Belt Trail is happening throughout 2025 with its completion anticipated for Fall 2026 (barring unforeseen complications). Though only a few miles long, the trail will become a wonderful new feature of Oshtemo Township for all of us to enjoy.

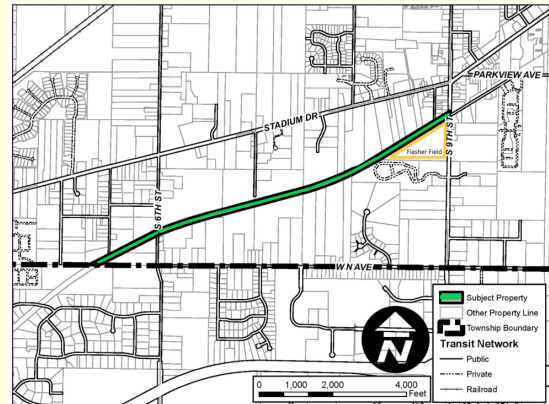
Submitted by: Hannah Hudson, Oshtemo Parks
(parks@oshtemo.org)

Hannah, this is awesome piece of both news and history and we are all looking forward to riding this section of repurposed rail to trail path. Thank you for submitting this article !

Kalamazoo, Lake Shore & Chicago Railway “The Fruit Belt Line”



KLS&C locomotive #37 near the Michigan Basket Warehouse in Paw Paw c.1906. Charles Grice is standing between the coal tender and the locomotive, others are unidentified. It's plausible that Samuel J. Dunkley is the man standing on the front of the locomotive to the far right.



Route for the proposed Fruit Belt Trail in Oshtemo Township. Photo: MLive/Karen High.



Volunteers Needed for KalTour 2025

Riders used to sign up for KalTour by filling out a paper form, putting it in an envelope, writing a check, finding a postage stamp, and mailing the envelope. Now all that is done by clicking on a website. Similarly volunteers no longer have to tell me in person that they will help out at KalTour and hope I remember what they tell me. Instead for the second year we are using a volunteer recruitment website to sign up and communicate with KalTour volunteers. An advantage of this procedure is that volunteers can see at a glance the list of those who have already volunteered as well as the tasks that are not yet covered. Also the web site **SignUpGenius** gives the club the ability to email reminders and other information to volunteers.. (When someone volunteers outside of the site, they will be added to the list on **SignUpGenius** so that they will receive reminders and other volunteer information.)

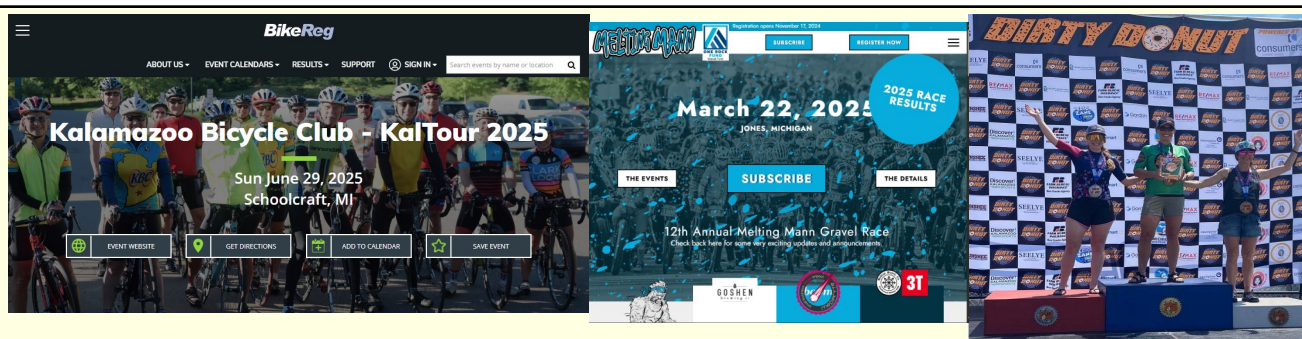
KalTour is the club's largest event of the year and a major fundraiser for the grants that the club distributes and for the club's partner, Kazoo Valley AMBUCS. KalTour 2025 takes place on Sunday June 29, so it is not far away, only a few weeks by the time you read this. There are many tasks that must be accomplished to put on a successful event. Road painting and shopping for supplies and nonperishable food need to happen well before June 29, while shopping for bananas, grapes, bread, and cookies can only be done a few days prior to June 29. When do you think ice and ice cream must be purchased? On June 29 setup for registration begins at 6 am. Ride groups have become increasingly popular in the last few years; our goal is to have at least two certified KBC ride leaders on each of our four routes, 62,50, 31, and 15 miles. Of course, the last task of the day is cleanup and packing up the leftovers.

What will you do to help with KalTour 2025? Please follow the link below to sign up or email kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org. We look forward to seeing you on June 29!

Volunteer for KalTour on SignUpGenius

Putting on an organized ride with marked courses, sag stop (perhaps a more accurate designation would be snack stop), organized ride groups, and post-ride lunch is a major project for a bicycle club, one that requires many volunteers. KalTour uses the **SignUpGenius** website to recruit and communicate with volunteers. You can volunteer to help with KalTour by using the following link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944afab2ba5ffc61-2023#/>

Mike Krischer, KalTour Director



2025 Cycling Events.

Not all inclusive but looking to capture the main cycling events in the immediate (50 mile or so) area. Provided for informational content only — **KalTour**, **W-Ride Bike Camp** and **KBC Recovery Party** are KBC sponsored events. Opportunities to volunteer for the club abound.

[League of Michigan Cyclist](#)—Link to most major bicycle events in Michigan

[RACE SCHEDULE — MGRS \(michigan gravel races series.com\)](#) - Link to MI gravel races

[Michigan Bike Events | Bicycle Races in Michigan - Michigan Bicycle Law](#) - Link to MI Road & Gravel

[Events – Bike Friendly Kalamazoo](#) - Link to many local cycling events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Link</u>
W RIDE	14 June 2025	<u>Kalamazoo Bicycle Club - Life is better on a bike!</u>
Dirty Donut	21 June 2025	<u>Dirty Donut</u>
KalTour	29 June 2025	<u>Kalamazoo Bicycle Club - Life is better on a bike!</u>
Holland 100	19 July 2025	<u>Holland 100</u>
DALMAC	27-31 August 2025	<u>DALMAC</u>
Lowell Classic Gravel Race	25 October 2025	<u>LOWELL CLASSIC GRAVEL ROAD RACE - Home (thelowell50.com)</u>