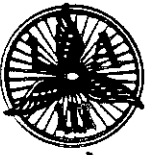




Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

PEDAL PRESS



January/February Newsletter

January Meeting: There will be no club meeting in January.

February Meeting: The Club will meet at 7:45 at the Fitness Center on 315 Turwill Lane on Monday, February 6. Bob DeBruyn will present a program on his recent cycling trip in Australia.

Note from the Newsletter Editor

The new officers of the Club have been elected. The Club owes many thanks to the outgoing officers. The Club had a successful year under their guidance. Last year's president, **Gail Slaughter**, will be in East Lansing working on a graduate degree at MSU. We wish her and Michael a pleasant and productive year. Gail says she will make it back to some of our events. **Terry Jackson** will no longer be vice president. However we did persuade him to take over as president. Thanks for the past and lets all try to cooperate with Terry in the coming year! The vice-president position is being filled by a new member of the club: **Keith Little**. **Steve Daane** served as treasurer last year, coming all of the way from St. Joseph, Michigan to attend meetings. Steve is being replaced by **Karen Torre** who last year served as Ride Captain. **Tim Greening** who served as race captain last year is stepping down. Keeping a bunch of individualists working together takes lots of effort and Tim did an excellent job. Thanks for all of the time you spent, Tim. **Jim Stark** will be taking over for Tim. Thanks for volunteering, Jim. The Newsletter Editor position will be shared this year. **Chuck Dodson** will be doing the creative work of writing articles and collecting materials for the newsletter. Phil Caruso will assemble the newsletter and maintain the database for the Club.

The Club still needs to find an effective way to handle the position of ride captain. We've talked about having people be ride captain for a newsletter or finding ways to get the members to volunteer to lead rides without being asked. any suggestions for how to handle this task, call Terry Jackson. Ultimately, a bike club's main reason for existing is riding.

RIDE SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

Noone has volunteered to lead scheduled rides in January and February. However, as the words of Chuck Dodson below indicate, he is willing to ride outdoors during the Winter and has some suggestions for doing so. If anyone is interested in attempting to ride outside and would like company, contact Chuck at 385-8355.

BAH !! Part I of III by Chuck Dodson

It's getting to be that time again folks! Nope, not a membership drive, but a wintership drive! Yeah, and your "ship" is your bike, and you "drive" it in that sea of heavenly dandruff called snow.

"Ha ha ha ha ha!" says old man freezing cold as he forces our shivering souls into months of slaving over roller sets and ill-fitting exercise bikes.

But wait! Hold it! Don't you see that you don't HAVE to stare blankly at those VCR vacation workouts? You can be OUT THERE, pedalling your bicycle and loving it.

You've heard about those fanatic cyclists who stick screws out of their tires so they can still ride. But did you know that you can ride too, without going to so much trouble? You don't even have to buy anything much, really.

I should know, I'm one of those winter bicyclists. In fact, my experience stems not only from Michigan-winter riding but Montana- and Alaska-winter riding and touring.

I ride a mountain bike like many of the other "crazy" people. But I think I'm more innovative. And the best part is I spend hardly any money. A far cry from those \$30 studded bicycle tires, for sure.

I find that the most useful things I use in my winter commuting and expeditions, are my improvisations. A helmet shield instead of goggles (which fog up too much for me, and are too sweaty) and studded turf shoes.

Even though I now ride entirely on a mountain bike I used to ride a ten speed with racing handlebars in the winter.

All bicycling is already dangerous, but winter pedaling is even more dangerous. And to think back about me riding that ten speed complete with skinny tires that make the word "fall" a common vocabulary word, I wonder how I still have such a zest for it all.

But like all crude adventurers, I just have a lust for taking chances I guess. Let me confirm, though, the chances I take now have been perfected over about ten years of traffic experience. The wildest thing I think is that I have never been in a serious accident in the winter. I hope I'm not tempting the devil by saying this...

If you're one of those gutsy cyclists young or old that are thinking of taking up this kind of riding, please listen to a little advice.

First of all, practice falling. Winter biking can be like judo at times. Besides knowing how to fall, you've got to be thinking and alert at all times. I think to fall the safest, for bike and you is to ride straight into a snowbank. Sounds rather insane, of course, and before you go kamikaze, check out your target for how soft it is.

Second, already be experienced in traffic. I think if you can successfully pedal legally on Stadium or Sprinkle Road in the summer, taking left turns, and all, you should be ready for traffic in winter. But if you'll be doing this, take care to ride at only the safest times; that is, right after noon when

most city streets are mowed with salt or sand, and the sun has melted the scariest ice.

In winter, the cyclist has to be very, very alert and paranoid. And you have to know how to "talk" to drivers through eye contact, or knocking on their window.

Like a car you have to be very careful. Take it slow and cautious on curves and turns. Slow down way before stops. and, in emergency situations, know how to use your studded shoes. What good are studded tires when you've already stopped and you can't get any foot traction? First thing you know the word "rupture" is screaming blatantly in your brain. Or, if fallen, you're sliding on a one way trip into a meal of car parts. Yummy, huh? Yes, I've been in just such a situation. Luckily, (having no screws in my shoes) I was able to slide out of control into an adjacent parking lot.

Another problem is all of that frozen air that churns into one's lungs as they breathe. I have two methods to solve that problem. Drink milk and orange juice so that saliva will thicken (don't spit it out), and by all means wrap a scarf over your lips. Breathe through the scarf and fix it to a new place when it freezes.

The phenomenon of numbed toes, fingers, and nose, as well as eye-lashes freezing together, is I hate to say, one problem I have not yet solved. In Montana I would stop every now and then to rub these extremities back to life before frostbite could set in. As for the eyelashes, well that brings to mind visions of making a bicycle with a self-powered heating system and an enclosure of sorts.

The last problem that I almost forgot--I must be getting it, is hypothermia. If you ride alone like I do (so far), you have got to learn to listen to your body. Save being macho for the summer (and get heat exhaustion instead). If I ever start shaking uncontrollably or drift off mentally, I stop and rest. Then I find out somewhere to warm up. Make a fire or check out a local cafe. I have had hypothermia before, I believe. So far I've been smart enough to catch it before it could get serious. the last time where I was most worried was on a three-day bike trip that started out warm and beautiful (with no snow on the ground) and the last night a storm came. Now that was in the mountains of Montana and I was basically prepared for just such an occurrence sine I was heading for a ski resort above Big Sky.

One last world of advice before next month, don't be afraid to be scared as hell. On a bike in the winter you quickly learn that nature's the boss and technology and your well-being works mostly on luck, or how good your standing is with God (if you believe).

That's what I like about winter biking. Being out in survival situations and knowing how to get through it all with a slightly toughened guffaw.

BAH !! Part II of III by Chuck Dodson

I know why winter is hated so! Look at all of us who put so much dependence upon "advanced" technology. And we say we "need" cars. Now that may be true if your job is far away or you travel, but other than that you have a choice.

Have you seen that one crazy bicyclist out there in the winter? You drive by that "poor soul" with sympathy in your heart. But ask him or her why they do it, and from underneath all of the clothes comes a smile and a wink. "I love it."

Now how on earth can this be?

You get up every morning, and as soon as you've dressed adequately you venture outside to start your car and heat it up. After breakfast you're back out there either trying to start the darn snow blower, shoveling, or cursing because your car is stuck.

What can I say? I hear you over there. Your rubber squealing at all hours of the morning, day, and night. I watch you pouring the salt, slamming at the ice, sticking pieces of carpet under your tires. I help you push your car.

I can hear your mind: "But at least I am warm;" I must counter. Sure you're warm now, because your car finally started and your butt is numb from the seat, and you've had a work-out clearing your driveway.

Hey, I understand what you're saying. It's "easier" to do it the way you've always done it. And while I brave the horrible cold you sit comfortably in your luxurious warm classic. That is, until you get stuck on a hill, or get bumped by another car.

The truth is both of us have it tough. And on a bicycle in winter I'm far from safe. If a bicyclist isn't careful enough they can become just another winter fatality.

But there's a remarkable difference between us. Not only can I pedal through snowdrifts up to four feet high, and pick up my steed if I'm stuck, but I have a thoroughly exhilarating experience every time I'm out there.

I'm not recommending that you give up driving, nor do only bicycling. I'm saying that you ought to try it once in a while. Especially when you're about to pulverize your vehicle barehandedly. Get out of that cycle for a day or so, and onto a cycle you can get out your energies on.

It's much more fun coming to work with a smile and a mind that is ready for the next challenge of the day. Sure, you get lots of challenges driving, but when your car won't start or won't go, you're helpless. If you're biking you simply pick it up and carry it, and then, if you want to, you can throw it off a cliff.

BAH !! Part III by Chuck Dodson

This time I'm going to talk about how to save money by bicycling in the winter.

Saving money. First of all, bicycling just saves money. Winter or summer you save gas and high mechanic bills (unless you don't do any self-repairs on your bike).

Secondly, if you use some of my ideas and have the guts, you can save money in more interesting ways.

Stop throwing out your grocery sacks and newspapers. Did you know that a bag turned into an undershirt works wonders for holding circulating warm air from your body? Forget all those exorbitant prices of gore-tex and its competitors, if you want to save and still survive. Stuff cut-to-your size newspaper sheets up your sleeves. They block the wind, and don't look gaudy. and they're highly replaceable, cheaply. You can also improvise newspaper to fit inside your shoes..."Can't you see one day when firms which provide mountain climbing equipment will sell a complete outfit for winter sports made of paper lining?"

I recommended studded turf shoes in **BAH !! I Part I**. Well, now I'll say how to make them. Buy some tiny screws from your local hardware store. Next take a leather punch, like the kind that swiss army knives have, and dig a small hole into the cleats on a pair of turf shoes. Make sure you "drill" a place deep enough so your screw can hold. Then just screw each one in, so the head sticks out. You might also try the other method of putting screws in so the tip is outward, but it is hard to get screws in anywhere past the shoe heel and the screw heads can become uncomfortable if you wear them long.

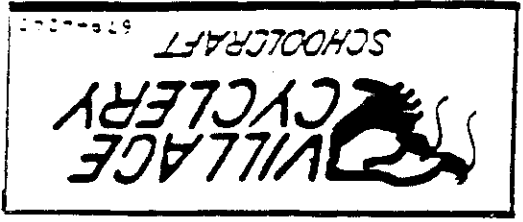
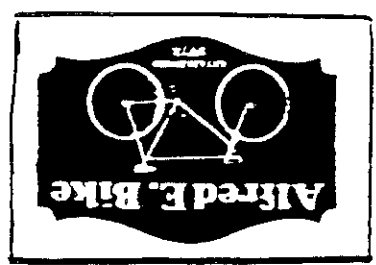
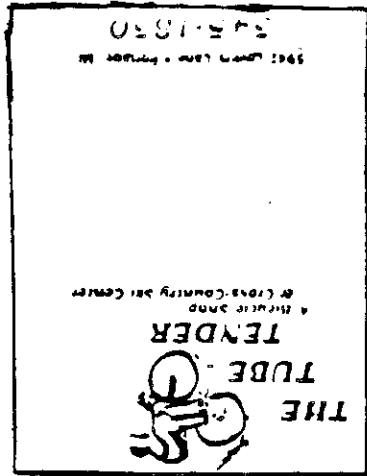
The last idea this time is the helmet shield. If you don't mind looking like a character out of Star Wars, you'll find this home-made device real useful.

You can find scraps for the shield either by looking in the trash on monthly pick-up dates or buying one at a glass and plastic warehouse. If you're lucky you can find a good piece in their scrap bin for under \$3. Next, cut it to the size you want from your measurements by bending it back and forth. Then take any screws left over from studding your shoes and drive them first into the shield and then into your helmet. When that fits, cut a path for your helmet mirror (if you have one) into the shield so that you can put it all the way down without bending your mirror. You'll also want to fiddle with a way to keep the shield from falling down whenever it feels like it.

Oh yeah, before I stop this writing, don't forget your ears! You can make simple earmuffs by cutting up an old wool shirt and fastening it with paperclips to the styrofoam of your helmet.

If your bike itself needs winterizing and it has 27" wheels, then try this. First, look for mountain bike-type handlebars. The steering difference is worth the trouble. Next, get yourself either some "Goop" or "Shoe Goo." then you can make your own knobbies, or glue parts of cut 26" knobbies (preferably those thrown out by bike shops) onto your tires. This is not easy of course, but if you are successful you'll know it. (You may still be able to find Specialized 27" Tri-cross tires, if you are lucky.)

And, treat your bicycle to the warmth of your home every night, and after a week of riding, stand near it and spray some lubricant on revolving parts and, if possible, on the insides of the frame tubes.



- President -** Terry Jackson: 349-4110
Vice President - Keith Little: 329-4987
Sec./Treasurer - Karen Torre: 381-4329
Race Captain - Jim Stark: 685-1274
Ride Captain - Chuck Dodson: 385-8355
Newsletter Editor - Phil Caruso: 381-0135
Membership list -

KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB OFFICERS, 1989



Kalamazoo Bicycle Club
 P.O. Box 527
 Kalamazoo, Michigan 49005

