

Pedal Press

www.angelfire.com/mi/kbc/

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

President's Letter

November brings cold, rainy weather, early sunsets, and pretty much signals the end of the regular riding season. You still see die hard riders, especially mountain bikers. This is a great time of year to go mountain biking in the local area, just try to avoid looking like a deer.

You can also get out the headlight and go for a night ride. I did the other night and it was so quiet and peaceful—for the most part. If you thought being chased by a dog in the day was scary wait till it happens at night. You hear the dog, snarling and barking, but can't see it!

November is also the time to see if you made your goals for the year. I did. My goal was to do the Dalmac Quad Century. It wasn't nearly as brutal as I had expected. One century is tough but four days of it seemed like it should be torture. Training and the right attitude paid off and it wasn't so bad.

My total mileage for the year wasn't up there with some others in the club but I achieved what I wanted to achieve. I enjoy riding bicycles but I have many other things I like to do also. For me it really is a matter of priorities and bicycling has to share the top spot with other endeavors.

I am looking forward to some snow this winter. Riding with some snow on the ground is fun. You bundle up and head out into world that seems a little cleaner, a little nicer, and more tranquil. Either road or mountain bike rides can be fun and little bit different. And that really is one of the joys of riding a bike.

Always remember that the reason to ride a bike is to feel good. It doesn't have to be all work and sweat. While you're riding you can forget about the problems of the world, relax, and unwind. Stop hammering, slow down, and look around. There are a lot of nice things to see out there so enjoy them.

- Richard Walter

Editor's Note

Your editor would like to second what the Prez sez about riding this time of year. Sit up, relax, look around. Shorten up your rides if it's too cold to be out long. And it's MUCH easier to stay warm mountain biking in the woods (or in the City) than out in the open, in the wind, going twice as fast on your road bike.

Coming Events

November 16 KBC Board Meeting, including election of new KBC Board members. United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge. **FREE PIZZA.** See pages 2 & 3.

Flowerfest Sponsors Wanted

The Flowerfest committee is looking for some ideas for new sponsors. Maybe you work for a company that has ties to bicycling, sports in general, or has sponsored other community events. Do you know of a company that might make a good sponsor? All ideas are welcome. Just contact a board member or someone on the Flowerfest committee. Our phone numbers are on the back page of this and every *Pedal Press*.

Joke of the Month

There just don't seem to be too many bicycling jokes (at least if you overlook the Editor's sprinting), but what Tom Cross sent in definitely qualifies:

"My favorite moment from the 1999 club rides was the time after a Monday night ride in which my wife Rhonda and I had ridden the tandem.

At the end of the ride, I was just shredded. I asked her, "When we're out there and going for a sprint or chasing a group, are you just right on that edge where your legs are screaming and your heart's getting ready to blow out your eyes?"

Her reply, "I'm not pedaling that hard at all."

KBC Brass Discovers Previously Unknown Bylaw

Constitution Allows Drafting of Absent Members For Election To Fill Board Vacancies

KBC Board members were picking their way through the KBC Constitution and Bylaws at last month's meeting and discovered—remarkably—a provision allowing those KBC members present at a KBC election to nominate members not present *in absentia* to fill any vacant Board position.

Apparently, our wise and thoughtful forefathers (forecyclers?) were concerned that lethargy or apathy might afflict members around election time, when it's getting cold enough out that people are putting their bikes away, so that it might be difficult to line up people to keep KBC going the following year.

The founding pedalers therefore decreed that members not present at the election could be nominated for any position, and elected by popular vote of those present. The Bylaws also seem to indicate that only those present at the election may decline a nomination.

In view of this discovery, it seems especially important that all KBC members exercise their franchise to show up and vote at the annual election on November 16th at the United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge (corner of Dutton) or risk losing the luxury of just showing up at the right place and time and riding with southwest Michigan's premier bike club.

Further, this bylaw makes the previous decision by the Board to offer **FREE PIZZA** at the meeting even more foolhardy than an ordinary offer of free food to a bunch of hungry riders. So, to be sure you don't get elected to some position on the Board you don't want, be sure to show up on November 16th, and **BRING YOUR APPETITE**.

Vonderfecht Steps Up

Longtime KBC member and biking rights advocate Steve Vonderfecht has graciously agreed to replace Dave DeRight as KBC's delegate and voice on KATS, which stands for Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study. Dave is now this regions delegate to the League of Michigan Bicyclists.

KATS is a group composed of members of various government groups and is responsible for long-term planning for transportation needs for the Kalamazoo area.

Steve, I know I am not the only KBC member who would like to hear from you whenever possible about what is going on and how we might be affected. I also know that some of us are willing to help if we can. I personally invite you to communicate as much as you can with us about what you and KATS are up to.

- Doug Kirk

November Birthdays

Betsy Barnes
Kate Beauchamp
Roger Behnke
Louise Boulding
Lisa Clevenson
Beth Davis
Bruce DeDee
Diana Degen
Janice Herrick
Kathy Hutchins
Sheri Jones
Frank Machnik
J. S. McNutt
James Miller
Donna Oas
Anne Reineck
Phil Reynhout
Victor Van Fleet
Dan Van Sweden
Kevin Vonderfecht
Tyler Williams

New Members

Cheryl Olson
Mark Olson
Greg Petty
Brian Scribner
Holly Scribner
Lindsey Scribner
Evan Scribner
Thom Collins
Mary Ellen McNerney

Fort Markin?

KBC member Mike Jones has been heard floating around an idea that sure is worth some serious thought.

You may know of Markin Glen Park, which is north of the City of Kalamazoo on N. Westnedge Ave., south of the Nature Center. Markin Glen Park now belongs to Kalamazoo County, which also acquired a large tract of additional land directly across N. Westnedge from the existing park.

The existing park is pretty big (I'd guess at least 60 acres) and is on a hillside covered with mature maples and oaks. It's plenty big enough for a good, long mountain bike trail.

Mike's thought is to build a mountain bike trail (or trails) through the woods. I know for a fact that a few hiking trails exist there already. The idea of having a decent mountain bike trail so close to town is just plain neat.

What hoops would have to be hopped through to get approval for this is unknown at present, but Mike and your Pedal Press Editor would appreciate input from anyone on the subject.

Expiring Members

Outgoing secretary Barb Saula points out that these people aren't actually expiring—no funerals are planned! But a bit of their life energy will disappear if they don't renew! Remember, friends don't let friends expire! Remind them to send in their dues instead!

Robert Bell
Thomas & Rhonda Cross
Paul Grabowski
Mike Goodrich
Mary Goodsett

KBC Elections November 16; All KBC Members Invited to attend

Elections for the KBC Board of Directors for the year 2000 are coming up in November. We are currently taking nominations for the positions of President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. Contact any current Board member (see back page) to nominate yourself—or anyone else.

The elections will take place at the November KBC Board meeting which is scheduled for November 16, 1999 at 6:30 pm at the United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge (at Dutton). **NOTE THE DIFFERENT LOCATION, NOT THE PORTAGE LIBRARY AS INDICATED IN LAST MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.**

KBC IS PROVIDING FREE PIZZA FOR THE ELECTION MEETING, SO YOU CAN CARBO-LOAD WHILE YOU VOTE.

The new Board will take over in December. If you are interested in any one of these positions let someone on the Board know. We are all listed on the back page of this *Pedal Press*.

Ride Leaders Needed For Y2K

We have had great turnouts for the rides this year. Since the groups have been so large, up to 40 riders at times, it is difficult for one ride leader to handle the entire group. We often could use more than one ride leader per ride group.

I encourage riders who have participated in the rides this year to volunteer to lead rides next year. This can be either regular rides, or special/ocasional rides you decide to do, like the tandem-only rides, the ride around Kalamazoo County, or anything else you want to put together.

We could use some additional leaders. Many of the 1999 season ride leaders have been leading for several years and often lead the rides all season. A few KBC members end up doing all the ride leading, but there's just no reason for this. Ride leading is easy and fun.

Although we all enjoy leading rides, it is nice to show up and just ride sometimes. If people would take turns leading, it would be a big improvement. Routes for most of the ride nights are well established, so making up maps is a snap. If you want to have a ride of your own, just get us the information and we'll publish the information.

We do need your help. No previous experience is necessary to become a ride leader. Please give Randy Putt a call at 649-1814 or send an e-mail to sterling.r.putt@am.pnu.com to volunteer or to get more information on being a ride leader.

Happy Trails

by Barb Saula Miller

Getting the family involved in bicycling AS A FAMILY has not been easy. The kids seem to have no problem hopping on their bikes to go here and there, and I, too, make my solo trips to work, the grocery store or just to feel the breeze in my face.

But, bound and determined, the Kal Haven Trail was our destination one Sunday afternoon. I had it all planned the night before. I made sandwiches. I had saddlebags ("panniers") on my bicycle, and they would be packed with food and drink.

Sunday came around and the sun was NOT shining. "Haze" was all the weather man offered. No "scattered showers" no "overcast" prediction, just "haze." The temperature outside was around 72 degrees, so it was perfect cycling weather. One of those not-to-hot, not-too-cold days. The 10 a.m. launch was pushed to 1:00 p.m. when we figured the weather seemed to be maintaining.

It had taken a lot of shopping to find a bike rack that would fit the derriere of my '93 Grand Prix. I finally found one that would meld fairly well with the car's body, but I didn't realize the challenge had only just begun.

I had my bike modified and larger, nublier tires were added as well as upright instead of downturned handlebars. I had to unpack my saddlebags, however, because I could not get the next bike on the rack with my lunch jutting to one side.

My husband's racer slid on the rack effortlessly. The next bicycle to go on was a women's frame with the angular, sloping top-tube. This was a bit trickier, since the bike had to be sloped in order for the bar to be horizontal on the bike carrier. OK, two bikes on.

Next was my 11 year old son's BMX bicycle. There is no way that bike wanted to fit on my particular carrier. His bike got crammed in the back seat of the car. Then my daughter's bicycle with the 20" wheels. This was also difficult with the slanted bar. After a bit of finagling, three bikes were successfully mounted.

Trying to recall the correct route to the entrance of the

Kal-Haven Trail, we took the 10th street way. That whole stretch of roadway happened to be torn up and down to that brown gravel, so for a couple of miles it was bumpy, dusty, and I kept looking back to make sure the bicycles did not bounce right off the rack. We were okay.

Pulling in to the entrance of the Kal-Haven trail, sure enough, it decided to precipitate. Nothing heavy. Just some mist. We could deal with mist. The bikes came off the rack a whole lot quicker than they went on.

My memory did not serve me well, for I THOUGHT the trail was paved with asphalt, but, indeed, it was more like a hard clay with a light gravel topcoat.

To those of you who don't know this, there is a train caboose stationed at the entrance of the trail where you purchase your trail pass. The ride from the caboose was delightfully easy. The trail has a gradual downhill slope and you can practically cruise the trail for the first who knows how many miles without an ounce of sweat. I was pleased that there were periodic porta potties, picnic tables and even water wells for the thirsty.

But the mist in the air seemed to penetrate even the wooded pathways. I was beginning to feel cold. I didn't bring a jacket because I didn't think I'd need one. Well, heck, it was seventy some degrees outside and I'm not exactly skin and bones anymore. But, I got cold. The kids got cold. We all got annoyed with the light mist, that, had it been a sunny day, would have probably felt pretty darned good.

The rain started to pick up and it seemed like a good time to find a broad-leaved tree to stand under while we ate our lunch. My daughter started complaining of cramping. We only made it to the 4 mile marker.

Our goal was to go to 10, then turn around and come back for a round trip of 20. It wasn't going to happen. With the rain wetting the trail now, the light gravel was really kicking up and sticking to our bikes and clothes. When we made it back to the caboose, we all stood in line to use the water well pump.

(Continued on page 4.)

Happy Trails..

Continued from page 4

We left our house with a clean car and clean bicycles. We now had a dusty car and four dirty bicycles. Worse, the bike that REALLY needed attention was the one that I was putting INSIDE the car.

Once we loaded up the bikes again, my daughter went right to the water pump and firmly planted both hands on the lubricating grease around the "throat" of the pump. "What's this Mommy?" I just looked at her in disbelief.

When my turn to clean off was up, and I asked my son to pump while I washed the gravel off the wheels of my bike. Leaning my head too far to one side, I felt a pull to my hair. A lock had fallen into that same grease that had found it's way to my daughter's hands only moments earlier.

On the positive side, it matched my hair color.

This is the extent of my bicycling adventure for the year. I'm not a racer. I stay on side streets and keep to my neighborhood.

I joined the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club a year ago and have been the club's secretary and, more recently, distributor of the newsletter. I think I will now pass this on to the next person.

Bikers are good people. You see nothing but smiles and acknowledgments from your fellow cyclists. I can't think of a better group of folks with whom to be associated. Keep the club alive. Get involved. Attend the November meeting and become a board member.

**God Does Not Subtract
From One's Alloted Time
Those Hours Spent
Riding Your Bicycle.**

Thanks Ride Leaders and Riders

I'm sitting at my computer writing a note about the 1999 ride coming to an end. The weather is Fall-like and I'm still recovering from the Hilly 100 last weekend.

There are no regularly scheduled rides in November. Between the dreaded return of Daylight Losing Time (which rules out after-work rides), and the colder weather, it just isn't very practical to schedule rides in advance.

But we have had yet another great summer of riding. The attendance at the regular weekly club rides was strong all summer and many new people have become regulars at the rides.

I would like to thank the ride leaders again for the great job they have done this year. The following people led rides for the entire season: Lee Anderson, Kathy Barrett, Zolton Cohen, Mike Higgins, Larry Kissinger, Terry O'Connor, Randy Putt, Bill Strome, Richard Walter, and Paul Wells.

Thanks also to thank Doug Kirk, Dale Krueger, Rose McKenna, Rollin Richman, Paul Stevens, and Steve Vonderfecht for leading rides several times during the year. Finally, thanks also go to those conscientious riders who filled in at the last minute when no ride leader could make it. One last thank you to all the riders who attended the rides and made them a success. Come back next year.

Although there are no regularly schedule rides in November, the weather should allow some weekend rides. The key here is to keep an eye on the weather forecast, and plan things a day or two in advance, so you can round up a few folks. It is usually is a good idea to plan the ride closer to the middle of the day to take advantage of whatever warmth Mr. Sunshine can be coaxed out of.

If you'd like, give me a call or send me an e-mail (sterling.r.putt@am.pnu.com) and I would be more than happy to forward information about the ride to my biking e-mail list. There are always riders ready to go. If you would like to be on the list, send me your e-mail address.

If anyone has any ideas on how to improve upon our ride schedule or the rides, please contact me.

- Randy Putt

Back Roads And Bike Shops

By David Sluyter

Last summer in answer to the perennial question, "Where shall we take our summer vacation?", Jill Stewart and I decided on Bar Harbor, Maine. The more interesting question though was, "How shall we get there?" The answer: our Cannondale tandem bicycle – how else?

So, we had a terrific trip. We traveled over 1300 miles in 15 1/2 days with one rest day which we spent on Long Lake in the Adirondack Mountains – reading, hiking and canoeing. Not only were we still together after the trip, but we bonded even more as a couple and learned that two people, both of whom need a great deal of solitude in their lives, can find peace and harmony while spending more than two weeks being within a foot of each other for most of the day.

Reflecting on the trip, I asked myself what makes a bicycling trip as extraordinary as this one. Some of the answers were the usual – the bike, which performed flawlessly for the most part; the company, both Jill for the entire distance, and Al Cergol who joined us for the first four days of the trip and helped pull us from Quincy to Pennsylvania (where he headed south to visit friends and relatives in Youngstown, Ohio); the thrill of accomplishment every day after pedaling from 60 to 100 miles; and the many fine and helpful people who we met along the way.

But the things that really made a difference and stand out for me were the back roads and bike shops (mostly back roads, but I like the alliteration). Before leaving, we made the excellent decision to purchase Adventure Cycling maps for the route and, in fact, planned our route in order to take advantage of this excellent resource.

Adventure Cycling is a group that, among other things, supports cross-country trips. But they also sell their maps separately, and the maps were exquisite – accurate and detailed with the names of bike shops, restaurants, motels, and even service stations in the four-corner towns through which they routed us. And the routes were terrific! Adventure Cycling has a lot of experience in going cross-country, and they work with local bike clubs to find

the most scenic and least traveled roads – from farm roads in Ohio to scenic trails along the Great Lakes, to shortcuts through the mountains and lakes and ocean-view rides in Maine. We were able to wake up every morning with the expectation that we would enjoy the best ride that the local bike club had to offer.

The other thing that stood out for me, in a different way, was the courtesy and attentiveness which bike shop owners along the way afforded us. In the small towns that we went through, there weren't many bike shops, but when we did encounter them, we always stopped, if for nothing else than to use a real floor pump with a gauge to put air in our tires. Without exception, the staff of the bike shops would drop everything they were doing to fill tires, give advice, help find food and lodging, and talk about the local area. In some cases, they recommended stops at other bike shops along the route.

One that stands out is Murdock's in Oswego, New York located downtown but nearly on the shore of Lake Ontario. Their policy for traveling cyclists is to offer free labor on anything needed on the bike and to give first priority to traveling cyclists. Owner Benjamin Turner was great, and they did a quick tune-up free.

A similar standout shop was managed by Brian Lewis at the Alpine Shop in Middlebury, Vermont. We were having trouble with the front derailleur, and after two of his mechanics spent about 15 minutes each trying to adjust it, Brian, with a pair of pliers, spent about 45 minutes bending it, trying it, bending, trying it, and finally getting it to work flawlessly. After spending over an hour on our bike while other bike shop personnel helped Jill find lodging for the night, Brian's charge was only five dollars.

One other place that stands out, because of an unusual mix, was called Petals and Pedals, a combination bicycle and flower shop located in Adirondacks. It sounds like a bit of a fluffy bike shop, but it actually had some hard-core mountain bikes and racing bikes and a staff who knew what they were doing.

Next year we would like to start in Washington and bike home, or as far as we can get in probably no more than the three weeks that we will be able to take away from our jobs in July. If anyone wants to come along, give either of us a call.

Big Plans

by Axel Kleat

I've got big plans—you know, for the off season. This year's gonna be different.

I know, I know, you've heard the same thing year after year. Around Halloween, I devise some new winter training plan that will make me a (pick one) better sprinter/stronger hill climber/faster spinner/real hammerhead. Usually, the key to my plan has been lifting weights: squats, leg extensions, leg curls, calf raises. Can't neglect the core body strength either, so crunches, back extensions and those sorts of things were part of the picture too.

But things just never quite worked out right. I'd start hoisting the iron around the time I ought to have my Christmas shopping done, but by the end of January, I'd be a goner, always managing to find one reason or another why I couldn't make it to the weight room. Before long, apathy took over completely.

It just got too monotonous. The scenery is lousy too. No gorgeous fall colors, no banzai downhill, no pacelines, no friendly arguments about which terrific roads to ride today.

Besides, the fact is that lifting weights just makes me feel like crap. All those muscles are so used up from a few reps of what poundage my quivering quads can levitate that every fiber within me rebels at the idea of hoisting myself out of bed for days afterwards.

Besides, lifting weights disappoints me to death. I figure with all the enthusiasm I bring to the first few weight sessions, I ought to see some tiny bit of visual evidence that I'm building muscles after a few weeks. You know, a little growth or definition or something. A new piece of sinew I've never seen before, perhaps, or a strategically located bulge or two somewhere other than my waist.

Then there's the whole body image thing. Some of those hulks have mighty big thighs. Bad for the ego.

But wait—Shazam!--with my skinny but well-exercised biker legs, I could hoist weights some guys with thighs the size of my waist weren't doing. Wouldn't I ride lots faster if I had a pair of big ol' hamstrings and quads like these musclemen? Wow, I'd really mash those pedals when it was time to sprint with legs that big! So I'd push big weights on the leg machines and fantasize how great my bulging thighs would look next spring.

No good. My legs stayed skinny. Maybe I've got the wrong DNA, or just PPP—piss poor protoplasm. I guess even this realization would have been okay if I could move on to bigger weights to prove to myself I was getting stronger, but after the first couple of weeks, the numbers I'd lift always plateaued. Net result—I felt lousy, I had nothing to show for it, and my legs felt like concrete whenever it was nice enough to go for a ride.

"...It just got too monotonous...

The fact is that lifting weights

just makes me feel like crap..."

But like I said, this year's gonna be different, and I'll tell you why. I'm gonna lift when I feel like it and do crunches when I think about it. No schedule, no plan, no goal other than to lift weights when I feel like it. Same for running. If I only run ten miles all winter, so be it.

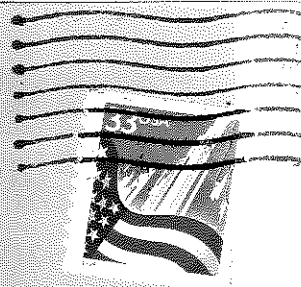
Maybe I'll try power-walking, or get out the Rollerblades. I'll ski the two or three weeks when there's decent snow, and ride the rollers once in a while so I don't completely forget how to spin. In short, I'm going to do what I feel like, do lots of different things, and try not to get too fat. I've earned a rest anyway.

But one thing I'm going to be religious about is stretching. Nice, long, easy sessions working to become more flexible. Stretching makes me feel good, not like death warmed over. Besides, if my muscles get longer, I figure I've got more muscle. And if I get more flexible, I can slide my seat further back, flatten my back, and lower my handlebar, just like the pros.

Yep, I've got big plans to have more fun this winter, and come spring maybe I'll look faster.



KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB
P.O. Box 50527
Kalamazoo, MI 49005



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Expires 2000/02

Phil & Jini Caruso
313 Horseshoe Court
Plainwell, MI 49080

KBC OFFICERS

President: Richard Walter 649-1944
Treasurer: Paul Stevens 324-9024
E-mail: 73372.1732@compuserve.com
Secretary: Barb Miller 349-1826

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Database Manager: Jeanette Holm 385-5052
E-mail: jsholm1@aol.com
Info Line: 343-2288
Newsletter Distribution: Barb Miller 349-1826
Newsletter Editor: Doug Kirk 388-5045
E-Mail: Kirkdoug@aol.com
Ride Captain: Randy Putt 649-1814
E-mail: SRBike@aol.com

KALAMAZOO AREA BIKE SHOPS

Alfred E. Bike 349-9423
Billy's Bike Shop 665-5202
Breakaway Bicycles 324-5555
Milwood Schwinn 349-6384
Parchment Bicycle 343-8118
Portage Schwinn 327-3393
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

Rider Category: Fitness ☐ Casual ☐ Competitive ☐

SEND TO: KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB, PO BOX 50527, KALAMAZOO MI 49005