

Pedal Press



The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, Inc., September, 2000

www.angelfire.com/mi/kbc/

Editor's Letter

I'm all excited, doubly excited actually. Two things have happened this month that are important to KBC members in completely different ways.

First and foremost, we have a President again. Check the back cover of this issue and you'll find that Karen Sue Oulette has the job, the result of her unanimous election at the August KBC meeting that was duly noted in last month's *Pedalpress*.

Karen Sue's real job requires her to work in the early evenings, so she's going to be pretty hard to spot at the weekday club rides, but she has a tremendous amount of energy, and is completely committed to healthy, athletic living.

She's involved at the YMCA, teaches aerobics classes at other fitness centers, is President of the local triathlon club, and routinely places very highly in her age group in lots of different events. I'd be more specific, but when you've really got it, you don't have to flaunt it, so Karen Sue doesn't.

I know that a focus for Karen Sue will be to increase KBC's membership, and there is early talk of a membership drive next spring. We welcome you, Madam President.

And if you readers are lucky, next month's issue will have a President's Letter right here instead of an Editor's Letter.

The second great thing that happened this month is that, as editor, I received something truly amazing—a LETTER TO THE EDITOR. The first since I became Editor. At first, I was elated simply to receive proof that there are actually people out there who take the time to read my monthly efforts. Then I realized that a letter from someone out there meant that someone thought enough about something I wrote to take the time and effort to write back. A compliment!

The letter, and my response to it, are on page 6 and touch on the melding of two important issues to bicyclists—helmet use and Critical Mass rides as a means of raising public awareness of cyclists' rights.

Please keep those cards and letters coming folks. My email address is on the back, and my regular address is 1525 Merrill St., Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

- Doug Kirk

In This Issue

New KBC President Elected.
See page 1 & 2

Critical Mass Point & Counterpoint. Pages 3 & 6.

Dangerous Rides. See page 7

Recumbent Rally. See page 2

Coming Events

Sunday, September 10 Vineyard Classic Bicycle Tour. Paw Paw. 22, 39, & 60 mile routes on deserted Van Buren County roads. Good food, Call 657-6309. Meet at KVCC at 8:00 am to ride out to the tour. See page 4 for more.

Tuesday, September 12 KBC general meeting, 6:30 pm, United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge. Nominations for November's annual elections will be taken. See page 2.

Sunday, September 24 Apple Cider Century. Biggest one day bike ride in the medwest every year. Over 8000 riders on 25, 50, 75 and 200 mile routes. If it's sold out, go anyway and find some place to park. Everybody should partake of this spectacle at least once. Call 616-756-3361.

KBC's Wish List

1. A New Database Manager. Interested? Call any KBC Board Member.
2. That more members show up at the meetings.
3. That members submit ideas for what to do with KLBC's surplus funds.

All KBC weekday rides start at 6:00 in September due to shorter days

KBC General Membership Meeting Tuesday, September 12, 6:30 pm

At its August meeting, the KBC Board decided—together with the members present—to begin holding meetings on a regular monthly basis. Things had gotten a bit slack with Richard Walter's departure and the fact that the President's position was vacant.

No more. We will hold meetings the second Tuesday of every month. And until further notice, meetings will take place at the United Way Building, 709 S. Westnedge Ave., at the corner of S Westnedge and Dutton St., across from Old Central High School. At the September 12 meeting, we plan to discuss the following subjects, though we would be happy to consider other subjects as well.

Elections. In keeping with past practice—and our Constitution—we will be taking nominations for President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer at the October meeting, with the election to be held at the November meeting. In past years I have joked that it's a real good idea to show up at these meetings in order to avoid being voted into office *in absentia*. It's still a good idea—please plan to attend.

KBC Membership Directory. The Board has been considering publishing and distributing to members a directory of all KBC members. Some members feel that doing so compromises members' privacy, while others members see no problem. Some think it would be OK as long as phone numbers are omitted, others say without phone numbers the directory wouldn't be very useful. We'd like to hear from as many members as possible on this issue.

2001 Flowerfest. The people responsible for Flowerfest (to whom we all owe a hearty Thank You) make clear that planning for next year's event must start soon. Much work needs to be done, and lots of it can be done over the winter. So anyone interested in helping please attend—or at least let a Board member know who you are. There are all sorts of things to do—not just day-of-event efforts—like printing, distribution, sponsorship, refreshments, etc.

Membership Drive. We are strongly considering a membership drive to take place next spring. We're interested in any and all ideas on the subject.

So be there. Besides, it's a great opportunity to meet our new President, Karen Sue Oullette.

Recumbent Rally

The Wolver-bent recumbent cyclists will rally Saturday, Sept. 9 here in Kalamazoo, and will also meet to ride the Vineyard Classic Sunday Sept. 10. The man to contact for more information is **Paul Pancella**. But he's temporarily staying in Indiana, so the phone we have is no good. Email Paul at Paul.Pancella@wmich.edu. Or point your browser to www.speedmerchants.com.

- Doug Kirk

September Birthdays

Lee Anderson
Robert Bell
Gerald Blohm
Mary Cohen
Carl Degen
Cathy Doan
Ronald Eichaker
William Fries
Peter Gaff
David Hapman
John Looman
Ashley Mitchell
Jim Van Buren
Richard Walter
Mike White
James Wyrick

New Members

Jamie Clark
Graham Hollis
Mary Lou Hollis

Expiring Memberships

Debra Carlson
Todd Clevenson & Family
Charles Daudert & Family
Laurie and Ron Doering
William Fries
Brian Gronert & Family
Allen Halley
Rene' Hess
Chris Kline
Mark Krook
Dale & Ruth Krueger
Bob McCulfor
Barbara Miller Family
Renny & Donna Oas
Mark Prairie
Phil Reynhout & Family
Kurt Sherwood
Tom Small
Michael Walsh
Robin Warden
Dan Wytko & Claudia Cap

Critical Mass Rides Continue In Kalamazoo

Yes, we have Critical Mass rides in Kalamazoo. Riders begin congregating in Bronson Park at 4:30 - 4:45 pm and ride two similar loops through the downtown area starting at 5:00 pm. The ride itself goes roughly from the park east on Michigan Ave. to Pitcher, north to Kalamazoo Ave., west to Westnedge Ave., south to Lovell St., west to Stadium, then right, around on to Michigan Ave. again, and then repeats on largely the same route. The pace is definitely leisurely.

Turnouts so far have been in the 20 - 25 rider range, and turnout should increase as the word gets around, and also once the students return in the fall. The riders obey traffic control devices, and take up one lane, not the whole road like in the BIG Critical Mass rides in major cities. Though invited, Kalamazoo's bike-mounted police have not yet partaken.

We spoke with Sara, a recent WMU grad who is behind Kalamazoo's Critical Mass rides. We were most struck by Sara's statement that people in vehicles lose their sense of humanity and vulnerability, and become distanced from the real world around them.

This is not a KBC-sponsored ride. The only thing this ride has in common with KBC rides is that we all ride bikes. And you'll see on page 7 of this *Pedalpress* that some KBC members think we ought not be promoting this ride because most of the participants don't wear helmets.

I urge you to check it out and decide for yourself. There's much to be said for solidarity—and for being informed

- Doug Kirk.

Kalamazoo Bike Club Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2000; United Way Building, 709 South Westnedge Ave., Kalamazoo; 6:30 PM

The Board members and Kalamazoo Bicycle Club members present at this meeting began by calling for a vote on the election of an interim president of the Club. Kathy Barrett nominated Karen Sue Oulette for the position, Victor Van Fleet supported, and the vote carried unanimously. Karen Sue is the new president of the Club until the elections in the late fall of this year - and, as she has expressed interest in continuing in this capacity, potentially beyond that time. The KBC Board is appreciative of Karen Sue's willingness to step up and fulfill this important position.

Treasurer Paul Stevens submitted a financial report to the board meeting, with the results of the recent Flowerfest Tour included. Flowerfest brought in nearly \$9,000 this year. Minus expenses the total benefit to the Club was approximately \$3,336. Including this income, the Club is approximately \$2500 in the black for the year 2000 so far. Newsletter printing and mailing costs continue to be the Club's largest yearly expense.

Victor brought up the subject of increasing the size of the Club membership and there was discussion about how best to achieve that goal. Karen Sue mentioned the possibility of a membership drive in the spring of the year 2001. There was discussion about what the club can offer members - and how to increase membership by providing better or more "services" that would induce bikers to join. There was discussion concerning a lack of services for recreational riders in the club. The suggestions for providing more "services" included buying various brands and varieties of bicycle seats in order to loan out to members on a "trial" basis, sponsoring an event like a "poker run" type of ride, and possibly working toward getting monetary discounts at other rides and tours and possibly at bicycle shops - in the area. These are in addition to the bike repairing and refurbishing that have been done this past year for charitable groups.

Celine Keizer suggested adding a "wish list" to the front page of the newsletter each month, spelling out in bulleted points the current needs of the bike club. These requests might include recruiting a person willing to handle the KBC database and other volunteer needs. Doug agreed that this was a good idea and plans to implement it starting with this issue of the newsletter.

Finally it was agreed to set a regular meeting date for the 2nd Tuesday of each month rather than the somewhat variable meeting dates as of late. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 PM.

Zolton B. Cohen, KBC Secretary

September Ride Calendar

by Ride Captain Randy Putt

NOTE: Due to less light in the evening all weekly evening rides will leave at 6 PM in September and October.

It has been another great riding season and some of the best tours of the year are yet to come this Fall: DALMAC over the Labor Day Weekend, the Wine and Harvest Festival Ride on Sept 10 in Paw Paw, the Apple Cider Century on Sept 24 in Three Oaks, and the Turning Leaves Century October 1 in Dowagiac is very nice. For more challenging rides with some travel involved, try the Hilly 100 in Bloomington, IN on Oct 14 and 15, or, for you hard core riders, the Columbus Fall Challenge on Sept 30 and October 1 in Lancaster, Ohio just south of Columbus.

There are four ride groups at the Monday Night Ride at Texas Drive Park, 10-15 mph, 16-18 mph, 19-20 mph, and 20+ mph. Maps will be available.

The ride leaders will make sure that the groups stay together and ride as a group for all rides except the 20+ ride. Sherri and Mike Higgins plan to lead a group for about 20 miles at 10-15 mph.

The following three groups will typically follow the same route. Both the 16-18 mph and 19-20 mph groups plan to stay together and not drop riders. Both groups plan work on group riding techniques and pace lining in order to improve group riding skills. Terry O'Connor leads the 16-18 mph group for 25 to 35 miles. Randy Putt and substitutes lead the 19-20 mph group for 25 to 35 miles. The 20+ mph group will do their thing without a designated ride leader. Due to the riding pace and style of the 20+ mph group, it can fragment into smaller groups and all the riders may not finish together. This ride can be hard and is not suitable for inexperienced riders. Some riders can be expected to be dropped from the main group. Since the ride follows the same route as the 16-18 mph and 19-20 mph groups so any riders who get dropped can wait for 19-20 mph group.

The Tuesday ride from Breakaway Bicycles on Romence Rd near S. Westnedge in Portage leaves the parking lot at 6:00 PM. Paul Wells leads the group for 25 to 30 miles at about 17-19 mph.

The two Wednesday rides begin at the Kal-Haven Trail parking lot on 10th St between H Ave and G Ave at 6 PM.

Enjoy the rolling hills of northwest Kalamazoo County for a ride of 25 to 35 miles in one of two groups. The 16-18 mph group is lead by Bill Strome. The 20+ mph group is lead by Zolton Cohen. Both Bill and Zolton do a great job in keeping the groups together. These are good rides to learn how to ride in a group.

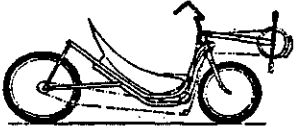
A fast group also rides from Kalamazoo Central on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:00 PM. The pace of the ride is typically about the same as Zolton's group, but the route goes to Bloomingdale and back (about 46 miles). No maps are available for this ride. This group consists of racers and other experienced riders. There is no designated ride leader. The group typically fragments into smaller groups and the riders often times do not finish together. This ride is hard and is not suitable for inexperienced riders. Some riders can be expected to be dropped from the main group. The ride is a loop and those riders who get dropped meet up with the main group on the return part of the loop.

Amy Lehman is leading a WOMEN'S RIDE on Thursdays at 6:00 PM from the west end of the KVCC paring lot (by the gym). Please spread the word. This is just the sort of ride that we need more of--a ride tailored for a specific sort of rider, to get more people interested in riding and especially group riding.

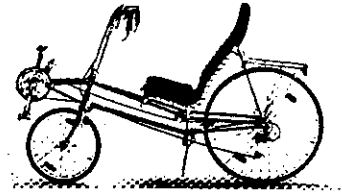
The Tour de Gull Lake meets at Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg at 6:00 PM on Fridays. The route for this ride is a loop around Gull Lake with a number of rolling hills. The route is well established, is 26 miles in length, and maps are available. There are two groups. The 17 mph has no designated leader, so we could use your help in leading this ride. This group finishes together. Randy Putt leads the 20+ mph group and tries to keep up. The pace for this group is typically greater than 21 mph at this time of year. Even though this ride can split into more than one group the ride leader will make sure that all riders finish the ride.

Call Randy at 649-1814 for more information about any of the rides described above. There is always room for a special weekend ride. Anyone can organize one. Just send me a description by the 10th of the month prior to the month of ride and we will get it into the newsletter.

Michigan Recumbent Rally - West



*Saturday, September 9, 2000
Campus of Western Michigan University,
Kalamazoo, MI*



Whether you've been riding a recumbent bike since the Arab oil embargo, or you're not even sure what one looks like, you are invited to an informal gathering of recumbent owners and curious onlookers here in southwest Michigan. The purpose of this gathering is to talk, ride, have some fun, and give everyone a chance to experience this alternative to traditional (and often painful) upright bicycles. Breakaway Bicycles of Portage is planning to bring some bikes for test rides, and other dealers may show up as well. Anyone who is interested is invited to drop in for some or all of the festivities, and all kinds of bikes and trikes are welcome. Experienced recumbent riders may enjoy getting together with others of their species, and the interested public will get a chance to try out some recumbents for themselves.

Where: Rally headquarters will be the "Promenade Circle" in the center of the WMU main campus, just west of downtown Kalamazoo. Ample parking will be available close by. Test rides will utilize campus roads and parking lots (relatively low traffic on the weekend) or groups may venture further into the vicinity. Kalamazoo is halfway between Detroit and Chicago on Interstate 94, see map and directions on reverse.

Schedule:

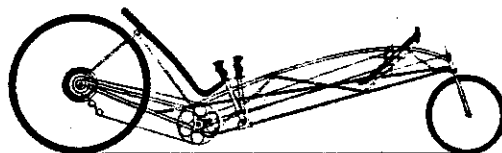
- 10:00 Gather and welcome, short test rides of whatever shows up will continue at the tent until 3:00 pm.
- 11:00 Short ride off campus (route suggestions provided)
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Longer ride options, downtown Kalamazoo or out of town
- 3:00 End of 'formal' program

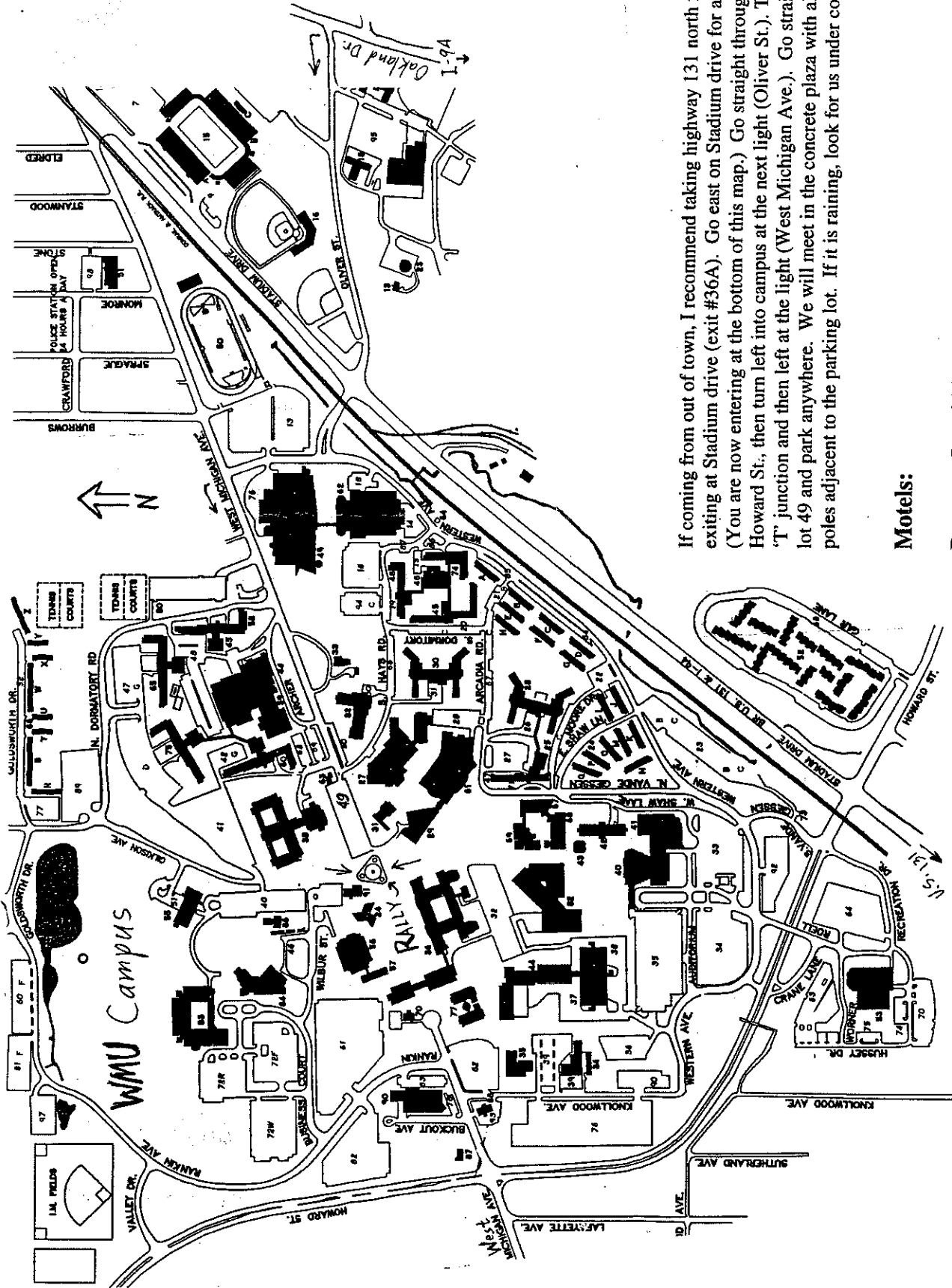
Information on choosing a recumbent, features, local suppliers, etc., will be provided at the Rally headquarters. There will be no sag support for the rides, and you are urged to wear a helmet.

Cost: There is none!

The Rally will be held rain or shine. On the following day (**Sunday 9/10**) recumbent riders are invited to ride the annual **Vineyard Classic** bike tour in nearby Paw Paw (brochure enclosed). Advanced registration for this ride is optional, but would save \$5.00 from the \$15.00 registration fee on the day of the event. Let's meet on the parking lot at the start of the ride at 8:30 Sunday morning so we can start together. If you wish to stay in the area Saturday night, see the lodging information on the enclosed map. For further information, contact

Paul.Pancella@WMich.edu (preferred) or (616) 353-0125





If coming from out of town, I recommend taking highway 131 north from I-94 and exiting at Stadium drive (exit #36A). Go east on Stadium drive for about 2.7 miles. (You are now entering at the bottom of this map.) Go straight through the light at Howard St., then turn left into campus at the next light (Oliver St.). Turn right at the 'T' junction and then left at the light (West Michigan Ave.). Go straight into parking lot 49 and park anywhere. We will meet in the concrete plaza with all of the flagpoles adjacent to the parking lot. If it is raining, look for us under cover further west.

Motels:

- Baymont Inn, 2203 S. 11th St. (Stadium and US 131) 1-800-301-0200
- Holiday Inn, 2747 S. 11th St., (616)375-6000
- Red Roof Inn, 5425 W. Michigan (adjacent to Budgetel) (616)375-7400
- Knights Inn, 1211 S. Westnedge, 1-800-843-5644

SEPTEMBER

2000

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
27 KVCC-8:00 AM & 12:00 noon Riders present decide pace and distance.	28 Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:15 10-15mph 6:15 16-18mph 6:15 20+mph	29 Breakaway Ride Breakaway Bicycles 6:00 17-19mph	30 Wed Night Ride Kal-Haven Trail-head 6:00 20+mph 6:00 10-15mph 6:00 16-18mph	31 Women's Ride 6:00 PM at Texas Drive Park. Riders set pace	1 Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:00 18-21mph	2 KVCC 9:00 am. Riders present determine pace and distance.
3 KVCC-8:00 AM & 12:00 noon Riders present decide pace and distance.	4 Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:00 10-15mph 6:00 16-18mph 6:00 20+mph	5 Breakaway Ride Breakaway Bicycles 6:00 17-19mph	6 Wed Night Ride Kal-Haven Trail-head 6:00 20+mph 6:00 10-15mph 6:00 16-18mph	7 Women's Ride 6:00 PM at Texas Drive Park. Riders set pace	8 Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:00 18-21mph	9 KVCC 9:00 am. Riders present determine pace and distance.
10 Vineyard Classic Paw Paw See story within; Also, meet at KVCC at 8:00 AM to ride out to Paw Paw for the tour	11 Recovery Ride Texas Drive Park 6:00 10-15mph 6:00 16-18mph 6:00 20+mph	12 Breakaway Ride Breakaway Bicycles 6:00 17-19mph	13 Wed Night Ride Kal-Haven Trail-head 6:00 20+mph 6:00 10-15mph 6:00 16-18mph	14 Women's Ride 6:00 PM at Texas Drive Park. Riders set pace	15 Tour de Gull Lake Billy's Bike Shop 6:00 18-21mph	16 KVCC 9:00 am. Riders present determine pace and distance.
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Dangerous Rides

By Zolton Cohen

As a person who has only been biking seriously for about four years now, I've been on a somewhat limited number of rides. But there have been a few, a memorable few, which could be considered dangerous.

There was that time a few summers ago, pulling out of Decatur with a pack of riders, when a sudden rain shower hit. The roostertail of water, oil, and road grit thrown up by Richard Neumann's back tire instantly coated my glasses with an opaque film so thick that I literally couldn't see where I was going. That was pretty scary.

I've also been dragged around the county at 27 miles an hour by a seemingly indefatigable John Meyers, bumping over wavy pavement and who knows what else - hazardous objects on the road slipping by so fast they didn't even register.

What about that time out on the Kal Haven trail, at night and in the early winter, when Tom Cross - with me right on his wheel - had to swerve adroitly to avoid T-boning a big whitetail buck deer that plunged across the trail not six feet in front of us?

And there are also the hot summer days, riding behind a certain bike club newsletter editor whose sweat is so toxic and corrosive that foreign governments are studying it for possible use as a biological warfare weapon. Terrifying to get smeared with that stuff. (*Worse yet, I'm told, to inhale it.* -Ed)

But by far the most dangerous ride I do comes on Saturday mornings. It lasts only twenty minutes or so and it takes place on a sidewalk. This is the "Credit Union Ride," a four mile jaunt on my mountain bike to deposit my meager weekly earnings in a credit union up on West Main Street. For sheer thrills, chills, and a scrub-two-thousand-miles-worth-of-wear-off-your-tires-in-a-screaming, skidding-stop type of ride, this is the real deal. At no other time on a bike have I come so close to death and dismemberment. And, again, this takes place on an otherwise benign sidewalk.

Rather than risk my life among the cars on West Main Street, I choose to ride on the sidewalk alongside the road. That's where the real excitement is. That's where car drivers really don't see me at all. They don't even look.

Picture this: I'm headed east on that broad, asphalt sidewalk on the north side of West Main Street, east of the Westwood Plaza. There are a number of north/south cross streets that cross West Main in this area, and at each of these intersections a potential accident lurks. A car coming from the north pulls south down a cross street, headed for West Main. That driver's head is turned to the east, only concerned about the traffic coming from that direction. So focused is the driver on cars coming from the east that the fact that I'm entering the intersection from the west has no implication. I jump on my brakes, slide to a stop, thump on the driver's hood with my fist, and only then does the driver turn to look at me - like I'm the one who is at fault for nearly colliding with him. Whew. Another disaster averted. As I continue along this path, the same thing occurs at nearly half of the other intersections along the way.

A TV show I saw recently had a policewoman stating that bike riders on sidewalks were legally bound to ride in the same direction as the traffic on the road. I don't know if that's true or not, but it sure is a good idea. At least drivers would have their heads turned in your direction and you'd have a ghost of a chance of them stopping. Why don't I ride on a sidewalk on the other side of West Main? There is none. So, I choose the dangerous path - the exciting one. If nothing else, it keeps my reflexes sharp.

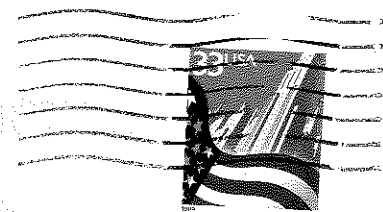
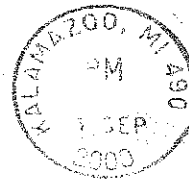
Axel Kleat took the month off. Actually, he says he wrote something about Flowerfest, the Saturn pro riders that we are truly lucky to get the past three years, and what tremendous ambassadors they are for the sport. He says he was trying to make the point that while these pros are inhumanly fast, many of us could even learn more about humility and camaraderie from them than they could about speed, power, or racing.

But when Axel saw what Zolton wrote, he tossed his effort in the recycling and said, "Oh, what's the use? Hammerheads will always be hammerheads. Besides, this is better than my stuff lately anyway."

- Ed.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Expires 2001/02

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KALAMAZOO AREA BIKE SHOPS

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 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
 Freedom Recreation.....381-7233

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

