

KBC Pedal Press

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The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

March 2002

President's Letter:

Zolton beat me to the punch last month so this month I'd like to start by thanking everyone who made the Recovery Party a smash hit; Karen Sue, Steve, Doug, Kathy, and above all everyone who attended. I'd also like to thank Jinny Ahrens and Chuck Jaqua Realty for providing such a nice facility for the party.

Last month I wrote about planning for the year to come and what things we can do to make KBC a good club. A good cycling club means something different to everyone, but I think we have a lot to offer. This season will bring about some changes and new opportunities for KBC.

First of all, we will have a Social Director for the first time since I've been involved with KBC. Emily Mattes will take on the role and I'm glad to have her on board. The Social Director will organize events such as the Recovery Party and the Anniversary Ride. The primary goals of these events are to get current members together off their bikes and to attract new members to the club. Emily will provide more specifics regarding her goals at our next board meeting.

We have been presented with an opportunity to rehabilitate bicycles at the Lakeside Treatment and Learning Center (www.lakesidetlc.org). There are as many as 40 bikes on site in different states of disrepair. Chris and Marian Barnes are working with Lakeside to set a date for a workday. We hope to see many of you there to help get these bikes into working order. Keep watching the Pedal Press for dates. This is a great community outreach opportunity for KBC.

KBC will also debut a time trial series this summer. Following our ride schedule meeting in October, Tom Cross announced that he would organize a time trial series. This series is open to club members only and prizes will be awarded at the end of the season. There will be several categories of awards so you don't have to be the fastest to win! See Tom's report inside for more information.

Cycling season has arrived for those who are willing to get a little cold. It's right around the corner for those who prefer more forgiving weather conditions. No matter what your preference, things are really starting to take shape for KBC in 2002. Randy Putt (Ride Captain) has submitted the first ride calendar for 2002. Many of you are working diligently on Flowerfest, special rides, and other KBC events; thanks for the hard work. All we need now is a good paceline. See you on the road.

Greg Bouwman,

Editor's Letter:

The sharp eyed among you (and what biker doesn't consider him or herself that?) will notice a different look to the newsletter this month. The layout has been changed to better reflect my inadequacies as a newsletter designer. Actually, someone inadvertently sent me a virus by e-mail last month and it crashed the hard drive on my old computer. I was just starting to get the hang of the newsletter software on that machine when it took a face plant. So now I'm in the middle of setting up and learning a new computer, a new operating system, and new newsletter software all at the same time. Well, Doug never said putting the Pedal Press together was going to be easy. But he didn't mention anything about the Exxon Valdez ramming into my office door, either.

But that aside, I think we've got a number of important issues to consider in this month's Pedal Press. While it's still too cold for many of us to do any serious riding yet, there are wheels within wheels turning on the road construction front, and what's being said and decided right now is going to affect us all in the near – and also distant – future. All of us ride on the roads at some point, and that's why we consider their condition and safety of utmost importance. With road projects pending this summer on R Avenue and also on Parkview, this takes on even more immediacy for the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club. Read Doug's report for more details.

As Greg pointed out in his President's letter, there's a lot going on inside KBC right now. Attendance at the monthly KBC meetings is up. Emily Mattes will breathe life into the Social Director's position, Tom Cross is organizing a time trial series, and KBC is getting ready to do more community outreach this year. It's an exciting time, especially if you're involved in any one of these projects. And you can be you know. All it takes is a phone call to get on board with some of these projects. Volunteering in your bike club is fun, it gives you a stake in what goes on, and you get to meet some wonderful, dedicated people. It's hard to top all that in exchange for just a bit of your time. See you out on the roads – or working on a KBC project - soon. Zolton Cohen.

(Editor's note: Dr. Stays has written eloquently on many bicycling related subjects for the Pedal Press over the years. Here's his latest: a story of rhapsody between a man and his bicycle seat. Hey, there are worse things to obsess about. A comfortable sit is of utmost importance on a long ride. Comfort rules!)

Musings about Saddles by a Retro-Grouch

By Curly Stays

I was able to ride more often last fall than usual, mainly because of the excellent weather. My normal fall routine is to switch in October to a low fixed-gear for all of my road rides, and this switch usually also entails a change of saddles to one that is a bit wider and more supportive than the Flite that I use during the summer. I need a more supportive saddle when I spin a low fixed-gear because more of my body weight ends up being supported by the saddle. I've unfortunately had perineal bruises after using the Flite on some long, bumpy, low fixed-gear rides. My problem has been that I haven't been able to find a more supportive saddle that I've really liked. If the saddle offered enough support for my sit bones, then it was invariably too wide in the middle and did not offer enough thigh clearance and/or created numbness problems. Until this year, I would begin a search each fall for a saddle that might be comfortable for fixed-gear riding, and my basement junk box has several discarded, uncomfortable saddles.

This summer I began using a Brooks B.17 saddle on my commuting bike. The folks at Rivendell Bicycle Works (www.rivendellbicycles.com) highly recommended the B.17, and it is the most comfortable saddle that I've ever had. The Brooks saddles are different from nearly all of the other saddles on the US market because they are traditional leather saddles that have no plastic or foam. Brooks began making the B.17 a long time ago, even before Axel Kleat was born. The saddle is 17 cm wide in the back (hence the name), and offers plenty of sit bone support. Brooks makes the B.17 with several cosmetic options, with choices of color, rail materials, and the size of the rivets that secure the leather to the frame. The cost of the B.17 ranges from about \$70 for black leather and small rivets to about \$140 for titanium

rails and large rivets. My favorite B.17 is finished with large brass rivets and the leather is stained honey brown. The saddle is so comfortable that I've permanently converted my commuter to a low fixed-gear bike. The B.17 does a great job at smoothing out the potholes of city streets.

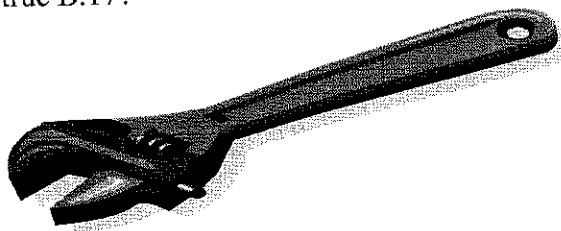
What makes the Brooks saddles so remarkably comfortable is that they become truly customized to one's butt as the leather breaks in. It is true that the leather can seem forbiddingly hard and uncomfortable on a new saddle, but by properly dressing the leather before the first ride, the saddle should become comfortable within the first few hours of riding. As the leather molds to the contours of one's butt, the sit bones will force small, permanent depressions in the leather. Because leather can stretch, Brooks saddles are designed so that tension on the leather can be increased, as needed. This also means that the tension can be customized for comfort. Brooks sells a spanner that allows easy tension adjustment, and I highly recommend the purchase of the spanner; a regular open-end wrench can also be used but it is a much slower and more frustrating experience.

Although a new B.17 is relatively narrow in the middle for thigh clearance, there will be somewhat less thigh clearance as the leather breaks-in and softens up. This may not be a problem except to riders accustomed to the thigh clearance of a Flite. Brooks used to make a wonderful racing saddle named the Swallow that offered great thigh clearance. Even though the back of the Swallow was as wide as other Brooks saddles, the middle portion of the saddle was as narrow as today's Flites. Brooks reportedly introduced the Swallow long ago to meet the demands of racers who were cutting off the leather on the sides of the saddle (i.e. the side skirts) in order to gain thigh clearance. This trimming takes minimal time and tools (an X-acto or other sharp knife, a drill or awl, and a pop-rivet tool.) I've done this to several Brooks saddles, and I can e-mail (curlystays@aol.com) anyone who is interested with more details about the procedure. I have read about other riders drilling holes or thinning the leather to increase the comfort of their saddles. (*"Musings" Continued on page 3*)

My Swallow-like B.17 is as narrow in the middle and nose as a Flite and offers great thigh clearance, but the back is as wide as a traditional touring saddle and offers great sit bone support. I've used this saddle on many 3+ hour low fixed-gear rides without any discomfort or numbness, and I doubt that I will go back to the Flite next summer. Some people are incredulous that a saddle without padding and with a rock hard nose can provide such a plush ride. It is extremely important that the nose of the saddle be tilted slightly downward in order to avoid uncomfortable perineal pressure. The nose of the saddle should only provide stability, not support. Only the back half of the saddle should support body weight.

Brooks saddles require more care than modern leather-covered foam and plastic saddles. Leather dressing should be regularly applied (Brooks recommends their product, Proofide), and the saddle should not get soaked by rain. Many Brooks riders carry a saddle bonnet in their tool/tube kit so that the saddle can be protected on rainy days. (Carradice makes an excellent saddle bonnet, but a shower cap will also work fine.) As previously noted, the leather will stretch as it is broken in, and tension will need to be increased periodically. With proper care, however, a Brooks saddle is likely to last far longer than a foam and plastic saddle.

The B.17 weighs considerably more than a Flite (ca 500 gm vs 200 gm), and some riders will not be interested in the B.17 just because of the weight difference. My opinion is that this weight difference is unimportant relative to the gain in comfort provided by the B.17. The B.17 is so comfortable and supportive that you might not need padded riding shorts for short (<1 hr) rides! If you are a rider who can't seem to find a comfortable saddle, why not consider the tried and true B.17?



Pedal Press

Next Flowerfest Meeting:

March 21st, 7 PM at Tom Keizor's house. Call Dave Newman at 375-8105 for details and directions.

Interested in helping out with KBC's **Flowerfest Tour** next year, and in meeting and making new friends, and having fun? This is a good way to do it.

KBC on the Web:

Since February 22, 1999, KBC has had a website at <http://www.angelfire.com/rni/kbc/>. Angelfire is a part of Lycos and it provides service for websites at no charge. Angelfire generates income from advertisements that are put onto computer screens each time a website is accessed.

As of February 2, 2002, the KBC website has been accessed 10,003 times, which averages 9 hits per day. The number of hits is shown at the bottom of many of the KBC pages. Some of the primary KBC website pages (and hits) are the ride page (1263), KBC Flowerfest Tour (905), photos (859), other KBC information (272), joining KBC (195), nearby tours (804), local bicycle shops, and bicycling links.

Members of KBC can exchange bicycling information through the Yahoo Group KBC-General, which was created in November 2000. Members of the group can e-mail all other members of the group by sending to KBC-general@yahoogroups.com. This useful system is a fast and free way to communicate with KBC members, especially for setting up rides and exchanging other bicycling information. The Yahoo Group can also be accessed at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kbc-general/>, which is linked from the KBC website. KBC members can join the group by going to the internet address and following the instructions. Joining the group is subject to approval, which is to verify KBC membership. Members of the group can receive the e-mail messages with their Yahoo ID, elect an alternate e-mail address, or view messages at the internet site. The group currently has 38 members and 296 messages have been posted to the group.

The KBC website and Yahoo Group have been set up and maintained by Larry Kissinger. Suggestions regarding the KBC website or Yahoo Group can be directed to Larry at (kalamazoobc@yahoo.com).

A Tale of Two Meetings by Doug Kirk

I recently attended two meetings of interest to area bicyclists. One was in late January relative to R Ave. and the Road Commission's plan to flatten both R. Ave. and 6th St about a quarter mile each side of where they intersect. The other was a Kalamazoo City Commission meeting which included a vote to approve new plans to rebuild Parkview Ave. between Oakland Drive and Drake Road. The similarities and differences in the way matters were handled were striking. As usual, bicyclists' desires and needs got short shrift.

Past readers will recall that the City was actually supposed to rebuild Parkview last year in conjunction with the rebuilding of Drake Road. The plan was to have Parkview west of Parkview Hills become a boulevard, similar to the one recently built on Drake north of Parkview. Part of the plan included nice wide bike lanes, just like those on Drake. East of Parkview Hills, where the right-of-way is much narrower, the plan was a three lane road, like Oakland Drive, with similar bike lanes. Parkview was a key road for bicycling in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan we helped develop with the City in the last few years, and all in all the plan looked good. I actually went to a meeting with residents of the Oakwood neighborhood (located on the south side of Parkview) and helped the City's engineers explain the need for the improvements to the residents, who generally opposed any changes—not too surprising considering how they'd just been led down the primrose path concerning WMU's new Research Park. They didn't want their yards to shrink, and they didn't want to lose any trees.

But the Sunday, February 3, 2002 Gazette featured an article about the plan and the Commission's intention to vote on it the following evening. The plan in the paper looked different than what I remembered and the old internal alarm bells started clanging, particularly when my phone calls the next morning to the engineer in charge of the plan went unreturned. I trundled down to City Hall that evening and discovered that within the last week the plans had been completely altered, much to the detriment of bicycling safety. East of Parkview Hills the bike lanes had disappeared entirely. Now it was just a three lane road. West of Parkview Hills the boulevard is history, but at least there will be bike lanes, similar to what's there now, but a little wider. Expect it to be built this year. Contracts will apparently be bid by April.

I don't know if I was more upset at the change in the plans, or at the fact that they tried to slip it through unnoticed at the last minute. I addressed the Commission on both subjects before they voted. Of course, I got nowhere. The Commission voted as the engineers requested, and now I'm looking for evidence that someone at the City is interested in working together, rather than having engineers decide for themselves—at the last minute—what they think is best. And I wonder why we went to the trouble of spending thousands of dollars—and hours—on the Non-Motorized Plan if the result is ignored and the City disregards the needs of the non-

motorized community. All in all it was a very galling experience.

The other meeting was primarily for residents in the area of R. Ave and 6th St. You'll likely recall that some teenagers have used the steep hills there to launch themselves airborne in cars at highly illegal speeds. At least one fatality and several lurid accidents have occurred, with the result that some residents asked the County to see if something could be done. The result is not increased police surveillance or a lower speed limit but a plan from the Road Commission to lop off the hilltops, fill in the valleys, and hack down lots of nice trees along what is one of three "Natural Beauty Roads" in the County.

The Road Commission's plan had most area residents incensed. And even though both the plan and the opposition have been known for some time the Road Commission plan moves on despite the rancor. Work is to begin later this year. As one citizen after another (some of whom were extremely well-spoken) rose at the meeting and voiced opposition, it became clear that the Commission's plans are essentially immutable because, we learned, they have a federal grant to do the job, and they lose the money if they don't follow federal guidelines and get the project going this year. In the long run, I don't suppose this makes too much difference to bicyclists other than to obviously subtract from the "natural beauty" of what certainly is one of the most beautiful roads in the area. Still, it was shocking to see the Road Commission running what appeared to be little more than an opportunity for the residents to vent before they went ahead with what they had already decided to do.

In contrast, the City listened to the Oakwood residents but didn't ask other interested parties to be involved. Eleventh hour changes were made, to the detriment of the people—like us—they left out of the loop. I've been involved with local road politics enough now to know that you can never please everyone. Further, people are generally opposed to change, especially in their own back yard. But ignoring those most impacted by a plan isn't any better an approach than listening to one group at the expense of another. Meanwhile, I'm trying to figure out how to get the City OR the Road Commission to show any interest in what we bicyclists have to say about how they build their roads. I am open to suggestions. *Editor's note: In the days since Doug attended these meetings and wrote this article, both the Kalamazoo County Commission and the Texas Township Board of Commissioners have requested that the Kalamazoo Country Road Commission go back to the drawing board on some of the issues involved in the R Avenue road flattening project. Ron Reid, managing director of KCRC, said the road commission may try and request a variance from the Michigan Department of Transportation (the agency funding most of the work) to take into account some of the affected homeowner's concerns. Stay tuned on these issues. They're not over yet.*

MARCH RIDE SCHEDULE

Although there will be no official rides scheduled for March there will be riders ready to ride if the weather is suitable. When the weather cooperates, impromptu rides will most likely materialize in the next couple of months.

- Meet at 12 PM on Saturdays in the SW corner of the KVCC parking lot near the tennis courts in March.
- Meet at 12 PM on Sundays in the SW corner of the KVCC parking lot near the tennis courts in March.
- Meet at 5:30 PM on Mondays at Texas Drive Park.
- Meet at 5:30 PM on Wednesdays at the Kal-Haven Trail parking lot.
- Meet at 5:30 PM on Fridays at Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg.

The riders who show up at any of these locations can determine the length and pace of the ride. There will no official ride leader or maps provided in March.

Wear the appropriate clothing and let's go for a ride. If anyone would like to lead a weekend ride in March, give me a call or send me a description of the ride via e-mail or use the KBC-General group e-mail list (see the January Pedal Press for instructions). If the roads are dry, there will be riders ready to ride. I have a lengthy e-mail list of riders, so the ride information can be transferred quickly and on short notice. If any of you would like to be added to the e-mail list, send your e-mail address to me (srbike@aol.com or sterling.r.putt@pharmacia.com).

BE A RIDE LEADER

The weather has been unseasonably warm several times in January and February this year. A few weeks ago in January there was a ride from KVCC on a Sunday. Doug Kirk sent an email note around announcing the ride and over 25 riders of varying abilities showing up. A group of faster riders did over 40 miles that day. I think everyone had a good time as the ride split into several ride groups. Today, in early February, the sun is shining and I plan to take a ride. It sure gets me thinking about the upcoming ride season. Is spring really just around the corner?

Although it is only February it is time to think about the 2002 ride season. I've been riding on the road several times already this year, and I know of others who have been riding even more. KBC had a great group of ride leaders last year and the 2001 ride season was another great year. Attendance at the rides continued to increase. With the increased ride attendance we need more ride leaders for the 2002 season to accommodate the larger groups. The more ride leaders we have the better. Volunteer to lead some rides. It's fun. The routes are well established for the Monday,

Wednesday, and Friday rides. Route maps are available on the KBC web site (www.angelfire.com/mi/kbc). Give it a shot. The club will be happy to help get you started.

In the past several years there has been a large rider participation in the 16+ mph ride groups and these groups are well established for the three weekly ride nights. There were usually 2 to 6 people riding in the 10-15 mph range on Monday evenings, and periodic participation from that group on Friday nights. In order to make additional 10-15 mph ride groups a part of the KBC ride calendar KBC needs you 10-15 mph riders to participate and to help lead the rides. If you are planning to take a ride why not invite others and do the ride during one of KBC's normal ride days? Once a group gets started it feeds on itself. Riding in a group is great fun.

If anyone is interested in leading rides this year, please give me a call at 649-1814. I will be more than happy to discuss how to lead rides with you. In fact, most any experienced KBC rider would be happy to discuss ride leader responsibilities with you. You do not have to wait to be asked. No experience is necessary, just the willingness to ride with a great group of people who enjoy riding their bikes.

PROPOSED YEAR 2002 RIDE SCHEDULE

We plan to continue the evening Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday rides for the 2002 season. Last year KBC also sponsored five special weekend rides; the W ride in late April, the Old Car Ride from Vicksburg (60 miles) in June, a ride from Kalamazoo to South Haven and back for lunch and some beach time (100 miles) in July, the Ride Around Kalamazoo County (100 miles) in August, and the inaugural 30th Anniversary ride in September. These rides will again be offered in 2002. KBC is open to proposals for other weekend rides as well. Send your ideas to any KBC officer or the Ride Captain.

KBC plans to offer at least a partial weekly ride schedule in April as the weather permits. The full ride schedule will start in May at 6 PM. Look for details in the April Newsletter. Descriptions of the regular weekday rides are listed below.

Monday

The Monday Ride at Texas Drive Park will consist of five ride groups, one of which should provide a pace to suit riders of nearly any ability:

- 15-20 mile group at 10-12 mph,
- 15-20 mile group at 12-15 mph,
- 25-30 mile group at 16-18 mph,
- 25-30 mile group at 19-20 mph,
- 25-30 mile group at 20+ mph

The 10-15 mile groups will generally ride the same route and the 25-30 mile groups will also usually ride the same route. The 10-15 mph groups are recommended to new riders. For more experienced riders who are new to the club the 16-18 mph group is recommended. The leaders for the 16 - 18 mph and 18 - 19 mph groups plan to keep the groups together and at a steady pace. All riders who want to push the pace please do so in the 20+mph group.

Tuesday

The Tuesday Ride starts at Breakaway Bicycles on Romence Road in Portage. The ride consists of one group that rides 25-30 miles at 16-18 mph.

Wednesday

The Wednesday rides start at the Kal-Haven Trail Parking lot on 10th Street. KBC plans to offer three ride groups:

- 10-15 mile fitness group at 10-15 mph on the Kal-Haven Trail,
- 25-35 mile group at 16-18 mph,
- 25-35 mile group at 20+ mph.

The fitness ride at 10-15 mph on the Kal-Haven Trail is a new ride and will start in May or June. The Wednesday night Hammerfest will start at the Kal-Haven Trail Parking lot at 6 PM when daylight savings time begins. The pace of this ride is typically greater than 22++ mph and the route goes to Bloomingdale and back (about 46 miles). Since the route is well known to most of the regular riders, no maps are available for this ride. This group is typically large (more than 15 riders) and consists of racers and other experienced riders. There is no designated ride leader. The group typically fragments into smaller groups and the riders often 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.

Thursday

Thursday night's ride, starting at KVCC, is a nice and easy "social" ride, and has a loyal following that is growing in size. Riders of all riding abilities are welcome. The pace is typically 15-17 mph and distance is 20-25 miles.

Friday

The Friday Tour de Gull meets at Billy's Bike Shop in Galesburg and the pace varies depending on who shows up. We did have a 16-17 mph as well as the 20+ mph group last year. The fast group typically leads itself. The route for this ride is well established so the ride leader job is easy. Give it a try.

The ride leaders make every attempt at keeping each group together, although the 20+ mph groups may fragment.

We need ride leaders for all the ride groups described above. The more volunteers the better.

Minutes for February 12, 2001 KBC meeting, Borgess Fitness Center.

Present: Greg Bouwman, Karen Sue Mackaluso, Steve Secondi, Terry O'Connor, Kathy Kirk, Rick Whaley, David Newman, Emily Mattes, Zolton Cohen, Chris Barnes, and Randy Putt.

It was clear that people are getting excited about the upcoming season. The meeting ran nearly twice as long as usual and covered a wide range of topics.

Karen Sue Mackaluso volunteered to lead an effort to design and purchase new KBC jerseys. The Board will wait to see what Karen Sue develops in this regard. She will report back on pricing and design issues.

Denny Morrison, who previously donated money to KBC for the express purpose of purchasing bikes for needy children, is anxious to get this process completed. Denny has a boy in mind to receive a bike and will order one from Alfred E. Bike to present to him at the March, 2002 KBC meeting. Chris Barnes agreed to search out a needy local girl to receive a similar bike.

Zolton Cohen nominated Emily Mattes to become KBC's Social Director, a position that exists under the KBC Constitution but which has remained vacant for several years. Voted into the position unanimously, Emily will submit ideas for KBC promotion and activities in the near future. In this same vein, Randy Putt discussed ways to make new riders feel welcome and a part of the club at KBC rides.

Chris Barnes stated that he and his wife, Marian are putting together a Bike Repair Day for Lakeside Treatment Center on Oakland Drive on a to-be-determined date this spring. LTC is a home for troubled boys and girls and has about forty bikes for the residents, most of which are in need of minor repairs to be useable. The idea is to get a number of KBC volunteers to provide manpower and tools to fix flats, true wheels, lube chains, etc. KBC will purchase supplies for this project from local bike shops. Please contact Chris Barnes if you can help with this fine idea, at 327-8972.

Kathy Kirk discussed issues she has discovered since taking over KBC's membership database. These include members who paid dues but didn't get added to the database in part because the members joined at Flowerfest and the Flowerfest entry form did not collect sufficient data on the new members. Dave Newman will re-do the Flowerfest application to address this problem. Kathy also distributed copies of the packets of information KBC currently sends new members and asked for input to update them. She will couple the updated information to a special "New Member" edition of the *Pedal Press*.

Greg Bouwman reported that Tom Cross wants to start a twice-monthly Tuesday Time Trial series this year and has a location picked out. After discussion about funding for timing equipment and prizes, Karen Sue moved to budget \$200 for gift certificates at area bike shops for prizes, and the measure passed. Zolton suggested that KBC require all riders to sign standard releases to participate in the time trials. Kathy suggested that only KBC members be allowed to participate, and this was also approved.

After discussion about KBC's bike box (for shipping bikes on airlines, etc), the Board decided to set the rental price at \$30 per week. Zolton will include information on this KBC service in the newsletter.

Randy Putt, a/k/a Ride Captain Randy, brought up that the KBC insurance requires that we make a good faith effort **each year** to get all riders to sign releases to participate in KBC rides. It was agreed that we need to spread around this thankless task rather than have one or two people doing it. Randy also brought up that we ought to make an effort to have weekend rides start at different locations. Suggestions included Parchment High School, Climax and Richland. Finally, Randy mentioned that we badly need more people to lead the slower rides, especially the 10 - 15 mph rides. Anyone interested please contact Randy at 649-1814.

Rick Whaley questioned whether KBC risks its tax-exempt status by taking a position relative to issues such as the Road Commission's plan to flatten out R Ave. near 6th St. Zolton and Greg will look further into this issue.

The Board discussed how to distribute the 100 copies KBC receives of the League of Michigan Bicyclists poster that lists organized Michigan rides for the year. In the past, we have mailed these out with a spring edition of the *Pedal Press*, but this costs additional postage and we have to buy about 50 extra copies from LMB, adding to the expense. The Board decided this year to distribute these posters to area bicycle shops for distribution. If you want one, they should be in the shops by the time you read this.

Chris Barnes indicated he is interested in KBC organizing a trip to the brand new Mike Walden Velodrome near Detroit.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Next KBC meeting: March 12, 2002, 7 PM, Borgess Fitness Center, Gull Road.

Respectfully submitted, Doug Kirk, KBC Secretary.

New KBC Members:

Diane & Megan Place
Ron Rutgers Family

March Membership Expirations:

Greg Bouwman Family
Al Cergol
Rand Loga
Denny Morrison
Richard Neumann

March Birthdays:

Dan Degen
Ron Doering
Logan Freer
Rebecca Gaff
Jeanette Holm
Cole Lehman
Gary Lehman
Christine Raible
Ron Rutgers
Scott Showers
Blaire Showers
Ed Wilson
Jim Wilson

New to KBC: Tuesday Night Time Trial Series.

Feeling fast? Now, as a KBC member, you've got a chance to find out on a fixed course exactly how your training is affecting and improving your fitness and speed.

Time trials give you the opportunity to race against the clock for a set distance on a set course. Participants start a minute or so apart, ride to a turnaround point, and then ride back to the start line. The idea is to ride as fast as you can for the duration of the time trial, giving maximum effort in order to keep the variables pretty much the same from trial to trial. There is a monitor keeping track of riders and times, and you can compare how you're doing from month to month during the season. Tom Cross has volunteered to set up and lead the time trial series this year for KBC.

The time trials begin on April 2 and run until fall, and will be held the first and third Tuesday of each month with the exception of 04/16/02 and 06/04/02.. They start at Vicksburg High School at 6 PM with a 6:30 cut-off time. Distance is 10 miles out and back. These time trials are for KBC members only. There will be prizes supplied in different categories, some based on performance and some on participation.

Time trialers may be asked to help out before or after they ride. Results may be posted on the KBC website and in the *Pedal Press*. More seasoned time trialers will offer tips to the newbies.

(Axel, continued from page 9)

nylon or Gore-Tex gauntlet gloves (that come about half way to your elbow,) your fingers should be okay in any weather you can talk yourself into going out in.

And speaking of talking to yourself, how you treat your head makes all the difference. You lose a full third of your body heat from your head. Having the right stuff up there makes a big difference in how much you need on your chest and arms to be comfortable. In fact, after tights and long sleeves, a hat should be the next thing to reach for—one of those ubiquitous cotton bike hats. Cheap, colorful, and easy to stuff in a pocket, they do the job down to fifty degrees or less. A Lycra headband that is two or three inches across is even warmer. Adding a hat is just about as warm as a Lycra hood, if a bit harder to make comfortable under a helmet. But you don't want your head to get too wet with perspiration either. The great thing about hats is that they don't take up much space in pockets.

Of course, if it's in the thirties or forties and also very wet outside, all bets are off except one—your money is safe figuring I'm taking the fastest way home I know.

Here's Emily!

KBC's new social director (filling up a position in the hierarchy that has been vacant for much too long) is Emily Mattes, whom some of you may know from rides she participated in last summer. Vice President Karen Sue Mackaluso has said of Emily, "she's a determined gal," and her style of riding and her personal life seem to bear this out. She's 17, a junior in high school at Kalamazoo Central and the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center, and she's taking many college classes, including a course in Russian. If you've ever tried to follow Emily up a hill on a KBC ride you know she can also turn the cranks on a bike.

Emily writes: "I've lived in Kalamazoo for about five years and got into road cycling and the KBC two-and-a-half years ago, when I started training for triathlons. The start was slow: my first bike was a 25-year-old 10-speed my dad found in the attic of our old home! Though in the past I haven't been consistent in my ride attendance, now that I can drive I plan on being a regular. You'll most likely see me at the Friday night rides at Billy's. I hope to see all of you at a ride once the season starts!"

Emily has said that, in addition to her role as KBC social director, she plans to do some recruiting of new KBC members, including some affiliates of the younger generation.

The Essentials by Axel Kleat

If you ride your bike in cold weather you've got to dress for the ride. The length of time you'll be out, how hard you ride, and the temperature, moisture and wind conditions all make enormous differences in your pre-ride layering. If it's really cold—near freezing—I'll rarely be out more than an hour and a half. At forty degrees, I've done centuries and been fine. One important step is to plan your ride so you keep a pretty even pace. If you're hammering, then sitting up for a while, or cranking up hills and flying down the other side, it's tough to stay warm for long.

You have to find clothing that works for you, and you have to figure that you'll be cold until you've been out there making some sort of steady effort for ten minutes or so. Over the years I've found a few keys to comfortable, sometimes downright wonderful, riding even in temperatures below thirty degrees. Maybe you already know exactly what works for you. If not, here's Axel's list of cold weather riding necessities, starting with...

Wool socks. I swear they're the key to the whole shebang. Wool socks and a jersey with nice, big pockets to stuff things in when you discover you are perhaps a trifle overdressed since the sun came out and—Wow!—it's ten or fifteen degrees warmer now. I just hate it when I end up with half the stuff I was wearing when I left tied, stuffed and hanging around my middle. The art of dressing for the ride is not to be carrying more than you actually end up using.

Where was I? Oh yeah, wool socks. Gotta have nice, thick wool socks. Your feet are delivering the power, and you've got to keep them warm and happy. Good wool socks are at least as warm as booties and cheaper too. And it's important your shoes be big enough to hold them with plenty of room inside—enough for air to circulate, enough to wiggle your toes around. In fact, I buy shoes so they fit with *two* insole pads in each shoe instead of just one. Insoles are cheap, and in cold weather I ditch one pair to make room for my big, soft, warm socks.

Good quality athletic wool socks feel great, and you can usually wear 'em a few times before they need a trip through the washer. They're amazingly soft, and simply don't itch at all. With these and not-too-tight leather cycling shoes, I can ride for hours at forty-five degrees with toasty toes. Add booties and I've got happy feet down to thirty degrees. If your tights are thin, be sure to get socks that come further up your calf. An extra three or four inches up the calf can make a difference in your feet too.

For a cheap, second pair of tights, when the temperature is just too cold for your regular tights, panty hose underneath work just fine. Plus they're really handy if you're caught with a big temperature drop far from home since you can buy them cheaply at any decent drug or grocery store. Besides amusing the salesperson, a good-fitting pair might also increase your popularity. Darker colors are warmer.

Actually, I made up that last part. On your torso, the key is something long-sleeved and pretty snug fitting, something thicker than a regular jersey *that wicks moisture away from your skin*. Like polypropylene or Capilene. Wool isn't as comfortable up top as it is on your toesies, and tends to stretch out, too. Then add whatever works—a jersey, sweatshirt, vest or jacket. You don't want your torso getting too wet with perspiration, so don't overdo it.

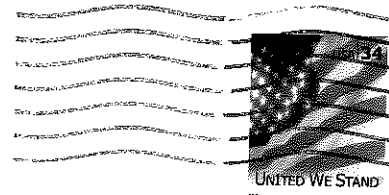
Another hard-to-do-without item is a nylon vest. One with lots of venting—or mesh—in the back. With a good top, a sweatshirt and a vest, I'm fine even at forty degrees or less as long as I take care of my extremities. Add a nylon jacket and I'm warm below thirty. That is as long as I can keep my fingers from freezing up so bad I discover ten miles from home I've lost nerve function and can barely get my wrist and knuckles moving enough to creak at all.

There are lots of fancy gloves out there that can do the job, but just like shoes, the key is to buy warm gloves big enough that you can slip a pair of thin, knitted, polypropylene gloves inside if you need to. Thin, knitted gloves are surprisingly warm, especially if you slip a pair of regular, fingerless summer gloves over them. If you add a big pair of

(Axel is continued on page 8)

KBC

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2005/02

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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
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Kalamazoo Bicycle Club Membership Application

- ☐ Yearly Adult Membership-----\$15.00
☐ 3 Year Adult Membership-----\$40.00
☐ Yearly Family Membership-----\$17.00
☐ 3 Year Family Membership-----\$45.00
☐ Yearly Senior (60+) Membership-----\$13.00
☐ 3 Year Senior (60+) Membership-----\$35.00

Renewal? Yes No

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

Ride Category: ☐ Fitness ☐ Casual ☐ Competitive

Send to: Kalamazoo Bicycle Club P.O. Box 50527, Kalamazoo MI 49005