KBC PedalPress

www.angelfire.com/mi/kbc/ The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

December 2003

President's Letter:

I got re-elected two days ago. It wasn't a big surprise—there were no other nominees. I welcome our new Vice-President, Mike Boersma, as well as fellow returning incumbents Brad Fry and Terry O'Connor as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

You probably wonder what skills and abilities I bring to the KBC Presidency, particularly since I won the job with no campaigning whatsoever. From time to time, I wonder the same thing myself, even after sitting in this bully pulpit for a year now. Let's see... What do I really do around here anyway?

One duty is to preside over the monthly meetings. I don't think I was too good at this to begin with, but maybe I'm getting a feel for staying focused on one thing at a time, and keeping things moving. Come take a look sometime and see how you think I'm doing.

I also manage to get some something to Zolton, your long-suffering Editor each month in time for this spot in the PedalPress each month. No one ever comments on my President's Letters so I figure they leave you speechless; they don't leave much of an impression one way or another, or none of you read them. I am a bit jealous though—even Axel Kleat got a letter this year.

I seem to have some small and ill-defined authority at group rides. There's nothing about this in the Constitution—I checked—but folks often seem to defer to me about routes and such. This is a good thing—for me if not for anyone else. I do pride myself on knowing the roads around here really well, and while this might be a better qualification for Ride Captain than President, I guess it counts for something.

In what was nearly my finest hour, I almost managed to vastly improve the Hammerfest route this summer, returning east on 102nd Ave. rather than C.R 388. But after two weeks it was back to suffering as usual because I lack the legs and lungs to be anywhere near the front when we get to the turn. It's hard to shout directions to the 15 riders who have sprinted off the front without me when I'm already completely winded. Where's the Secret Service when I need it?

The bad thing about being President is that on occasion I get a swelled head and preach about blowing stop signs, or ride schedule changes, or some other bit of nonsense entirely peripheral to the business at hand—having fun riding our bikes. Humor me—I mean well. Besides, it damages the Presidential ego to observe that, as a rule, no one pays much attention anyway.

One of my privileges as President has been to watch the way in which Tom Keizer and his small but energetic group put the Flowerfest Ride together. I take no credit whatsoever for the continued success of this fine event, which provides virtually all the operating capital for the clubyour dues just about cover the costs of producing and mailing this newsletter each month.

Unfortunately, I can think of all sorts of things I ought to be doing as President—or at least things I ought to be twisting other people's arms to do, like getting involved with local government about more and better bike routes, organizing more medium and slower rides, weekday daytime rides, and working with kids and adults to bring more people into this wonderful way of life.

I just can't seem to find the time for this stuff. Too busy riding my bike. Doug Kirk

KBC Wish List:

It's a slender wish list we have this month, thanks in no small part to recently re-elected President Doug Kirk's elation at being re-elected in a landslide at the November KBC meeting.

We're happy to have him back, as there is no one in this club, on a day to day basis, who does more for bicycling in the community.

For the actual club wishes, though, as we're rapidly running short of room here (Doug can go on, can't he?), check out the details on the uncoming (January 24th) **KBC Recovery** Party on page 2.

Again this year you'll be asked to bring some food to the party. But believe it; your efforts will be richly rewarded.

Recovery Party Plans!

Mark your calendars! Saturday, January 24th, is the date, 7-10 PM is the time, and 6705 Evergreen, in Portage is the place.

KBC members **Chris and Marian Barnes** have generously volunteered the use of their home for the 2004 version of KBC's annual **Recovery Party**. Let's make it a good one.

KBC Social Directors Michele Intermont and Mary Cohen say they'll handle the entree and drinks, but ask your help in bringing something to share.

Last name A - H: Appetizers
Last name I - O: Salads
Last name P - Z: Desserts

The potluck concept worked out very well last year and not only cut down on the expenses, but insured a wide (and large!) variety of food for all the attendees.

And don't forget that the local bike shops contribute a big old batch of swag to be given out as door prizes each year. It's rare to go home without picking up at least something of value.

More details will follow in December's *PedalPress*. But for now, reserve that date!

And Now for a Little Historical Perspective....

KBC Secretary Terry O'Connor had the good sense to wed Pamela Hall O'Connor some years ago.

Pam is a renowned Kalamazoo historian, and while deep in research at the microfiche machine at the Kalamazoo Public Library recently, she ran across something that KBC members might find of interest.

An article Pam copied for our edification came from a publication called the Weekly Gazette, and is dated Friday, June 30, 1882.

In the "Local News" section a small brief states, "The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club numbers nine members. Their club room is over the city bank."

So KBC is older, by some 89 years at least, than originally thought. And had a clubhouse!

Those few words contain no information about what the club charged for dues, if their hierarchy had trouble attracting members to their meetings, if ride leaders allowed riders to get dropped on club rides, or what would be served at their annual Recovery Party.

Incidentally, in the same issue, The Local News also reported that, "Samuel Tarbell, the man who was so fearfully maimed near Battle Creek, will get well." What caused the maiming is a subject for speculation still.

Pam came across another article concerning KBC that said a group of seven riders rode to Battle Creek, and the trip took four hours. Six riders returned by train, while one rode back.

Axel Kleat points out that this journey may well have been undertaken on high wheeler, "bone shaker" type bikes (non-titanium), as the modern "safety bicycle" with a chain and sprockets had just been invented.

And the riders would have been riding the twenty miles between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek on dirt roads and cow paths. No wonder some of the bikers opted for the train on the return route. Now how can we, in good conscience, complain about chip 'n seal?

Thanks, Pam, for bringing this to our attention.

December Birthdays:

Taylor Birmann, Mike Boersma, Wiley C. Boulding, Al Cergol, Judah Gusmondo, Sherry Higgins, Rosemary Jacobson, Mike Jones, Dan Kallewaard, Dale & Ruth Krueger, Greg Lawford, Amy Lehman, Karen Sue Mackaluso, Donald Mitchell, Rob Nicey, Charles Page, Evan Spaulding, Reese Spaulding, Paul Stevens, Richard Wolf

December Expiring Memberships:

David & Jill Sluyter

No new members in December ⊗

November, 2003, KBC Minutes

KBC's regular monthly meeting was held Tuesday, November 11th, 2003 at 7:00 pm at the Kalamazoo YMCA located on Maple Street. KBC president Doug Kirk led this monthly meeting. Present were Doug Kirk, Ray Murphy, Jeff Newman, Chris Barnes, Steven Barnes, Mike Miles, Dale Krueger, Larry Kissinger, Jeff Harrison, Paul Stevens, Paul Bruneau, Tom Keizer, Zolton Cohen, Terry O'Connor, Brad Fry, Mike Lahaie, Mike Boersma, and Victor Van Fleet.

The November meeting began with the election of the 2004 KBC Executive Committee. Doug Kirk, Brad Fry, and Terry O'Connor were nominated to run again for their current positions of President, Secretary, and Treasurer, respectively. Mike Boersma was nominated to run for Vice-President, to replace Jeff Newman, who is stepping down. All candidates were unanimously approved by those KBC members in attendance and will begin serving their terms at the December 2003 meeting.

Next, **Mike Lahaie** and **Jeff Newman** reviewed proposed designs for the new club jersey. Mike reported that the final design must be submitted to *Voler* no later than March 5th to guarantee an April 19th delivery date. *Voler* has agreed to send sample jerseys for sizing purposes. Mike and Jeff will continue to work on the jersey design and provide updates at future meetings. The subject of advertising by local businesses on the jersey will also be discussed at a future club meeting.

Plans for the 2004 KBC Recovery Party are progressing. Chris Barnes and his family have agreed to host the event on Saturday, January 24th, 2004. Doug Kirk, Zolton Cohen, Dale Krueger, and Mike Miles agreed to solicit swag from local bicycle shops for the occasion. Further details on the party will be provided in a future *PedalPress*.

At a previous KBC meeting, **Doug Kirk** asked **Zolton Cohen**, **Paul Bruneau**, **Jeff Newman**, **Mike**Miles and Larry Kissinger to formulate a proposal for upgrading the club's website and possibly publishing the *PedalPress* online. At this month's meeting, Zolton and Jeff reported on the group's progress. They noted that the group favors (though not unanimously) upgrading the current web-hosting plan provided by *Angelfire* to eliminate popup advertisements and increase bandwidth.

Zolton previously proposed publishing the *PedalPress* online, and printing hard copies of the newsletter for free distribution at area bicycle shops. This proposal would save approximately \$1500 yearly in printing and mailing costs, and would reduce the time required by volunteers to publish the *PedalPress*. Quarterly postcards could also be mailed out, alerting members to special KBC news and events.

This committee will evaluate several software titles for publishing content on the web. The group will also continue to explore the feasibility and address concerns related to publishing the newsletter online. Proposals for domain names are also being solicited through the KBC listserve and through email. A new domain name for the club's website may be chosen at the December meeting.

Finally, **Dale Krueger** inquired about the availability of the club membership list to facilitate making contact with other members for rides and social events. Members in attendance supported the concept, but were concerned with maintaining the privacy of club members, and choosing the appropriate method for distributing this information. A voluntary "Ride Buddy" type sign up board has been proposed.

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm. The next KBC monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday December 9th, at 7 PM at the YMCA on Maple Street in Kalamazoo.

Respectfully submitted, Brad Fry, KBC Secretary

PedalPress

A (Slow) Ride in the Cold

By Zolton Cohen, with help from Paul Pancella

There's a hill I ride down to get to the north and west side of town. It's on North Berkley Street, and I coast down it nearly every Wednesday evening during the summer. It's on my way when I ride out to the KBC rides starting at the Kal Haven Trailhead, and also heading out for weekend rides. It adds up to dozens of times during the course of the summer months. (Unfortunately, I also then have to climb this hill heading home, at the very end of a long Wednesday night of hard riding. But that's another story).

In the summer, my speed at the bottom of that hill usually tops out at about 30-31 mph. Because I'm not interested in going fast at that early point in my ride, I don't crouch low on the bars, lift my feet to a horizontal position on the pedals, or do anything dramatic in order to make my body more aerodynamic. Still, I hit 30 or a little above consistently.

This fall, on a chilly day when I was headed out on a solo ride, I noticed my coasting speed down the Berkley hill was abnormally low. Instead of 30-31, my top speed was only 28. Hm. What gives here?

There was no wind to speak of, and I had done nothing different than I usually do in terms of aerodynamics. I hadn't sat up and waved my arms around in the air in order to slow my descent. I wasn't warmed up, but that would have no effect anyway, as this was just a coast, not a pedal, down the hill. Very strange.

Was it my clothing? Did the tights, wind jacket, earband, heavy gloves, and toe warmers I had donned to combat the chill contribute to more drag through the air? Is that why I was going so much slower?

Curious, I wrote to Paul Pancella, Chair of WMU's Physics Department and uber KBC recumbent biker and TNTTer, to ask why this occurred. In my note, I speculated that my less-aerodynamic clothing may have played a factor in my bike's slowdown, or that the grease in the hub bearings had congealed and slowed the wheels' rotation.

Pancella was quick to rule out these theories. He wrote, "You've noticed the cycling around here generally gets slower when the weather gets colder."

"What you have discovered is a great truth in human-powered transportation: Aerodynamics is king. In the kind of riding you do, aerodynamic drag dwarfs all other effects in determining speed for a given power input (efficiency)."

He elaborated, "For modern bikes built for and operated on hard, smooth, level surfaces, all other friction effects are small compared to air drag. If there is a grade, weight is the other big factor, but heavier winter equipment would make your downhill speed faster rather than slower, so the composition of the air is the prime suspect."

The air? Yep...

"There are at least three relevant factors that determine the density of the air we ride through. They are temperature, barometric pressure, and humidity. A 25 F degree decrease in temperature increases the air density by ~5%, all else being equal."

Whoa, this is interesting stuff. The colder it gets, the denser the air becomes, making it more difficult to plow through. No wonder I was going slower.

Pancella went on, "It was my desire for more efficient transportation (laziness?) that led me to the IHPVA (International Human Powered Vehicle Association, www.ihpva.org), and the recumbent configuration. Lots of money and effort has gone into streamlining bike bits, but it should be obvious to anyone that the human passenger/engine is a much larger source of drag than any stem or seat tube. The foremost contributor to aero drag is simply the size of the rider, how much area is presented in the direction of motion."

"It is possible to decrease the frontal area of the rider by just changing his orientation, without any performance penalty, ergonomic or otherwise (on the contrary, you usually end up much more comfortable than on an upright bike) hence the recumbent position. My time trial runs this summer (fairly flat course, no drafting, good control of power input and other human factors) were another attempt to isolate aerodynamic effects, and showed significantly higher speeds in the recumbent position for this rider."

It's good to know it's not just declining physical fitness, gunky grease or less aerodynamic duds that slows bikers in cold weather. Now, whenever I get dropped on a ride, I'll be able to claim that I ran into a pocket of cold air along the way. Either that or get fitted to a recumbent...

PedalPress

Editor's Letter:

Well, it's been an exciting couple of months here at KBC. Sure, the organized ride season is over, but there's way more going on than that at your bike club.

For instance, a record number of members decided to show up at the November monthly meeting (next meeting, by the way, is on Tuesday, December 9th, at 7 PM at the YMCA on Maple Street). We even had to dig around for more chairs to accommodate everyone. And all who were there got to vote on the next Executive Board, as per the KBC Constitution.

Welcome and Thanks:

KBC welcomes newcomer Mike Boersma to the Board, taking over for Jeff Newman as Vice President. We hope Mike brings to KBC energy and enthusiasm similar to that contributed by Jeff this past year. Thanks Jeff, for all you've given to KBC in your Board role, and also as a committed working member of the club.

Board of Directors Executive Committee members who were re-elected were **Doug Kirk**, President; **Brad Fry**, Secretary; and **Terry O'Connor**, Treasurer. All have done splendid work on the club's business in the past year and deserve recognition for a job well done. As newsletter editor, I in particular appreciate Brad's timely and well written meeting minutes, and Doug's President's letter. Doug also manages to wheedle a column each month out of **Axel Kleat**.

Another who helped the club tremendously this past year is Ride Leader Randy Putt, whose enthusiasm for bicycle riding knows no bounds. His positive attitude spills over into his (occasionally on time) Ride Leader and Ride Schedule reports for the *PedalPress*, and he certainly brings it to the table on any rides he attends or leads.

Cheryl Olson, besides maintaining a busy professional mountain bike racing schedule, has for the last several seasons been combing racing results for KBC member names and organizing them into an easily readable format for publication in the *PedalPress*. Those riders appreciate the recognition, and her monthly schedule of upcoming racing events is a good reminder of how many opportunities there are to compete in this sport. The *PedalPress* would be poorer without her input.

Flowerfest organizers Tom Keizer, Rick Whaley, Amy Lehman, and Cliff Muller work hard all year so that those of us in the biking community can ride the wonderful Flowerfest Tour in July. It's a huge amount of effort, and much of what they do is virtually invisible; it goes on behind the scenes. But the result is spectacular. Rick has moved to Ann Arbor to pursue a Pfizer job, and we wish him luck in his endeavors over there. He pledges to be back next summer though, to actually ride - instead of work - Flowerfest for the first time.

And speaking of behind the scenes work, how many of us appreciate Database Manager Kathy Kirk's quiet and steady hand on the throttle of the KBC mailing database? The database needs constant maintenance and updating as new members enter the fold and expiring memberships drop off the list. Her skills and powers come into play in particular during Flowerfest season, when mailings go out to thousands of bikers and bike shops.

Randy Loga, who took on the utterly thankless task of folding, tabbing, and delivering the *PedalPresses* to the mailing service, deserves special recognition. His job, so important to the club's communications, is one that virtually no one even knows about. Yet, without Randy's work the *PedalPress* would not be delivered.

Larry Kissinger has been KBC's only webmaster since its inception. He created the site, and maintains and updates it constantly throughout the course of the year. For many riders, the website is their first contact with KBC, so the site's quality and accuracy is paramount.

Michele Intermont and Mary Cohen, new on board this year as the club's Social Directors, put on a fine and well attended 32nd Anniversary Party at the Kal Haven Trailhead in September. We look forward with anticipation to their plans for the January 24th Recovery Party.

There are many other people contributing their time, energy and skills to the club, not always in the most visible ways. But everyone's efforts mesh together to create a living, breathing bike club. That so many disparate people come together to do this one thing is extraordinary.

What's New at KBC?

Jeff Newman, "retired" KBC Vice President, isn't retiring to some sun drenched southern community to while away the idle hours. He and the Communications Committee of cyber-happy members (Paul Bruneau, Zolton Cohen, Larry Kissinger, and Mike Miles) are working on developing a new KBC communications program.

What does this mean? We touched on this some in the last issue of the *PedalPress*, and work on the concept is still in progress. But right now the committee is exploring different ways of getting information you need to know about

the club's doings to you in a more efficient manner.

Last month the *PedalPress* conducted an informal survey of members to see about the feasibility of mounting the *PedalPress* online on the club's website, and possibly eliminating the mailed newsletter at some point in the future.

Response overall was very positive. One member called to express the desire to keep receiving the *PedalPress* by mail, and two other members articulated similar feelings at meetings. Many others responded by email and in person, however, saying they thought the idea was a good one. Still others remarked that they could see wisdom in the idea due to the increased visibility for the club online and the greater efficiencies of both time and money, but would miss the hard copy newsletter.

So the jury's still out on this issue, and again, nothing has been decided yet. KBC's newly formed Communications Committee is sorting through proposals and ideas. If you'd like to contribute your thoughts to this

important subject, plan on attending the next KBC monthly meeting.

Jerseys!

KBC members Mike Lahaie and Jeff Newman (there's that name again!) have been working on designs and logistics for new KBC jerseys, scheduled to make their debut in the spring. The renderings they presented at the November meeting were enthusiastically received, and it looks as though they're getting close to final decisions on colors, design, and whether or not to include advertising logos.

Designs can be perused at http://www.newmanit.com/NewmanIT/kbc/jerseyinprogress.html, or come to

the next meeting to see how this effort is progressing.

It's exciting though, to see this process taking shape. I'm putting my order in early.

Winter Advances:

It may well be snowing by the time you receive this newsletter. For many, that signals the REAL end of bike season. But some hardy enthusiasts keep riding the year around. Several KBC members commute to work every day they can ride, through snow, rain, and whatever nature throws on the roadway.

Some ride for recreation though. For instance, there is a group, though not a "sanctioned" KBC ride, meeting at the Kal Haven Trailhead at 6 PM on Wednesday nights for a trail ride. This ride usually continues until snowmobiles take over the trail (supposedly when four inches of snow cover the surface, but often earlier than that). The pace of this ride is generally very brisk, as some of the participants use commuter, not mountain bikes. But those getting dropped can hook up with the group again on the 18-20 mile out-and-back route.

Riding in the winter takes a certain amount of preparedness. You need to be in the right clothing, and also should have a thorough knowledge of your bike and its — and your! - capabilities. Asking your ride buddies to stand around in 20 degree weather while you dither around changing a flat is not something that will win many friends.

X-C Anyone?

OK, this has little to do with biking, but many KBC members are also cross country skiers. It's a terrific way to not only stay in shape during the cold months, but also to get out and enjoy winter instead of fighting it all the time.

Seeking a groomed ski venue closer to home, some KBCer's got together and asked permission of the Kalamazoo City Parks Department to use and groom Milham Park Golf course for skiing. To our surprise, permission was granted, and this year we hope to groom the course for both skate and inline skiing. Details to follow in the next PedalPress. Put away your bike pump and get out your waxing iron!

Low Battery

By Axel Kleat

Criminy, the days sure are short.

Short days and cold temperatures—not a good combination for riding. Can't give in entirely though, so I got the lights out, and just like every year, they don't work worth a darn even though they worked just fine last March. If anyone ever comes out with a blinking light that lasts through a few cold, rainy rides, I'll be amazed. I must have gone through a dozen of 'em. The same holds for a headlight battery that lasts more than a year.

Nickel, cadmium, lead, sulfuric acid—these aren't the kinds of things it's a good idea to just heave into landfills, either. Sad to say this is one area where the automobile industry is one up on us. They actually pay you a pittance to bring in your old batteries so they can reuse the lead.

It's all enough to make me get one of those generators with the little wheels that spin against the tire to generate a faint flicker front and rear as long as you keep moving, except that those things sap too darn much of what little strength I can muster, and I'm depressed enough this time of year without feeling like I'm always going uphill and going even slower than usual. Maybe next year...

But to tell you the truth, I'm ready for a rest, and those lights aren't getting too much use anyway. In fact, I haven't done a hard ride since we turned the clocks back. Just haven't felt like it, I guess. Too many Hammerfests, too many centuries, too much touring, too many Tours de Gull. Oh I've still been riding. Actually, the weather's been pretty decent this fall. But I can't seem to get the old burner turned up past medium. Maybe I've just been distracted by the leaves. Looking around and taking in nature's splendor is hard to do when my nose is glued to the stem and I've got one eye locked on the wheel in front of me.

Actually, the last few years I have noticed that I really do end up both mentally and physically tired of riding this time of year. And the only real

fix is to dial the mileage way, way back. Old man winter sure does his part to help out with the plan.

It's time to think about cross-training anyway, and I'm getting into it, if raking leaves counts as training. Hey, quit your snickering! I'm using a real, honest-to-God rake, not one of those obnoxious blowers. If the pile gets big enough, you can really get a good sweat going. And one of these years, I'm going to challenge my neighbors to a duel—even at my advanced age I'm certain I can move more leaves in less time with a good old rake than those lazy butts can with any handheld blower. And my breathing's a whole lot less obnoxious than the awful drone emanating from the ass-backwards vacuum hanging on their backs. There's no end to what people will do to avoid a little honest work.

But raking's just the start of my cross training. As usual, I've got all sorts of plans to prepare my aging protoplasm to defy the laws of nature and trick Father Time in order to kick some serious butt next year. Yesirree, my program calls for strength work for muscular development, aerobic base development fc. stamina, anaerobic conditioning for those all-out efforts, high impact activities because biking isn't a load-bearing activity and I've got to keep my bones strong, core body conditioning because strong legs don't mean squat (pardon the pun) if I don't have the core strength for control and balance, a healthy diet with fewer carbs and plenty of protein to help rebuild muscle, and lots and lots of flexibility and stretching work because I can do it in front of the television, and a long muscle is a strong muscle (pretty snappy, eh? Just made that one up!)

Whew! Gets me tired just thinking about all of it. Good thing my program also calls for plenty of rest. Hey, it's the off season, right? My body needs to recuperate, and I know it. Just how I'm going to get in all this cross-training when its dark out and I'm depressed will be the problem this year, just like every year. All those hours of darkness are highly suggestive—I'd better be catching up on my sleep. We'll see about all that other stuff later on.

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