

KBC PedalPress

www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org

The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

September 2004

President's Letter:

Kathy & I took our annual unsupported bike tour in July, credit card touring—staying in motels and taking as little as possible, about 12 pounds apiece. Past tours have taken us through parts of Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama, but this year we rode a loop around Lake Huron, which turned out to be an 1100 mile mostly flat to rolling ride, though a few medium-sized climbs reared up on occasion.

We had a friend drop us off at Port Huron, at the extreme south end of the Lake, then crossed the bridge to Sarnia, Ontario and pedaled north to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula, which separates Lake Huron from Georgian Bay. After an hour and a half on a big ferry, we were deposited on Manitoulin Island. We toured the 50 by 100 mile island, which is inhabited mainly by Indians and tourists, then crossed the North Channel via an antique turnstile bridge which rotates to let ships get through, and took in the finest scenery of the trip as we headed up to the Trans-Canada Highway and turned west to Sault Ste. Marie.

There aren't a lot of roads to choose from up there, but we were able to leave Highway 17 (which wasn't bad riding at all) for about 30 miles in the Algoma Highlands, where we surprised a black bear who was rummaging in the ditch at the side of the road. Yikes! The wildflowers up there defy description, and if you are brave enough, mountain biking through "the bush" as they refer to the woods up there, would be fantastic.

We spent a night in the Soo, then a night on Drummond Island at the east end of the Upper Peninsula before heading south to the Mackinaw Bridge and heading south through the middle of the Lower Peninsula. By getting an early start every day and arriving in our destination town before three o'clock, we had no trouble finding rooms even in peak tourist season.

Every year we come back from these trips wishing we could keep going. The heartland of America (and Canada) is simply beautiful, and I'm convinced that nearly all surly, impolite people reside in big cities. If you haven't tried unsupported touring, you are missing the most rewarding riding we've found. Getting up somewhere new every day with the prospect of riding your bike in totally different places is a fabulous form of adventure.

Doug Kirk

Time Trial Added; Monthly Meeting Date Changed

Tuesday Night Time Trial Master **Chris Barnes** has decided to extend the Time Trial Series for one more date in September – and to add a party atmosphere to it.

So, the final TNTT will be held on **Tuesday, September 14th** at the same time (6:15 pm), and same place (corner of 29th Street and Q Avenue at the Pavilion Township Hall) as previous TNTT's. There will be food and drink provided by KBC after the final finisher has crossed the line, so plan on sticking around for a while afterward. If you haven't yet done a KBC time trial this year, give this last one a go and then set your sights on next year's events.

Due to the addition of this "auxiliary" TNTT, **the monthly KBC meeting has been changed to Thursday, September 16th, 7:00 pm**, at the YMCA on Maple Street in Kalamazoo.

Upcoming KBC Events:

Mark Saturday, September 18th on your calendars. That's the day of KBC's 33rd Anniversary Ride and Party. Start time for the rides is 10:00 am. Place is the Kal Haven Trailhead parking lot.

The format for this event is as follows: Anyone wishing to ride all or part of the Anniversary Ride route will meet at the parking lot and be ready to leave at 10:00 am. Route maps will be provided. You may ride as much or as little of the route as you'd like.

There are many cut-offs along the way if you'd like to ride 14, 19, 22, or 31 miles. The entire route is a scenic 36 mile loop through northern Kalamazoo and southern Allegan counties. Ride pace for the 36 mile loop is usually in the 18-20 mph range, but riders may form groups of different paces to suit the participants.

Those interested in riding on the Kal Haven Trail are welcome to do so as well. Be aware, however, that there is a daily or seasonal pass requirement for riding on the Trail.

At noon, KBC will provide pizza and soft drinks to anyone interested in having a bit of post-ride chow. We ask that you contribute something as well: salads or desserts are always welcome. We'll provide cups, plates, napkins and utensils. You might want to throw a folding camp chair or two in your car before you go, as seating is always at a premium after the ride.

This ride and party is an excellent opportunity to make new friends and to catch up on the latest with those you already know. It's a ride plus a social fling, and traditionally has been one of KBC's best attended events. See you there!

Classified Ads:

Bike-E Road-E AT recumbent - Excellent condition low miles, fits people from 4'8" to 6'6". Asking \$599

Colnago Dream Plus B-Stay frameset with Colnago Carbon Fork, Chris King headset and Dura Ace Bottom Bracket. Size 62cm. Only about 400 miles on this frame and it is in perfect, new condition. Asking \$1800

Vintage Colnago Super complete bike with mostly Campy Super Record components. Size 62cm. Asking \$599

Call John Thome at (269) 353-5812 for more information.

Mavic Helium Road Wheels: Approximately five years old. Still one of the lightest wheelsets made. Great for lighter riders and those who like to climb hills quicker than other riders. 8 or 9 speed compatible. \$175.00 Zolton Cohen (269) 344-0200 zcohen@ameritech.net.

New Members:

Laurie Anderson
Charles Barnes
James Bray
Bruce Caple
Michael Foley
Dan Frayer
Dave Hauschild
Jennifer Hauschild
Linda Kozacki
Zach McBride
Michael McPhilamy
Thomas A. Moore
Thomas T. Moore
Tony Nelson
Jennifer Niedzielski
Antony Randall
Carl Shinabargar

September Birthdays:

Laurie Anderson
Lee Anderson
Eric Bekker
Mike Berry
Joe Branch
Mary Cohen
Kevan Farrell
Eric Gauthier
Arianna Holmes
Chris Howard
Fred James
Shanna Keller
Larry Kissinger
Gary Mattox
Ashley Mitchell
Mary Moore
Dick Nivala
Jacob Olbrot
Andrew Peterson
Dave Pierce
Ronald Reoch
Tim Stewart
Ryan Theotet
James Wyrick

September Expiring memberships:

David Decker
Dan Ferrara Family
Kevin Lalone
Dennis McCormac
Shawn Messenger
Michael Miller
Mark Murry
Ron Newhouse
Charles Page
Houston Peterson
Jim Ross
Kurt Sherwood
Bill Strome

AUGUST, 2004, KBC MINUTES

KBC's regular monthly meeting was held Tuesday, August 10th, 2004 at 7:00 pm at the Kalamazoo YMCA located on Maple Street. KBC president Doug Kirk led this monthly meeting. Present were Doug Kirk, Kathy Kirk, Chris Barnes, Stephen Barnes, Zolton Cohen, Chris Howard, Mike Boersma, Tom Keizer, Terry O'Connor, Victor Van Fleet, Paul Bruneau, Brad Fry, and Mike Berry.

The August meeting began with a vote on the proposal to make the KBC Webmaster a board-appointed position. The KBC Executive Board unanimously approved this proposal and the club constitution will be updated to reflect this new position. **Kathy Kirk** was approved by the board as the new KBC Webmaster. **Zolton Cohen** will finalize the changes to the constitution and forward them to Kathy for posting on the website. Kathy indicated that she would like to have the new website running before the September meeting.

Next, **Chris Barnes**, the Tuesday Night Time Trial series coordinator, provided an update on the 2004 season. To date, 44 riders have ridden the series, representing all ages and abilities. Chris presented a proposal to reward participants of the TNTT series with discounts at the upcoming Fisk Knob time trial event. This proposal was debated by those in attendance, and will be discussed further at a future meeting. Arrangements will be made for the club to sponsor refreshments after the last time TNTT event in September.

Doug Kirk reported that John Liberty, a reporter from the Kalamazoo Gazette, was looking for interested club members to discuss aspects of cycling in and around Kalamazoo. **Zolton Cohen** volunteered to contact John and work with him.

Mike Berry and other club members expressed concerns regarding unsafe riding practices at club rides. Those in attendance encouraged riders to diplomatically communicate concerns to those responsible for unsafe behavior or to the ride leaders.

Paul Bruneau proposed to set up the new club website with online payment functionality using the *PayPal* service. This service could be used for the payment of membership dues, jersey orders, and Flowerfest registration, and would be provided in addition to the standard payment methods currently offered. Paul reported that *PayPal* charges \$0.30 per transaction and a 2.9% service fee. He will investigate setting up a *PayPal* account for the KBC website.

Due to the Labor Day holiday, **the final Tuesday Night Time Trial event is schedule for September 14th To eliminate a conflict with the KBC regular monthly meeting, September's meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 16th at 7:00 pm.**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Fry, KBC Secretary

Ride Schedule:

Note: All Weekday KBC Rides Start at 6:00 PM in September

RAMBLINGS FROM THE RIDE LEADER

September brings a start time change to the weekly rides as daylight starts to diminish. **Rides in September start at 6 PM.** In October, ride start times move to 5:30 PM. Summer can't be over yet!! We do have a lot of riding left this year, so let's go for a ride.

As I write this note, the temperature is hovering around 60 with rain. It looks as though summer is starting to desert us. For most of the summer this has been another outstanding year for cycling with great weather. Ride attendance at KBC weekday rides has increased over last year. There have been lots of new faces. The Monday (4 groups with 40+ riders, Wednesday (3 groups with 50 – 60 riders), Thursday (1 group with ~15 riders), and Friday (3 groups with ~40 riders) rides all have devoted attendees, even when the weather is threatening.

As the editor pointed out in last month's newsletter, it is important to communicate road hazards to other riders and obey the rules of the road. Groups as large as ours take up a long section of the road. Remember, we do share the road with vehicles, which are much larger and faster than bicycles. We should show respect for cars and their drivers and, hopefully, they will show respect for us as well.

Generally, the groups have done a good job so far this year in following the rules of the road. There have been a few instances where the mob mentality has prevailed, but thankfully there have been no mishaps. The groups have also done a good job of sitting up and waiting for other members of the group to get through a stop sign or make a turn across traffic. Remember:

- to stop at stop signs
- be careful not to cross the centerline
- and remember when turning with a group, more time is required to get the whole group turned before traffic arrives than when riding alone

Along with the hot summer temperatures come road repairs. The county road crews have been busy laying down new chip and seal on numerous roads in Kalamazoo and adjoining counties. They have been especially busy on the Monday routes. Keep a careful lookout for loose gravel. It can be treacherous. The roads should be well packed by September.

I hear a lot of chatter on the rides, which is great. Everyone seems to be having a great time. The overall fitness of riders in KBC is outstanding. Every week there are new faces at the rides, which is good news. Riders who were new early in the year are becoming ride regulars and are having a positive impact on the success of the rides this year. I encourage all of you to take the opportunity to introduce yourself to riders you don't know. It is a chance to make new friends every week.

There is still a lot of great riding left in the next couple of months such as:

- DALMAC over the Labor Day Weekend
- The Wine and Harvest Festival Ride on Sept 12
- KBC's own Anniversary ride and Party on September 18th
- The Apple Cider Century on Sept 26
- The Columbus Fall Challenge in Lancaster, OH Oct 2 & 3, (http://www.outdoor-pursuits.org/main/news/0408news/0408a_cfc.htm) (very challenging)
- The Hilly 100 in Bloomington, IN Oct 15, 16, 17 (<http://www.hillyhundred.org>)

These rides are a great way to end the touring season.

UPCOMING SPECIAL KBC WEEKEND RIDES

September 18 - The 34th KBC Anniversary Ride from the Kal-Haven trailhead parking lot, distance and route TBD. Since the Turning Leaves Century in early October is no longer operating KBC could use an October Special Weekend Ride. If anyone has any ideas for a weekend ride in October contact the ride captain.

Check out the KBC web page (www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org) for specific information about the ride calendar and for any last minute changes.

RACING UPDATE

This month the club juniors get the spotlight with great results in road racing, mountain biking and BMX racing. **Stephen Barnes** tore up the BMX scene and **Zack McBride** placed 4th in his class at the epic Ore to Shore mountain bike race, even after double-flattening. At the same race **Scott Steurer** experienced racing in the thick of the pack (rather than the front) after flattening and waiting a lengthy time for someone to pity him enough to trade a tool for a tube. Why would Scott enter a 48 mile race across a trail covered in loose shale without a spare tube you ask? When I asked him, he wasn't sure himself.

My final kudos this month goes to **Mark Olson**, who sacrificed his own Ore to Shore result by sitting up and waiting for his wife who for the second year in a row went out a bit too hard and blew up in the first few miles of the race. He pulled her back into the race while many others jumped on the train and benefited. There were times when the train he pulled was 20 or 30 people long!!! Quite a remarkable sight to see such a thing in a mountain bike race!

By the time you read this the road racing season will be pretty much complete, and in the mountain bike season only a few more races remain. Cyclo-Cross racing begins with the first race in the Kiss-Cross series on September 9th. The Kiss-Cross series is very low key and a great place to try out cross racing. Check out the "Coming Events" below for more information.

If I've missed your race results, please email me at caolson@mei.net. With so many events on the local calendar, it's hard to find them all without a bit of help!

Race Results:

Major Taylor State Championship RR

Stephen Barnes: 1st (ages 10-24);

Brookside Park Criterium, IN 8/1/04

David Sperry: 1st (Cat 4)

Ada Criterium: 8/7/04

David Sperry: 3rd (Cat 4)

Big M XC: 8/1/04

Zach McBride, 1st (Exp 10 & under); Scott Steurer, 3rd (Expert 40+)

Ithaca XC: 8/8/04

Mike Birmann, 2nd (Exp 40+); Taylor Birmann, 2nd (Sport 14& under)

Altoona Stage Race

Mike Miles, Crit 13th, RR 6th, Circuit 14th (Cat 4); Mark Olson, RR 61st, Circuit 71st, Crit Crashed (Cat 2)

Ore to Shore Hard Rock 48 Mile XC

Scott Steurer: 3:11, 22nd (with a flat); Doug McDonnell: 3:58, 9th; Cheryl Olson: 3:13, 2nd; Mark Olson 3:13, 29th (rode with his wife); Mike Birmann: 3:03, 3rd (Singlespeed class)

Ore to Shore Soft Rock 28 Mile XC

Zack McBride: 1:40, 4th, (with 2 flats); Pam McDonnell: 3:19, 12th

BMX RACING

7/24/04 Michigan State Qualifier, Ionia; Stephen Barnes 5th (Novice)

7/25/04 Michigan State Qualifier, Ionia; Stephen Barnes 6th (Novice)

7/31/04 Midwest Regional BMX, Lansing; Stephen Barnes 2nd (Novice)

COMING EVENTS

September 9th: Cannonsburg CycloCross (www.kisscross.com)

September 11th: Tour da Woods (www.annariverpedalers.org)

September 12th: Aspen Park XC (www.tailwind.net)

September 25th: Pando XC (www.funpromotions.com)

September 25th: Bloomer CycloCross (www.tailwind.net)

Online Payment Option Close for KBC Memberships

At the August KBC meeting, **Paul Bruneau**, KBC's database manager and Communications Committee member, brought a proposal to the Board of Directors concerning the possibility of online credit card payment for memberships and other items.

Bruneau has been in contact with well-known online payment service *PayPal* to inquire about the feasibility of KBC setting up an account. So far, his findings seem to point in a positive direction.

For approximately \$0.75 per membership application transaction, *PayPal* would take credit card payments online and stockpile the proceeds in an account easily accessed by KBC's Treasurer. There is no fee to set up or maintain the account.

The online payment option would supplement – not supplant – traditional ways of paying for KBC membership. Checks, money orders, and cash would still be accepted. And riders paying online through *PayPal* would not be required to have a membership in *PayPal*.

The advantages to this service are many. It would speed up and simplify getting new member names into the KBC database. It would enable accurate, swift and secure monetary transactions. And it has the possibility of reducing the number of “drive-by cashings” that occur each year at club rides. Drive-by cashings are characterized by, for instance, a rider showing up late for the TNTT, throwing money at the volunteers there, and shouting, “Sign me up!”

In addition to paying for KBC memberships online, the *PayPal* service could be expanded to receive payments for Flowerfest, jerseys, and other items KBC might have for sale in the future.

In the next few weeks Bruneau will set up a dummy *PayPal* account to test it out, and then will report back to the Board on his experience with its functionality.

K. Kirk Assumes Webmaster Position

In a unanimous vote during the August meeting, KBC's Board of Directors appointed **Kathy Kirk** to be KBC's next webmaster. Kirk will be taking over the reins from longtime volunteer **Larry Kissinger**, who will remain involved in the workings of the website and the Yahoogroup.

KBC owes a debt of gratitude to Kissinger for his long service to the club, both as webmaster and also as a ride leader. As the club's first webmaster, he got the club's original website up and going, and added to it and maintained it for many years.

One of Kirk's stated first orders of business in her new position will be to move the in-progress test website front and center to become the club's “real” site. The test site has a new look that should enhance navigation and readability. It will include all the information that has been available on the existing site, and will have new features that will be unveiled later in the fall.

Travel Diaries Online

If you're interested in doing an extended bike tour, or even if you aren't but enjoy reading about the adventures of others, hie thee to the KBC website at www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org.

There you'll find interesting travelogues by **Terry O'Connor**, who with **Pastor Dale Kreuger** biked extensively throughout Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, and by **Jim Hainen**, who traveled all the way to Russia for what he describes as “the trip of a lifetime.”

Thanks to these KBC members for writing down and sharing with us their experiences.

Editor's Letter:

Summer seems to be the time for travel and bicycle touring.

KBC President **Doug Kirk** and newly appointed Webmaster **Kathy Kirk** biked the long way around Lake Huron recently; KBC Treasurer **Terry O'Connor** and Pastor **Dale Kreuger** did an extended ride through Europe, and KBC member **Jim Hainen** went all the way to Russia for his trip of a lifetime.

Jamie Clark and his friend **Deb** actually took in the Tour de France, both as spectators and day-before participants. Clark rode up L'Alpe d'Huez – and lived to tell about it. And while non-KBC member (though we'd probably offer him an honorary one if he asked) **Lance Armstrong** did it somewhat faster during the Tour's mountain time trial stage, Jamie probably matched him in enjoyment – and suffering – up the steep grade.

In the meantime, two KBC members who also moonlight as world-class tri-athletes, **Dave Bishop** and co-Social Director **Megan James**, traveled overseas to compete in their sport. **Cheryl and Mark Olson** and their professional mountain bike racing team have been to Vermont for a race, and elsewhere to compete in other events. KBC's Social Director **Michele Intermont** is on her way over to England to swim the English Channel! And there were probably other club members who toured this country or another by bicycle. It's enough to make one wistful hearing about all the exotic locales and fun these adventurers had in their travels.

By contrast, I've been to Plainwell once this summer; and the trip up there wasn't even by bike.

KBC member and Plainwell resident **Dave DeBack** had a birthday, his wife **Michele** threw him a huge party, and they invited everyone to come along on a pre-festivities 50 mile ride through the countryside north and west of their historic home.

So, after the short drive up, DeBack's Birthday Ride turned out to be my "tour" for the summer.

But despite the dearth of unusual terrain (or, it should be noted, trouble with customs and airline delays) I'd have to say that ride was as pleasant as any I'd ever been on. I couldn't have picked better companions. Along

with Dave and some of his work cohorts, local cycling wizards **Bob Kennedy** and **John Meyers** joined us, and **Paul Wells** and his daughter **Molly** rode a sprightly tandem – and Molly made her dad work hard to keep up with her pedaling cadence up some of the longer hills. It was a lovely day and lovely ride – though a bit short of the advertised 50 miles. But oh, I love to travel!

The Bicycling Police:

There was a follow-up question during August's KBC meeting to the editorial I wrote in last month's *PedalPress* concerning KBC ride behavior and legal issues. **Mike Berry** took the editorial to heart, and said that he had noticed some of the same conduct I had noted on some of the rides I'd participated in this summer; bikers riding on the wrong side of the yellow line with cars approaching, and other transgressions.

Mike's question was, "when is it appropriate to say something to other riders about the way they are riding – even if you're not the ride leader?"

That query elicited a lot of comment from the experienced bikers at the meeting, with most agreeing in the end that any time the untoward rider is behaving in a manner that is a danger to himself or others, it should be pointed out. Close on the heels of that, however, was the admonition that there are ways of communicating such things that do more harm than good.

That, in turn, reminded me of something I learned when my wife and I coached AYSO soccer for nine years; the concept of the "praise sandwich." This teaching technique allows one to coach a young player without hurting his or her feelings. You start out with a statement of praise, "You were very quick getting over to the sideline to stop that last shot. Good job." Then proceed to the coaching, "Could you maybe work on getting into the corner before the rest of their team sets up behind our defense?" And finally, with some more praise, "And keep up the good work on number 11. He's been tough to stop all quarter."

So that's one way of going about it. Another method is to rely on "a lot of guys." "You know," you could drawl, "A lot of guys wouldn't let that handlebar tape dangle down the way you're doing on your bike. Could get caught up in the spokes."

Or, "A lot of guys wouldn't ride out into the other lane when there's a possibility of a car coming over a blind hill like that." >

One thing that is guaranteed not to work is direct criticism of another biker's riding. "Where the heck did you learn to ride? You shouldn't be taking up the entire lane while you're in a paceline!!" At times though, in the heat of battle so to speak, it sure is tempting to use this approach.

The bottom line is that if we all rode the way we're capable of riding; safely, with respect for others – not just other bikers but other vehicular and pedestrian traffic as well - this subject would never even come up. In a perfect world.

But in the world we live in these things do come to light, and the best way to deal with them is gently. They say you can attract more flies with honey than with vinegar. Of course though, a lot of guys would say you can attract even more flies with rotting meat. So there you go...

And speaking of ride behavior, KBC wishes a speedy recovery to **Charlie DeVries**, who suffered a bad fall during the Monday night Recovery Ride. Traveling with the group down South 8th Street DeVries hit the famous hole in the road just south of the Q Avenue intersection, apparently locked up his brakes, and flew most of the way over his handlebars. According to reports from other riders, he may have hit his head and face on someone's back tire, and then continued downward onto the freshly chip-and-sealed road.

There was a fair amount of bloodletting, but what concerned most of the bikers who had stopped to help was the fact that DeVries, when asked, couldn't conjure up either the day or the date. With help from **Frank Machnik** and KBC Vice President **Mike Boersma**, a call to 911 quickly brought out a contingent of emergency personnel. They made efficient work of strapping DeVries to a backboard and then drove him to the hospital. A call later to the DeVries house found Charlie just walking in the door, having been given a clean bill of health (well, other than the fat lip and road rash and other assorted contusions). We hope to see him back in the saddle soon.

Was this accident the result of other bikers ahead of DeVries failing to point out the pothole? It's hard to say, but it does illustrate the importance of every biker contributing to the safety of the group by pointing out obstructions on the roadway. The Golden Rule is applicable here: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Point out hazards to those behind you because at some point you'll be at the back of that long line of bikers and you'll be blind to the dangers on the road ahead – and you'll want the people you're riding with to point things out to you. It's simple courtesy.

Getting Better on the Bike:

Earlier this year a relative newcomer to biking asked me what it takes to get better on the bike. My answer, "Ride your bike – a lot," probably didn't help him very much.

But now I've run across something that might. And no, it's not a new drivetrain, new tires, or a new bike.

It's technique. In an interview at the Tour de France with **Chris Carmichael**, Lance Armstrong's coach, Carmichael opened a door into understanding how Armstrong does what he does so well. It has to do with fitness, spinning, and aerobic capacity.

Carmichael's contention was that when you spin your cranks fast (90-110 rpm), you're using your aerobic system more than your large leg muscles. So you transfer some of the activity load from those muscles to your lungs and cardiovascular system. That leaves the legs fresher. And if your aerobic system is in good condition, you should be able to ride faster and longer if you distribute that load around to more than just one system in your body.

That made some sense to me.

Now the only problem is working on acquiring something near Armstrong's aerobic capacity. That, in my experience, is quite impossible.

But you can improve your own aerobic capacity level. It is something that takes years to develop. Every year you bike you can gain experience, better blood and oxygen transport through the body, fitness, and muscle memory. It gives you something to look forward to every year – getting better.

So go out and spin fast. And my first bit of advice still holds. Ride your bike – a lot.

Zolton Cohen

Help, I Need Somebody

By Axel Kleat

Summer is the time for long rides, and I've been doing my share. Long rides give a soul a lot of time to think, at least as long as I'm not working so hard my brain's getting oxygen-starved. Okay, okay, I know some of you out there are smirking to yourselves that it's too late, the damage is done, but I'm pretty sure a few of the synapses still fire on occasion.

Sometimes it's one daydream after another—remembering other rides, thinking about work, a new bike, or the weather. I dream about putting on a Tour de Michigan stage race and wonder how hard it would be to get all the necessary cooperation—road closings, police, sponsors and prizes. Then I think it'd be lots easier to just organize a bike tour that just keeps going for weeks at a time—spread the word and let people join up for as long as they want. Charge folks to haul their camping stuff and maybe sell simple food. Then I come to a hill and forget about it all till it just pops into my head again weeks—or minutes—later.

Lots of times I get a song stuck in my head, and it stays there for a few rides. This little purgatory usually starts when I'm rhythmically slogging uphill. Doesn't matter what I do to try getting rid of it, before long, that same old tune is back again...and again. If it's a good tune, this is OK for a while. But it's a rare tune indeed that doesn't get old after a few dozen miles.

Lately I've been thinking about other stuff too, and uncharacteristically bad stuff on occasion—like what if I'm out for a lovely ride, and for whatever reason I end up in the ditch on some lonesome road and can't get up. Maybe I get distracted by the eighth replay of Stairway to Heaven and whack a mailbox. Maybe my karma gives out and some drunks in a loud pickup smack me. Maybe my fork snaps when I hit a bump flying downhill. Admit it—it's possible things could go real wrong out there when there's no one around to help out or even see the predicament you've constructed for yourself.

I know, I know. When my time's up, my time's up. But the will to survive is pretty strong; strong enough that after more than twenty years of road riding, I'm starting to actually consider as more than an abstract thought that

sooner or later something nasty might happen to me out there. Maybe I ought to put a little advance thought into self-preservation. I do wear a helmet, after all.

I'm generally willing to trust my fellow man to do the right thing, even if he's driving an SUV. I truly believe that, if I'm lying there motionless, or waving for help, that someone—maybe not the first driver to pass, but someone—will stop. But suppose I land in the ditch, out of sight, with a broken leg or something, and no one knows where I am. Stranger things have happened.

I have taken one step. I got a dog tag—literally. I fed some coins to an engraving machine at the pet store which scratches out up to six 12-character lines on a little metal tag intended for Fido. Names, phone numbers, that sort of thing. Cheap and reliable, it might be useful hanging around my neck out in the boonies in case I don't seem to remember who I am.

Actually, this is one thing that makes group rides safer than riding alone—other hopefully uninjured riders are there to ride to your rescue—or do whatever has to be done. And even now, in 2004, I'm still amazed when someone pulls out a cell phone to call for help, like a couple of weeks ago when a few Hammerheads hit the deck sprinting for a city limit sign. Call me a relic, call me what you will, but when I'm tossing on the Lycra and heading for the door, it never even occurs to me that maybe I ought to stick one in my pocket.

I actually did take a cell phone on a bike trip once. After a few days of stuffing it back in the pack every morning, I decided I might as well use it for something. I switched it on to call home and was surprised to see on the little screen that it knew exactly what I was doing out there...roaming! I'd roamed right out of range of the fool thing!

That's when I figured out that with my luck, if something finally happens to make me wish I had a phone in my pocket, the battery would be dead, I'd have smashed it when I fell, or my head would be too concussed to push the right buttons or spout anything useful to anyone on the other end. Can you hear me now?

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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 Ride Captain: Randy Putt.....649-1814
 e-mail: SRBike@aol.com
 Social Director: Michele Intermont.....373-8929
 e-mail: intermon@kzoo.edu
 Webmaster: Kathy Kirk.....388-5045
 email: klkirk@ameritech.net

Kalamazoo Area Bike Shops

- Alfred E. Bike.....349-9423
- Billy's Bike Shop.....665-5202
- Breakaway Bicycles.....324-5555
- Team Active.....962-7688
- Village Cyclery.....679-4242

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

Permission to register your name with the KBC groupserve list
 and receive all the group's email messages?
 Yes No

Ride Category: Fitness Casual Competitive

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