

KBC PedalPress

The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club for August, 2018

www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org

The next KBC monthly meeting is Tuesday August 14th, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.
at the Kalamazoo YMCA, 1001 Maple St. All KBC members are welcome to attend.

President's Letter

Happy August KBC!

It's hard to believe that August is already here, the summer is flying by, as it always does in Michigan. Hopefully you've been able to enjoy some of the wonderful tours and riding throughout our state; it's a beautiful place to ride.

KBC Jerseys are Back!

We are so excited to have the KBC jerseys available again from Voler. Please see the related article in this Pedal Press for details on how to order yours today. I'd like to thank Kathy Kirk for all her efforts and coordination in getting these available again, as members and others have been requesting them. Thank you, Kathy!

Crisscrossing the State for Safety

On September 8th, Valerie Litznerski, the KBC's Secretary, will crisscross the state of Michigan by riding her bike from Sturgis to Sault Ste. Marie to increase awareness for bicycle safety. Valerie is an ultra-cyclist who rides thousands of miles each year. She anticipates that this ride will take her between 20-24 hours, pretty incredible! Her goals are to increase awareness about the need to make cycling safe, generate funds for KBC's Education Committee, set a record, and share a positive uplifting story. When I asked her how KBC members can help, she replied "... helping to spread the word beyond our membership would be the most helpful." So KBC, let's help spread the word to others about Valerie's ride crisscrossing Michigan for bicycle safety. Additional details on her ride can be found on KBC's website.

Other Ramblings

1. Are you wondering where to find routes for some good riding? KBC's Ride with GPS account lists numerous routes across Michigan and surrounding states. Routes include KBC regular weekly and annual rides, Kal-Tour routes, member-submitted rides, and more. When using KBC's Club Account, members have all the added features of a paid "premium" account at Ride with GPS. For more information, please visit the [Ride with GPS page](#) on the KBC website.
2. To celebrate the final Tuesday Night Time Trial (TNNTT), the KBC will be hosting a Time Trial Championship on Tuesday, August 21st. This is a free event only for KBC members and it's all about having fun, winning a little money, and bragging rights. Thank you, Doug and Kathy Kirk for coming up with a great idea and running with it! [Click here](#) for all the details.

Have a wonderful August and safe cycling!

Renee Mitchell, President@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KBC Jerseys Are BACK! Order Yours Now!

If you are new to the KBC or have just put off ordering your KBC Jersey, your wait is over! KBC Jerseys are available again! Order yours now and start flying your KBC colors with pride! The design is the Club's most recent jersey design with the original red star marking Kalamazoo. Both men's and women's cuts/sizing are available.

Orders are being processed directly through the manufacture, Voler; the cost is \$77 with free shipping and 20% of the cost goes to KBC's Education Committee. The jerseys are made-to-order and ship about 7 days after your order is placed. Follow this link to [order your KBC Jersey](https://www.voler.com/browse/collections/details/li/KalamazooBicycleClub) NOW!

(<https://www.voler.com/browse/collections/details/li/KalamazooBicycleClub>)

Dale Abbott



Education Committee Update

The KBC Education Committee has ordered and received another 250 "Give Them 5 to Keep Them Alive" yard signs. We will have them at the next KBC meeting on Tuesday August 14th. They are free for the taking, but we encourage donations to the Education Fund. They are also available at all the local bike shops and at the Kalamazoo city offices on Stockbridge Avenue, at Portage City Hall, and Oshtemo and Kalamazoo Township offices. The more signs we can get displayed, the more reminders we have out there. The City of Grand Rapids, which was the first municipality in Michigan to pass a five foot passing ordinance, is ordering some of the signs for their use in Grand Rapids. The League of Michigan Bicyclists is modifying a version of the sign with a three foot passing message to support the new State of Michigan law. The Tri-County Bicycle Association, which we received the DALMAC Fund grants from, has modified our "Give Them 5" design for use on two billboards in the Lansing area. Our impact is spreading to other areas and that is a good thing.

Here is an update on the new laws recently passed regarding bicycles on the roads in the State of Michigan. This is my very brief summary:

- HB4185 goes into effect September 27, 2018. It requires passing to the left of a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet, or less if three feet is not practicable. Yes, it's unfortunate that this "or less" wording is in there, but our hope has to be that the emphasis will be on the three feet and that is what folks will remember.
- HB4265 goes into effect August 1, 2019. It requires passing to the right of a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet, or less if three feet is not practicable.
- HB4198 goes into effect the 91st day after the end of the regular 2018 legislative session. This law requires a minimum of one hour of driver's education programs to cover laws about bicycles, pedestrians, and other vulnerable road users.
- SB330 goes into effect September 24, 2018. This law increases penalties for those convicted of injuring or harming vulnerable road users, cyclists, pedestrians, etc.

I am in the middle of inquiring about whether the statewide three foot law will supersede our local five foot ordinances or if they can still be enforced locally. I'm told that the Grand Rapids city attorney has researched this and believes the city can keep enforcing five feet. The folks at the state level claim the state laws will overrule local ordinances. So, it sounds to me that at this point, no one absolutely knows for sure! At any rate, for the next two months at least, our local five foot laws are solid. We'll keep our eyes and ears open and keep you KBCers informed.

Paul Wells, educationchair@kalamazobicycleclub.org

Bike Week 2019 Welcomes KBC Ideas

The planning committee for Kalamazoo Bike Week (KBW) 2019 met for its kick-off meeting on Thursday, July 19, 2018, at the Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation Conference Room on Mills Street.

As discussed at our monthly KBC meeting on July 10, the committee has been composed of the various local entities that are active in bicycle advocacy within the local areas. The group agreed to a schedule of monthly meetings for the balance of this year with a planned winter break before resuming activities early in 2019. The overall goal will be to prepare for a dynamic Bike Week that will promote bicycling in as many different venues as possible to attempt to appeal to a wide cross section of the community.

The following organizations/individuals are current members of this committee: Kalamazoo Parks and Recreation, Friends of KVRT, Portage Bike Advisory Committee, KBC, Portage and Kalamazoo (Oshtemo Branch) Public Libraries, Bronson Health Care, Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study, Open Roads, Gear Geezers, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo, Pedal Bicycle, Chain Gang, Portage Senior Center Bicycle Club, Kalamazoo County Parks, Oshtemo Parks & Recreation, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo, Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo, and AMBUCS.

The past co-chairs, David and Mary Jo Warwick, were in attendance to provide continuity during the transition to the new committee. They presided over the committee discussion and vote to utilize the resources of the Bike Friendly Kalamazoo organization to chair the committee for this year's planning activities. This will also provide us with the opportunity to institutionalize Kalamazoo Bike Week as an ongoing part of the greater community's annual calendar.

As planning continues, Paul Wells and I will attend the meetings to represent the KBC and we will keep the Club advised on all future developments as necessary. We welcome the input of KBC members who want to volunteer or share ideas for the KBC's involvement in Bike Week 2019 (May 11-18). Please contact Paul Wells or me via our Club email with any suggestions or input.

Thom Brennan

Ride to South Haven to be Postponed

The Ride to South Haven, scheduled for August 4, will be rescheduled, due to infirmities involving the Ride Leader (*see the Editor's Letter*). After my accident, I had hoped to lend moral support at the stops to and from South Haven (no, I wasn't planning on wearing a cheerleader's outfit), but since I can't drive until I pass a concussion protocol test, I can't even do that. So, I hope to reschedule this event for late August or September. I still may not be able to actually ride, but I should be able to supply moral support. This also gives me more time to shop for a particularly cute cheerleading uniform in case I change my mind.

Rick Whaley, Ride to South Haven Leader

Bike Myths vs. Facts: Bicycling Is “Just for Kids,” “The Elite” or “Is Too Slow”

We've all heard supposedly authoritative remarks about bicycling and bicyclists from time to time. How well are some of the more common “observations” supported by the evidence?

To answer this question, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo held a public meeting at the Oshtemo Township Hall on August 24, 2017. The more than 20 participants (among them, KBC members) were asked to research a number of common remarks and report on their findings. The result was an extensive publication, “Answers to Common Bicyclist-Motorist Myths, Misunderstandings and Misconceptions.”

The following is adapted from the full publication, which is available on the Bike Friendly Kalamazoo website at <http://bikefriendlykalamazoo.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Bike-Motorist-MisunderstandingsFAQs180516.pdf>. The publication also provides extensive references for those interested in further fact-checking and learning more. As I get time, I'll extract a few more of the FAQs from the document, which was edited by Paul Runnels.

Myth: Bicycling is just for a few people, not for the general public.

Fact: Bicycle ownership and use are fairly widespread. The ratio of bicycles to people in the USA was approximately 1 to 2.6 in the USA, in 1995, or roughly one per household. More than one in ten Americans cycle regularly.

Myth: Bicycling is a luxury just for rich white people who wear spandex.

Fact: Actually, people of lower incomes use bicycles the most, per the U.S. Census Bureau.

Myth: Bicyclists are mainly young people.

Fact: It depends on the definition of “young.” Most active bicyclists are probably 25 years old or older. Among bicyclists who commute, individuals older than 25 outnumber those under 25 years old by about 2.7 to 1.

Myth: Riding a bike takes longer than driving.

Fact: Riding a bike to specific destinations can reduce door-to-door time on shorter trips, especially at certain times of the day. On longer trips in light traffic, driving is quicker. It depends on more than one factor and on the purpose of the ride.

Deciding whether to ride a bicycle or drive in a particular situation depends on more factors than simple mph measures of speed. Recreational bicycling is intended to allow the rider to enjoy the surroundings at a deliberately slower pace than when motoring. Also, bicycling for exercise burns more calories than sitting

behind a steering wheel. When energy efficiency is considered, the bicycle is one of the most efficient forms of travel ever invented. On a cost-per-mile traveled basis, the bicycle can also be much less expensive than a motor vehicle.

Myth: Bicyclists don't drive cars.

Fact: Most adult bicyclists own and drive motor vehicles. The typical household travels more by motor vehicle than by bicycle by a ratio of about 84 to 1. Motorists drive an average of 13,476 miles per year. Doing the math, it is reasonable to suggest that the typical bicycle owner in the US drives cars many more miles than they bicycle, perhaps riding a bicycle less than 200 miles per year.

Paul Selden

Why I Love Riding Gravel

You have probably heard people talking about riding gravel roads. Maybe, like me, when you first heard about it you thought, "Why would anyone do that?" It seems at first blush like a terrible idea! Aren't paved roads a significant technological advancement over gravel roads? They are smoother, faster, and usually not dusty or muddy. Gravel roads are rougher, slower, and often dusty or muddy, sometimes both on the same day!

I recently tried riding gravel in preparation for the 2017 edition of the Barry-Roubaix gravel grinder in Hastings, MI. What I discovered is that the "problems" of gravel roads actually provide benefits for cyclists and make for some great riding.

Rough roads: Rough roads seem worse the faster you go. Since bikes generally go slower than cars, this is more of a car problem than a bike problem. Cyclists can often find a smooth track to ride on. The crown of the road might be smoother than the lanes or the edges might be free of washboard. Even if the whole roadway is rough from edge to edge, gravel surfaces change frequently. A bike rider can just slow down through the rough patch and find smoother riding a little way down the road.

The best part about rough roads is that cars don't like them. Gravel roads remain unpaved because they aren't used much by motor vehicles. Busy roads get paved. Quiet roads stay gravel. I have heard from many people that they won't ride any more or are afraid of riding because of car traffic. On a recent 26 mile gravel ride, I saw 3 cars. All of them were coming toward me in the opposite lane. Three. And because the roads were rough, the speeds were low.

Slower progress: No professional cycling teams have threatened to give me a job, so why do I care if my speed drops a mile or two per hour? Seriously, the slightly more challenging road surface requires that I slow down and watch out for sandy spots, washboard, etc. I certainly get as good of a workout on gravel as I do on the road. And I find that I change position on the bike more frequently. On gravel I tend to stay upright more, rarely tucking down into the drops and this makes for less of the shoulder and back fatigue that can come on a long road ride fixed in one or two positions. Plus, slower progress means that you have a better chance to enjoy the

Awesome scenery: Gravel roads often go through beautiful country. You might climb a hill under a canopy of ancient maple trees or see amazing vistas overlooking centennial farms. There are lakes, ponds, swamps, forests, and fields that you never knew about, just a mile or two off the paved road.

Resources: I am still pretty new to gravel riding so am not an expert on gearing. I ride a Trek Domane which has built in vibration dampening in the seat post and headset. One limitation is the size of tire I can run on that bike.

All of the local bike shops stock great bikes for riding on gravel and are filled with knowledgeable staff. You may already own a bike that would work fine.

Nick Legan has written a beautifully illustrated book called, "Gravel Cycling: The Complete Guide to Gravel Racing and Adventure Bikepacking."

A great source to find gravel roads is the website www.gravelmap.com. It uses google maps and users have highlighted gravel roads which appear as bright yellow lines on the map. In my experience, it is about 95% accurate. And the worst case for those 5% inaccurate routes is that you ride on a paved road for a mile or two. Want to try gravel riding? Watch the KBC Facebook page for ride leaders sponsoring spontaneous gravel rides. Or try it yourself. Lower your tire pressure, lower your speed, and increase your fun!

John Knowlton

KBC Monthly Meeting Notes for July 10th, 2018

Attendees: Andrea Melchiori, Barney Martlew, David Jones, Doug Kirk, John Idema, Kathy Kirk, Marc Irwin, Mark Jensen, Mike Boersma, Mike Krischer, Molly Cartwright, Pam Sotherland, Paul Pancella, Paul Runnels, Paul Selden, Paul Sotherland, Paul Wells, Rick Whaley, Ryan Corbin, Scott Powers, Terry Butcher, Terry O'Connor, Thom Brennan, Tim Verdries, and Zolton Cohen

After Welcome and Introductions, **Treasurer Mike Boersma**, in the absence of **President Renee Mitchell** and **Vice-President John Olbrot**, began the **Officer Reports**:

Mike Boersma, Treasurer:

Checking Account: \$15,410.10, including \$560.00 in the Jeremy Smith fund and \$3986.40 in the DALMAC fund. Unrestricted funds are \$10,863.64.

Mike mentioned that it is possible to write off mileage for Club purposes, at a rate of \$0.14 per mile. The IRS only recognizes mileage from motorized transportation in your own vehicle. He noted that it is also possible to contribute a cash donation at a local bicycle shop and that these shops have been supportive by donating merchandise to the Club. In addition, the Club is doing well in its commitment to partially match the grant given by DALMAC. He stated that donations can also be made online to the website and that anyone making a large donation (in excess of \$250) should reach out to the President of the Club first. Unless otherwise specified, donations are being directed to the Education Fund. Several attendees, including **Doug Kirk** and **Paul Sotherland** felt that donations should be directed to the Club's General Fund. It was decided that the Executive Committee will discuss this further. It was noted that the donation jars at the local bike shops are very specific about the donations being directed to the Education Fund. **Paul Selden** thanked Mike for sharing this information with the Club.

Valerie Litznerski, Secretary, Val reported that she looks forward to writing Thank You letters for the organizations that supported KalTour. **Mike Krischer** will be sending her the names of these organizations soon.

Committee Reports and Other Reports:

Education Committee, Paul Wells: Paul reported that 250 more yard signs will be ordered pending approval from the Executive Committee. There have been several requests for more signs. Paul spoke with **John Lindemayer**, the Executive Director of the League of Michigan Bicyclists, at length about the 3 foot law. It is not in effect yet and it is unclear as to whether or not it will supersede local ordinances. The Grand Rapids City

attorney believes that it does not supersede their ordinance. KBC will not make this an issue for our local ordinances, and Paul will follow up with them to encourage that they continue to enforce the ordinances. The League of Michigan Bicyclists will be making some 3 foot yard signs based on our signs and Grand Rapids will make some 5 foot yard signs using our graphic. The Education Committee is considering ordering more magnets and stickers as well. **Paul Selden** added that it would specify on our signs that the law is a local ordinance.

Ride Captain, Terry Butcher: Terry reported that Club is still in need of ride leaders so that the group rides can be broken up into smaller groups. Please reach out to Terry if interested. Keeping the groups smaller will make them easier to manage for riders and for motorized traffic. The Club is looking at possible incentives or tokens of appreciation for the ride leaders. He noted that Monday nights have the biggest need for ride leaders and not all sanctioned ride leaders have been willing to lead rides. He also noted that there are still flood-related road closures on the Monday Night Ride routes. In addition, there are continuing concerns about rides not adhering to the advertised pace. The groups will occasionally exceed the posted averages, but the overall average should be at the advertised pace. **Valerie Litznerski** stated that ride leaders should not chase riders in a group that ride faster than the posted pace. **Pam Sotherland** noted that speeds vary within the posted averages and that helping riders understand this sometimes gives them the opportunity to choose another group. **Zolton Cohen** brought up the fact that the most of the time the speed of the ride will exceed the posted average when slowing for ascents and stopping at intersections is taken into consideration. **Doug Kirk** stressed that this information should be communicated ahead of the ride and that we can't count on educating new riders on all of these factors at the beginning of the ride.

For the Jeremy Smith Memorial, **Terry Butcher** will meet with Portage officials to discuss a memorial and to find out what will be acceptable for all parties involved. He is recommending a fix-it station with a plaque. It will be on Portage Road on the bike trail extension across the street from the crash area. The KBC is also considering a bench or rock with his name on it. The City of Portage will have input on the design.

KalTour Recap, Mike Krischer: Mike reported that there were close to 300 riders of whom 257 were pre-registered. The Club spent about \$4,000 on supplies and facilities and was able to save considerably on sales tax for merchandise, rentals, and prepared foods. The total gross income was \$8,800 and KBC contributed over \$2000 of this income to AMBUCs. There were several new features this year, including a new start location, all new routes, and new SAG stops. Mike noted that the maps from Ride with GPS were very helpful and that he made the paper maps and will improve them for next year. Mike also stated that we may consider having lunch at the start-finish for some riders next year. There were several organized ride groups with advertised paces that were posted by **Paul Sotherland** on the KBC website. Next year, it may be advertised that ride groups will be formed for the ride and to encourage participants to check for updates on the website. Mike observed that most of those who signed up for family rates were couples and not larger families. About 60 riders completed the century ride. Mike felt that the century route was fairly challenging and that the stops were rather far apart. He may make some changes in the future. There were several volunteers that gave quite a bit of time to this event and Mike tried to personally thank them in his July Pedal Press article. Many of the volunteers also had a chance to ride. He noted that AMBUCs was also very helpful.

Other attendees also commented. **Marc Irwin** mentioned that having to ride 30 miles until the first SAG stop may have been a little too long. **Zolton Cohen** added that he helped to staff Scott's Mill (the first SAG stop) and found that most of the riders really enjoyed the new route. Zolton also mentioned that every SAG stop should have a few tools. **Terry O'Connor** stated that no one complained about the cost of registration and that more people registered prior to the day of the ride. **Terry Butcher** mentioned an opportunity that he knows about to advertise to families, which the Club looks forward to hearing about in the future. He also mentioned that the Southwest Michigan Bikeway was a resource that was used for the routes. Terry also noted that Mike puts in a considerable amount of time and effort to make sure that KalTour is a success and can't be thanked enough for his contributions.

TNTT, Doug Kirk: Doug noted that on August 21st, there will be a time trial championship on the Tuesday Night Time Trial course. There will be cash prizes to the top male and female riders and there will be equalizing handicaps to adjust for sex and age in a special handicap division. Doug encouraged everyone to come out for this individual personal best event, and not to be intimidated by the fact that it is a competitive event. There will be food and drinks after at Latitude 42 after this time trial. Normally the TNTT is the first and third Tuesday of the month, but there will be no time trial on August 7th. Instead, there will be time trials on July 17th, July 31st, and August 21st. The route is online and available through Ride with GPS. For the August 21st time trial, time trial bikes and disk wheels will be prohibited, as well as aero bars. Recumbents will be in a separate class.

Crisscrossing the State for Safety, Valerie Litznerski: Valerie reported that she is planning to ride across the state from south to north in support of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's safety efforts. This ride will be a record attempt, sanctioned by World Ultracycling Association (WUCA). The audience for advocacy, education, and fundraising is not limited to KBC members or cyclists and she is actively reaching out to local media organizations to share her story about the ride and to direct attention to the Club's education efforts. She asked that if anyone has any connections to local media please feel free to pass them on to her. She will encourage that people make donations directly to the KBC (rather than a go-fund me or similar social media campaign). The ride will take place on September 8th. **Paul Selden** mentioned that the story is something that should be shared with the community. He also mentioned that recognizing competitive athletes who devote their energy to advocacy and support can help to challenge the view that competitive athletes are "elitist and exclusive."

KVCC Wellness Fair, Molly Cartwright: As an organizer of this annual wellness fair which focuses on wellbeing in all aspects of the lives of employees and students, she stated that she would love to see the Club represented with a booth, information dissemination, or even bike demos. There is no cost for the Club to participate. The Club will consider participating and will look for a volunteer to attend on October 10th. Please reach out to **Thom Brennan**, KBC Insurance Coordinator, if you would like to help.

Ride Leader Sanctioning: Tim Verdries was sanctioned.

New Business: Thom Brennan noted that on June 28th, a group met to discuss Kalamazoo Bike Week in 2019. **Dave and Mary Jo Warwick** would like to step down as the organizers of Bike Week and are looking for others to chair this event. A large representation of area personnel and organizations were in attendance, including city government officials and bike-friendly businesses. These groups will form a committee to determine how to manage the event. **Thom Brennan** and **Paul Wells** will request approval from the Executive Committee of the KBC to represent the Club on this committee.

Kathy Kirk, reporting for Team Clark Logic, noted that TCL member Tyson Gilmore volunteered at KalTour and many team members rode KalTour. **Doug and Kathy Kirk** led a 62 mile KalTour ride. She also noted that TCL member **Kevin Oostema** has stepped up to help put on the Tuesday Night Time Trial. Kathy is also leading a special women's ride this Friday for riders that are not experienced with riding in groups. The group will average 10 mph. Kathy mentioned that the Club signed a sponsorship agreement with TCL, although **Valerie Litznerski** indicated that KBC never actually signed this. Valerie mentioned that she supports the sponsorship.

Kathy noted that the Team Clark Logic member who did the most in June was **Paul Guimond**, as he chaperoned youth participants at the Special Olympics. He accompanied the athletes as they traveled to Central Michigan University and during the event, he chaperoned 3 athletes, managing their medical care and ensuring that their needs were met. He also made sure they made it to their track and field events. Each athlete got to participate in three events including the shotput, 100 meter dash, standing long jump, 400 meter run, 200 meter run, and the 200 meter fast walk. The athletes even got to attend a dance party in the football stadium at CMU. According to Paul: "The weather was perfect and the event is truly amazing!"

Recent results for Team Clark Logic members are as follows:

Great Lakes State Classic Road Race:

Tim Stewart - 3rd Masters 45+

Alec Schau - 3rd Cat 3/4

Elliott Parcels - 10th Cat 3/4

Kevin Oostema - 2nd Cat 5

Kevin Oostema - 9th Cat 4/5

Angie Veneklaus - 1st W Cat 3/4/5

Tory Cane - 3rd W Cat 3/4/5

Meijer State Games TT:

Jamie Clark - 2nd M 40-49

Kevin Oostema - 1st M 50+

Sandy Reid - 1st W 30-59

Jim Kindle - 3rd M 50+

Lumberjack 100:

Dan Kannegieter - 29th Men's Open Overall; 7hr39min

Sweatshaker MTB Race:

Chris Mowell - 2nd

2018 MMBA Championship Points Series

Greg Worsnop – currently 1st in series, Male 60+ age group.

Paul Sotherland would like the Club to consider establishing a fundraising chair. The Grant Committee determines how KBC funds are donated but having a grant writer is now more important since we are a 501(c)(3) organization. This has been discussed by the Executive Committee. Interested parties can submit their names while we develop the position.

Old business: None.

Adjournment: **Mike Boersma**, motioned to adjourn, **Terry O'Connor** seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

(Correction: In the July 2018 KBC Monthly Minutes, there was the statement “**Dave Warwick** thanked **Paul Selden** for support and communication surrounding Kalamazoo Bike Week.” It was actually **Paul Selden** thanking **Dave and Jo Warwick** for their support and communication surrounding Kalamazoo Bike Week.)

Val Litznerski, Secretary@kalamazooobicycleclub.org

Editor's Letter – It's Been a Good Ride

(Editor of the Month Note: When I agreed to be the Editor for this month's Pedal Press, I didn't think, reasonably enough, that I'd be involved on an automobile-bicycle accident. (I was on the bicycle, just in case you were wondering.) All things considered, I'm pretty lucky, with a mild concussion, some general stiffness, a little bit of road rash, including some on my face (my partially black left eye makes me particularly fetching looking, if I do say so myself), and a fractured right wrist (unfortunately, my dominant hand). I should also add that my bicycle wasn't so lucky. I wrote this Editor's Letter before my accident, which, upon review, is somewhat prophetic in the sense that I won't be able to ride my bicycle for at least of couple of weeks and probably longer. I'd like to thank members of the KBC for their kind words and encouragement after my accident.)

When Doug asked me if I could come out of a two year retirement as Pedal Press Editor in order to edit this issue, I had to ask myself a couple of hard questions; questions that I would need to answer in a satisfactory manner if I were to carry out this responsibility.

- 1) Do I still remember how to read?
- 2) Do I still remember the rules for capitalizing letters in a title?

Happily, I quickly realized that the answer to the first question was “Yes!” and that the answer to the second question was “I never was sure of the rules in the first place.” So here I am, your Editor of the Month. And writing an Editor’s Letter of the Month.

For the past several years, I’ve been doing a weekend morning group ride most weekends during the cycling season. At the finish of the ride, I find myself saying “Good ride” to my fellow cyclists as I head back to my house. I say this as a matter of habit even if the ride isn’t particularly good.

For example, a few weeks ago, we started a ride where we knew that the probability of staying dry would be about the same as the probability that the ride would actually be at a “16ish” mph pace. We headed south and, sure enough, soon after we crossed the covered bridge over the St. Joseph River, it started to rain. We took a short break while waiting for the rain to subside and then we began riding to Three Rivers, where we discovered that a 10 yard section of road was now a pit that was about 15 feet deep.

So, we had two choices: A) While carrying our bicycles, walk on one of the two beams on either side of the road, bordered on one side by water of indeterminate depth and on the other side by the aforementioned pit. B) Turn around and find another way to Three Rivers. I was in favor of Option B; my other three riding companions were in favor of Option A and they exercised this option. I, on the other hand, was ready to exercise Option B, when one of my companions offered to come back and walk my bicycle across the beam. I agreed, and now all I had to do was to walk on one of the beams without my bicycle.

Yep, that’s all I had to do. On one side, possible death by drowning. On the other side, more than possible death by falling. And if the fall didn’t do me in, the two snapping turtles at the bottom of the pit could finish the job. Fatally mauled by snapping turtles. No one wants to see that on their death certificate.

So, with one hand on a corrugated metal makeshift railing on the water side of the beam, I proceeded to semi-bear walk my way across the road. Never have I felt quite so manly. We then continued our ride to Three Rivers, where we stopped for refreshments. During our break, it started raining again and we rode the last 20 miles back to Kalamazoo in pouring rain. Still, as I left the other riders in Portage, I called out “Good ride!” Good ride indeed.

A couple of weekends ago, I missed riding the Holland Hundred to attend a memorial service for one of my uncles. I had always enjoyed talking with him; he had a cheerful disposition and had interesting things to say. I last saw him at the 90th birthday party that my aunt and cousins had thrown for him almost 17 months earlier and I was happy that I had had this last opportunity to talk with him.

At the service, his son and daughter gave eulogies for their father. During his eulogy, his son noted that while under hospice care shortly before his death, my uncle told some members of his family that “It’s been a good ride.” Now was every day of his life a good ride? I seriously doubt it, no one’s life is. But my uncle knew that the good days had far outnumbered the bad and he had the wisdom and perspective to be grateful for this. And gratitude is an emotion worth cultivating.

So, yes, I got the adrenaline flowing during that ride a few weeks ago in a non-optimal way and, yes, I got soaking wet. But I ended up saying that it was a good ride, anyway, even if I didn’t quite believe it at the time; at least I was cultivating gratitude. At least I was able to ride.

So, when there comes a day when I'm no longer able to ride a bicycle, though I know that it will be hard, I hope that I can look back and celebrate and appreciate my cycling life, being grateful for what I had. And then I can lie on my deathbed and say "It's been a good ride and literally too." Preferably without staring into the eyes of an angry snapping turtle.

Rick Whaley, "Editor" editor@kalamazooobicycleclub.org

AUGUST KBC STATISTICS

Active subscriptions: 368

Members: 599

New or Renewed Members: Benjamin Shields • David Hapman & Zondra Heckman Family • Kyle P. O'Donohue

August Expiring Memberships:

Alisha Farber • Brian Rhinesmith • Angela Erdman & David Erdman Family • Chris Hamilton • Christine Bartholmey • Dean Vuckovich • Doug Wales & Lisa Wales Family • Edward Aurand & Jen Aurand Family • Jeff Robertson • Rick Bauer • Karen Ridley & Noelle Ridley • Mike Albright • Andrew Louwaert & Erin Rumery Family • Luanne St. Peter • Mark Stackhouse

YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOPS:

They support us so please support them

Billy's Bike Shop, 63 East Battle Creek Street, Galesburg, (269) 665-5202. Sadly, Billy's no longer has a website

Custer Cyclery, 104 North Augusta, Augusta, (269) 731-3492, www.custercyclery.com.

**Gazelle Sports, 214 South Kalamazoo Mall, Kalamazoo, (269) 342-5996, www.Gazellesports.com.
LADIES! Visit Gazelle Sports August 12-18 for 25% OFF bras!**

Kzoo Swift, 445 Forest St, Kalamazoo, (269) 929-8053, www.kzooswift.com.

**Pedal Downtown, 611 W Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, (269) 567-3325,
Pedal South, 185 Romence Road, Portage (269) 324-5555,
info@pedalbicycle.com and www.pedalbicycle.com.**

**Trek Bicycle Store, Battle Creek 22 West Michigan, Battle Creek, 1-800-841-9494,
www.trekstorebattlecreek.com (Team Active has changed names but not owners).**

Village Cyclery, US 131 in Schoolcraft, (269) 679-4242, www.villagecyclery.com.

Zoo City Cycle, 4328 South Westnedge, Kalamazoo, (269) 552-3000, www.zoocitycycle.com.