

PRESIDENT DOUG KIRK'S LETTER: TWO WHEEL SOCIAL DISTANCING

Wouldn't it be nice to have a real good idea about how much social distancing is enough? Enough for what? To be totally safe? Reasonably safe?

As far as riding your bike is concerned, what's far enough that even if you—or folks nearby—are unknowingly exhaling deadly viruses you won't infect one another? And should you assume that you and your bike-buddies are doing exactly that in order to be safe? On the other hand, what's far enough that you feel safe when you know your riding companions are trying just as hard as you not to get sick?

I'm no scientist, and I don't know for sure, but I have some thoughts about staying safe from acquiring the Covid-19 virus while riding your bike, and about how we, as a club of folks who love to ride our bikes, can come together to enjoy our sport.

Let's start by agreeing that biking while wearing a mask over one's nose & mouth is a non-starter. But breathing microscopic droplets exhaled by people carrying the virus is THE most likely way to acquire the virus yourself, so you have to be far enough away from others that this isn't a problem. And you have to be aware of where the air you're exhaling might be headed.

In buildings, we're told to stay 6 feet—or 10 feet—apart, and that's wearing masks. But outside is different. There are so many variables. Is there wind? How much? Which way is it blowing? Where are other people located relative to the wind? Then there's the question of how many others are around? How close? Are they riding—and breathing—easy, or working hard?

There's simply no way to do a decent job of constantly evaluating all these things while riding with several people (unless you go to the front and stay there!), so it seems to me that any kind of real group riding in close proximity to one another is a bad idea till who-knows-when. Bad for everyone's safety, and bad for the image of cyclists it would present to others.

On the other hand, suppose a group decides to all ride the same course about the same time, but leave the start in groups of one or maybe two people, keeping oh, say, 10 yards—or a minute—between one another. This seems perfectly reasonable. The closest folks might get to one another would be in the parking lot, and obviously is easy to control.

Does this remind you of a certain kind of ride? It should—a time trial. Each rider leaves alone, thirty seconds or a minute apart. The great thing about a time trial is that you are riding against yourself, so how hard you work is entirely up to you. No reason to go any faster than you feel like. But everyone gets to visit and share bike riding together—as together as present circumstances allow. Something to drink in the parking lot afterwards? Just keep your distance. We plan to get some TTs going before the end of May. Keep an eye on the website, the club's Facebook page, and future newsletters



APPEAL FOR PHOTOS

As the stay home orders continue to be extended, more and more cycling events are cancelled.

However, I still see many cyclists at the trails and riding on roads. Since we aren't meeting in groups we are missing each other more often than not.

Please take a selfie or a shot of a friend on a ride. Help us remain a connected community through the magic of smart phone images! You can send them along to:

editor@kalamazooBicycleClub.org

President's letter continued:

Also, elsewhere in this newsletter you can read about 13 different rides, all available through the KBC website, that we hope folks will ride whenever they want this spring. Routes include many KBC favorites, both paved and gravel. Ride Captain Gordy Vader and Education Director Paul Wells have teamed up to put this plan together. I don't see any reason why other people—you maybe?—couldn't do the same thing.

It's important to get good exercise, air out your lungs, get some endorphins flowing and generally look after your physical and emotional health right now. So let's sort of go for a ride together soon.

Kal-Tour—Decision coming in May

As of this writing, KalTour is scheduled to take place on Sunday June 28. However, a decision as to whether it will be possible to hold KalTour on the scheduled date has not been reached. All KBC club activities are currently suspended. If the situation improves by the early part of May and KBC activities resume, KalTour will be able to take place as scheduled.

Remember that the lowest KalTour prices (for members) of \$20 for individuals and \$40 for families will remain in effect until June 1. Please watch the club website or Facebook group for updates in early May.

There will be a "meeting" open to any interested KBC members to discuss the future of KalTour 2020 on Tuesday May 12 at 7:00 pm. The "meeting" of course will be virtual. Anyone who is interested in participating should email me at kaltour@kalamazooobicycleclub.org or mkrisch@chartermi.net in order to receive the participation link.

Mike Krischer
KalTour Director

NEXT KBC CLUB MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR . . . ?

WATCH THE KALAMAZOO BICYCLE CLUB DISCUSSION GROUP ON FACEBOOK AND THE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.

KBC Business

Due to COVID-19 and the Stay Home order, there was no KBC membership meeting in April, and none is scheduled for May. Please watch the KBC website and Facebook Discussion Page for updates.

Finance report, Pam Sotherland:

KBC FINANCIALS as of 4/13/2020

PREVIOUS BALANCE CASH (PNC Checking + PayPal) ACCOUNTS: \$9,597*

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash In): \$550

Monthly EXPENSES: \$74

CURRENT BALANCE CASH ACCOUNTS: \$10,073

TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS: \$6,769

Education Fund: \$6209

Jeremy Smith Fund: \$560

TOTAL ENCUMBERED EXPENSES: \$2,890

KRVT Pledge: \$1000

Race Team: 2021 Pledge: \$1000

Repair/Air Station for Portage: \$890

(\$1450 less Jeremy Smith Fund)

CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT: \$6184

***Due to a PayPal reporting error in Quicken last month's current balance was incorrect. It has been corrected for this month's report.**

Shaun and Stacie Ballard submitted this great picture from Easter Sunday April 12, 2020. This picture features a great view of the KBC name stickers on their helmets! These stickers are designed to facilitate communication and connection amongst cyclists on group rides. It is our intention to make the sport and club more welcoming to new members and participants. Plus, having a sticker on my helmet allows you to call me out by name: "John! Quit riding into my wheel!"

Thanks Team Ballard!



JOHN WAYNE DAYS—ZOLTON COHEN

I was in my shop the other day, puttering about, while physically distancing myself from the rest of humanity. I prefer the term ‘physical distancing’ rather than ‘social distancing’ because being socially distant is damaging to mental health. I recognize that, temporarily at least, I must be physically distant from others. But I do not endeavor to become socially so.

On the radio, the host of NPR’s *1A* show was conducting a discussion with the sportswriter Ben Cohen (no relation). Mr. Cohen had recently written a book called “*The Hot Hand: The Mystery and Science of Streaks*” and was doing interviews to promote it.

In the book Cohen explores, ...well, the mystery and science of what are known as ‘streaks:’ the idea that there is possible predictability in that if something happened before it will happen again. His examples cover sports and other realms – for instance, feeding the ball to a basketball player who is making shot after shot and can seemingly score at will.

What does this have to do with bicycling? Well, at one time or another, we’ve likely all had the experience of everything going right; everything coming together on a bike ride - wind conditions, ambient temperature, clothing choices made hours before, fitness level, equipment readiness and our interactions and interplay with fellow cyclists. The mental euphoria that accompanies such confluences can be rapturous and intoxicating. I call them “John Wayne Days,” referencing old western movies in which every time John Wayne turned, aimed and fired his rifle or six-shooter another bad guy would fall dead to the ground. In these instances he was unstoppable; his heroism stark, brilliant and abundant. And so, sometimes, are we on a great bike ride.

I have had a few of those in my riding life. One stands out though - the last day of DALMAC 2003.

Along with a handful of friends, I signed up early onto my one and only DALMAC tour, selecting the “Bridge” route that meandered from Lansing to Mackinaw City over four consecutive 100-mile days. The idea with DALMAC is that you ride during the day while your tent, sleeping bag and personal effects are transported to the evening’s campsite in a big semi tractor-trailer. Four centuries was going to be a stretch for my physical capabilities. But I was game for the challenge, and I had excellent riding companions for encouragement and support.

And a challenge it turned out to be, as our DALMAC was not devoid of incident. The first evening, exiting the showers at a high school locker room after being pelted by icicles pouring out of a crusty showerhead, I discovered that someone had stolen my only towel. That left me no option for the remainder of the tour but to dry off ‘naturally’ after showering by standing in the chilly evening air.

The following day, a member of our group had trouble shifting the gears on his bike, lost his balance and fell, breaking his collarbone. There was a lot of angst, phone calls and chaos as we got him to a hospital and secured his bike and camping gear for transport home.

On the evening of the third day, after beating for hour upon hour into a cold north wind, we arrived, starving and exhausted, at Lake City High School, our campsite for the night. By chance, I overheard two of the tour’s organizers talking, one saying to the other that the caterer in charge of the meal that night had misunderstood the day he was supposed to provide dinner. There was going to be nothing available for some hours as they called around town to see if they could dig up sufficient nourishment for 600 or so famished cyclists, all on short notice.

I spied a grocery store across the street from the high school and, gathering my friends together, we spearheaded a pilgrimage that rapidly grew in size and intensity as a horde of zombie-like figures inun-



JOHN WAYNE DAYS CONT.

dated the store's aisles, buying up every loaf of bread, box of crackers, jar of peanut butter and deli offering in sight.

As dawn rose on the final day of DALMAC I was thoroughly thrashed, ready to go home, ready to stop riding and eager to just sit quietly for a time in my house. The wind had kicked up overnight, again cold, and again from the north, in the direction we were heading. It had all the makings of a long, unforgettably bad day in the saddle. And so it was, for a while.

70 miles in I lost track of my companions and found myself on my own, riding along the Lake Michigan lakeshore as wind whipped the waves into whitecaps. Did I mention it was cold? And that's when John Wayne showed up.

I hooked up with a group of riders, maybe 7 or 8, who were as beat-up looking as I was feeling. They were pedaling along, really suffering, at about 14 miles an hour, wobbling with fatigue and the strong wind gusts.

I figured I could do a little better pace than that, so I surged to the front and cranked the speed up to about 17. One of the guys in back shouted to his mates, "Hey! We got a horse here. Let's get on and ride him." They all latched onto my wheel, in a single file echelon across the road, and sat in my draft for mile after mile.

Periodically I would need a break and would drift to the back of the pack. The pace would immediately drop back down to 14 MPH. After a minute of boredom with that, I would again surge to the front, elevating things back up to 17. We did that for the rest of the route, the rest of the day, until the bridge finally hove into sight. When we arrived at the finish area I was used up; empty. I didn't have the strength to lift my leg over the saddle, so I rolled the bike out from underneath me.

A couple of the riders I had dragged all those miles along the lakeshore approached and shook my hand, offering their thanks for the pulls; they said they couldn't have done it without me. "All in a day's work," I said.

I had the hot hand that cold afternoon; the John Wayne day. Despite my fatigue I got on a roll and stayed there - got on a streak. Despite everything that had gone wrong before, as well as the adverse weather conditions, I persevered and put in an effort that felt good..and was good. John Wayne, I think, would have tipped his hat.

What's This Place Called? —Tomme Maile

Many years ago we took the ferry across Lake Michigan to Manitowoc and did a cross state ride in Wisconsin on our tandem. I can't remember many details, but I do remember how strange the names of some of the small towns were that we passed through. At some point we came upon a sign at the edge of town saying Welcome to Oconomowoc, or something close to that. We tried to figure out how to pronounce this unusual name, apparently of Native American origin, and after each of us made several attempts we began to argue over which one was the closest. As we went back and forth, things began to get a little heated. At this point we were approaching a fast food joint and I said "let's go find out", and I pulled the tandem into the parking lot. I went up to the counter to speak to a young woman and asked "can you help us". She said "sure!" and I responded with "can you tell us how to pronounce this place?" and she again said "sure" and then, in very precise syllables, she slowly said "Burger-King".

THE LUCKY 13 RIDES

KBC will soon be unveiling "KBC's Lucky 13 Solo Rides" to help motivate you to get on your bike and ride. Gordy Vader and I will be getting the details of this finalized as you read this, so soon you can go to the KBC website, the KBC Facebook page, or the Kalamazoo Bike Week website to access The Lucky 13 favorite rides, many of which you know, and some other gems that might be new to you.

We will be asking you to post your ride story, with the particulars of weather; sun, clouds, wind, rain, dogs, squirrels, flat tires, and anything else of interest to you. Let us know the distance and pace, if you want. If you write it well, we might just put it in the next Pedal Press, and make you famous! Of course, if you ride with significant others, well that's great too. We also might offer some prizes for the best of the best stories.

Remember to go to the Kalamazoo Bike Week site to check out the virtual activities going on from May 9th through the 16th. Kalamazoo Bike Week activities may be different this year, but it's still really important to keep cycling in the public eye for everyone's safety, enjoyment, transportation, and sanity.

Oh, two more things...Put out the damn yard signs, as Governor Whitmer should say! And whoopee! Your fantastic, favorite local bike shop is now open for service, so fix that broken bike and ride.

Paul Wells, Education Director



KBC Club Statistics — Check for your name here!

Total Memberships: 330

Total Individuals: 552

New or Renewed Members: Russell Chmiel & Family; Tim Dirkse; Brett Dodds; Terry Florian; Andrea & Dan Fore; Dan & Sandra Frazier; Ryan Howard; Marc Irwin; Ann LaPoint & Family; Katie Little; Ed Micalizzi; Dave Mitchell; Roger Pozeznik; Pam Stinchcomb; Jana Zollinger

May Expiring Members: Karen Applebey; Michele Aslanian; Mike Boersma; Brian Bremiller; Angel Campbell; Cathy Cheron; Maureen & Keith Corts; Mary Dix; Carolyn Everts; Alisha Farber; Kitty Flatland; Kim Foghino; Steven Gilmer; Pat Gipper & Family; Bridget Gonder; Susan Hall; Karen Halsted; Kathryn & Norman Hamann; Tracy & Dan Harrison; Susan Hubert; Rick & Faith Huyser; Tana Jackson & Family; Phillip Kline; Martin Knop; Kathy Kroll & Family; Daryl Ann Letts; Linda Marks; Jeanette Marshall; Berit Miller; Sandra Molvern; Lynn Morrison; David Mulnix; Shannon and Adam Potgeisser; Elizabeth Rigoni; Allie Rowe; Paul Runnels; Melanie Sanic-Burke; Susan & Derek Sheehan; Amy Sherman; Wendy Sinclair & Patrick Lynch; Ken Smith; William Surna; Jerry Traxler; Joe Williams; Cindy Workman

Kalamazoo Bike Week Kicks Off Saturday, May 9, 2020

Paul Selden, KBW 2020 Chair

The 9th Annual Kalamazoo (Area) Bike Week starts Saturday May 9 and wraps up on Saturday, May 16. Warming weather and the urge to stay active during shelter-at-home orders are encouraging more bicycle riding than ever--including many families with younger children. Restrictions on public transit are motivating others to use their bikes for basic transportation. Many cyclists are riding the roads as a way to maintain fitness and stay healthy.

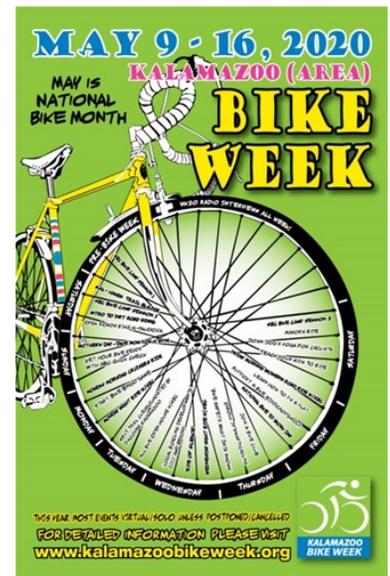
With all this in mind, this year Bike Week is underscoring the need for bicyclists and motorists alike to drive and bike safely. As promoted by KBC, this means for everyone to follow the rules of the road. This year events and featured Bike Week activities will be virtual, conducted solo or with family members, and mindful of safe social distancing, if not postponed or canceled.

Bike Week events and activities will still be listed on its calendar at www.kalamazoobikeweek.org to make the greater community aware of the many opportunities to bicycle throughout a more normal year. An Announcements page will list places to pick up bike safety tips and maps while supplies last, at a number of municipalities once they open their doors to the public again. It also suggests a way to participate in the Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive and take advantage of Morris Rose Auto Parts' offer to accept -- at no charge -- those beat up tires and inner tubes filled with holes piling up in your garage. Check the KBW event links to the organizer's links for last-minute updates, as well.

Kalamazoo Bike Week is one of the most event filled week-long celebrations of bicycling in the United States. It promotes more than 30 featured activities, and offers a nifty updated downloadable (some call it prize-worthy) Bike Week poster.

This year Bike Week will highlight information about:

- Locally available bicycle clubs, riding groups and shops
- Group riding on the roads
- Organized trail riding opportunities
- Annual Mayor's Ride
- Mountain biking
- Lessons on how to get bikes ready to ride and fix a flat
- Teaching kids to ride safely
- Local bicycling developments
- Ride of Silence observance
- Dirt & gravel road riding techniques
- Bike to Work Day
- Public safety message results
- Yoga For Cyclists
- Bike-related nonprofits.



Bike Week would not be possible without many wonderful independent organizers and their sponsors -- KBC and its members among them. These are challenging times, but there will never be a better time than during Bike Week for everyone to be enjoying their bikes while following the rules of the road--and the Golden Rule.

Editor's Letter: I Can See for Miles and Miles — John Knowlton

The Who released the album “The Who Sell Out” in 1967. One of the most memorable musical hooks (an earworm that gets stuck in your head) is the refrain on “I Can See For Miles.” The lyrics are certainly not Shakespearean or even Dylan-esque. They actually don’t have much depth at all. But the chorus of this song reflects a reality that most cyclists understand: Vistas are valuable.

The response to COVID 19 has prompted a lot of self-isolation has led many people to stay indoors. The impulse not to become infected with an invisible, unknown virus is understandable, natural and healthy. It is pro-social, too. If Bob doesn’t get infected, he can’t share an infection with Susie. Keeping ourselves away from others to defeat the novel coronavirus makes sense. Full stop.

However, staying indoors doesn’t necessarily make sense, at least for me. I am not a health professional and have no specially knowledge about virus transmission or respiratory droplet dispersion patterns. I don’t know how wind, sunlight, humidity or barometric pressure affects virulence. It isn’t clear if one is more likely to become infected indoors or outdoors. Those questions are being diligently pursued by smart people who are far more qualified than me.

What I do know is that being outside is uniquely restorative. Exercise is important to maintain the body, expel toxins, and enhance homeostasis. The CDC says regular exercise can help control weight, reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, reduce risk of type 2 diabetes as well as some cancers, and strengthen bones and muscles, and many other benefits. We can certainly exercise inside. Cyclists have been turning to Zwift, Peloton and other indoor cycling options in droves over the past months. Bike shops have a whole range of cool smart trainers that will simulate wind in your face, climbing and descending hills, and racing against other people. And exercise, indoors or out, addresses the body’s needs and accrues the benefits I quoted from the CDC above.

But we are more than bodies. Traditional Christian philosophy asserts that humans are tripartite: Spirit, soul and body. The soul is also made of three parts: mind, will and emotions. Exercising inside helps my body but leaves my mind, will and emotions unhelped (ok, that isn’t a word). But going outside for a ride – that is a difference-maker! While I haven’t conducted a randomized controlled trial with hundreds of subjects, I have spent a lot of time introspecting about the question: “Why does exercising outside make such a big difference in my thinking and feeling?”

I think The Who actually answered the question a couple years before I was born: I can see for miles. Inside a house or office building the farthest we can see is a few feet or a few dozen feet. At the office where I spend 50 hours per week, my longest vista is about 60 feet down the hallway toward the kitchen and bathroom. Same thing at home. But outside, well, we can see for miles and miles. My realization about being outdoors is that open spaces literally expand our vision. With no walls in the way, we see more. More space. More opportunity. More possibility. There is room for ideas and for big thoughts. There is enough room outside for more than one way to accomplish a goal or to think or to feel. Seeing for miles sparks creativity and optionality. All of the different sensory input allows our ideas to add up to more than their normal sum. There is a *gestalt* effect that comes with long views. All that we bring plus all that we see and experience somehow become more than a collection of thoughts and experiences. Something new begins to exist that wasn’t there before. And that thing would never exist if we stayed inside. Smart trainers may be smart, but they aren’t *gestalt*.

Want to come outside for a ride? editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

