

PRESIDENT'S LETTER — DOUG KIRK

Daylight savings time starts Sunday March 14, 2021. Overnight, there's enough daylight to ride after work. So it's time to become a KBC ride leader in order to have KBC's insurance coverage apply when you are riding in groups or 2 or more riders. The insurance covers up to \$10,000 in medical bills not covered by other insurance in case of a biking accident, and is a FREE benefit of your membership in KBC.

So whether or not you've been a sanctioned ride leader in the past, **you have to reapply every year**. Just like last year, there's a form you fill out online. Here's the link to the page on the KBC Website with details about being a ride leader. You'll also find a link to the registration form:

<https://www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/rides/club-rides/ride-leader-responsibilities/> (works best in Chrome—Ed.)

After you submit the form (electronically), you simply attend either the March or April KBC regular meeting (which will probably both be virtual meetings via Zoom) and we swear you in.

Not only do you benefit from the insurance by being a ride leader, KBC also needs leaders to lead club rides. So please take 5 minutes to click on the link above and sign up. The link to the Zoom meeting is on p. 2 and will also be sent out in a group email (so you might want to keep an eye on your Social and Promotions/Spam email folders). I personally look forward to seeing you and registering you to be a ride leader.

On a completely different subject, the Board of Directors has approved language for a change to the KBC Constitution's Bylaws that Paul Sotherland brought up at the February meeting. In order to clarify that individual KBC members are welcome to apply for grants from the club for bike-related ideas, the proposed change to Item 7 of the Bylaws would be amended (by adding the underlined language) to read:

"The club may award monetary grants, through a standardized grant proposal process, to individuals, including KBC members, and organizations involved in bicycle advocacy activities."

KBC's Constitution requires that 2/3 of the members present at KBC's next meeting approve the proposal, this is another reason to attend the next KBC meeting from the comfort of your home via Zoom. As noted above, the link to the Zoom meeting will appear in this *PedalPress* and will also be sent out in a group email. See you then! Email: president@kalamazoobicycleclub.org



APPEAL FOR STORIES, PHOTOS, AND CYCLING DISPATCHES

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 picture or send a report of a ride for others to enjoy. You can send them along to:

editor@kalamazooBicycleClub.org

KBC Meeting Notes—February 9, 2021

Finance report as of 2/8/21, Pam Sotherland

**PREVIOUS BALANCE CASH
(PNC Checking + PayPal) AC-
COUNTS: \$16,451**

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash In):
\$235

Monthly EXPENSES: **\$3,331**

**CURRENT BALANCE CASH
ACCOUNTS: \$13,355**

**TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS:
\$6,680**

Discretionary Expenses: \$500

Education Fund: \$6,180

**TOTAL ENCUMBERED EX-
PENSES: \$1,000**

KRVT Pledge: **\$1,000**

**AVAILABLE FREE BALANCE:
\$5,675**

**CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT:
\$6187**

2021 APPROVED BUDGET

**INCOME/DEPOSITS =
\$16,200**

Bike Camp Registrations:

\$2,000

Education (Shop Jars) \$200

Kal Tour Registrations: \$8,000

Membership Dues:

\$6,000

EXPENSES = \$16,040

Bike Camp: \$1,525

Bike Week: \$200

*Education: \$600

General Expenses: \$685

Awards: \$100

Grants: \$500

Insurance \$2,500

KalTour: \$7,595

LMB Membership: \$100

Race Team: \$1,000

Social Activities: \$700

Subscriptions: \$335

Website: \$200

*Education paid from Designat-
ed funds

**INCOME LESS EXPENSES:
\$160**

**The next KBC meeting will be Tuesday,
March 9 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Meeting
ID: 849 8286 2524 ; Passcode: 840834**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REPORTS:

Treasurer: Pam Sotherland

Four documents were shared with attendees:

2020 Annual Report - reviewed what was budgeted for 2020
what actual expenses were for the club.

2021 Budget - (based on 2019) discussions began about
KalTour, Bike Camp, and membership as KalTour and Bike
Camp do not cover all of the clubs expenses. Membership re-
newals are important for the club and membership benefits in-
clude insurance, Ride with GPS, socials, etc.

2021 Quarterly Forecast – assumes bike camp and KalTour are
happening and showcases projected income, expenses, and all
designated funds separated out by quarter.

DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Education Committee:

Renee Mitchell shared the Education Committee is aiming for an
abbreviated version of bike camp in 2-3 sessions in July. Bill
Surna and John Knowlton shared there will be 5 events happen-
ing throughout the summer which will include one-time **commu-
nity group rides** at a variety of locations on Thursday evenings.
KBC presence would be great. Paul Guimond shared that Bron-
son is known for providing helmets with a donation of \$25 (cash
or check). The contact person at Bronson is Samantha Tefft,
(269) 341-6508, appointments need to be made as there are lim-
ited people allowed in the hospital. More information coming
about the community bike rides. Lastly, Renee shared the City of
Portage will be hosting more **Smart Cycling classes**. Keep an
eye out for those dates if you're interested.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ride with GPS Coordinator: Paul Sotherland

Paul proposed a new position to serve on the Board of Directors,
a Ride with GPS Coordinator. This request is proposed for the
Board and EC to consider.

Proposed Modification to Bylaws – KBC Constitution: Paul
Sotherland

Paul proposed a motion to modify the bylaws in Article 11 of the
KBC Constitution. The **current wording** states, "The club may
award monetary grants, through a standardized grant proposal
process, to individuals and organizations involved in bicycle
advocacy activities." The **proposed wording** is as follows, "The
club may award monetary grants, through a standardized grant
proposal process, only to members of the Kalamazoo Bicycle
Club, in support of their endeavors to enhance bicycling activi-
ties in the Kalamazoo area." The **rationale** for this change is it
would provide another benefit for members as paying dues

KBC Meeting Notes Cont.

would mean the members have explicit access to grants to explore a variety of endeavors. **Discussion** about the proposal included numerous club members' statements. Topics brought up included KBC is a 501c3 organization which means there is a charity purpose for the greater community, meaning limiting grants might not fulfill that mission. KBC does donate half of the KalTour income to AMBUCS each year. The club should be open and inclusive, suggesting a certain amount be budgeted for members and a certain amount be budgeted for the community. The grants committee vets every request to ensure it fits the mission. Bike Friendly Kalamazoo checks www.charitynavigator.org and www.guidestar.org as it is ideal a lot of the percentage of any 501c3 should go to programs benefiting the public. **Next steps** include the board talking about this and then bringing it to the club for a vote.

KBC Jerseys: Paul Guimond

Paul asked if there was any interest in a new KBC jersey, it has been over 5 years since the club has ordered jerseys. Clark Bennett suggested a contact he could reach out to for a design idea and would follow up with the EC on this. More information coming about possible KBC jerseys.

5-Foot Bike Signs: Paul Selden

Bike Friendly Kalamazoo is excited to assist KBC with sign distribution and stated if KBC doesn't have the funds to purchase more signs, BFK will be happy to assist.

Group Rides in 2021:

The EC will be meeting to discuss this and continue monitoring the COVID-19 guidelines as daylight savings time is right around the corner. [See Group Ride article on p. 4—Ed.]

You can attend the March 9 KBC meeting and become a Sanctioned Ride Leader. Join at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom: Meeting ID: 849 8286 2524 ; Passcode: 840834. Zoom etiquette reminder: if you are not speaking, please mute your microphone. To help people see you, please ensure that light falls on your face (if you are backlit, you will be in silhouette).

February Membership meeting Attendees:

Marc Irwin	Terry O'Connor
David Jones	Paul Selden
Stacie Ballard	Pam Sotherland
Marshall Beachler	Paul Sotherland
Mike Boersma	Bill Surna
Clark Bennett	Rick Whaley
Paul Guimond	

KBC Statistics (Thanks to Rick Whaley for managing these details!)

Please check for your name here!

Total Memberships: 253

Total Individuals: 464

New or Renewed Members: Marshall Beachler; Molly Cartwright; Leo Davies; Marc Irwin; Arya Jayatilaka & Family

March Expiring Members: Bruce Caple; Tom Cross; Michelle Karpinski; Todd Maguire & Family; Kevin Oostema & Family; Rick Rumsey & Family; Mike & Sharon VandeMeulen; Marc Veihl; Kim Wier; Margaret & Dave Wochaski

DID YOU KNOW? — PAUL SOTHERLAND

Did You Know that the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County posts a collection of detailed and annually updated maps of roads in every Kalamazoo County township on their Assets Management page? Here's a link to that page - <https://www.kalamazooountyroads.com/InfrastructureData.php> (ctrl + click) Now that you know about that valuable resource, you can use those maps when planning a route to ride around the county.

GROUP RIDES UPDATE!

What About KBC Sanctioned Rides?

KBC's official group rides traditionally begin once daylight savings time kicks in, which is March 14 this year. With the pandemic still playing out, the Executive Committee met to discuss what rides KBC should offer as things now stand.

Small to medium-sized group rides are allowed under the State regulations in effect as of late February. Section 8-D of the January 13, 2021 Gatherings and Facemask Order from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services says that the facemask directive "does not apply to individuals who are exercising outdoors and able to consistently maintain 6 feet of distance from others."

The Executive Committee feels that 6 feet is roughly as close as riders are to one another on group rides, particularly if the group isn't more than 10 – 12 riders. And with the amount of air movement when pedaling anywhere from 12 to 25 mph, we feel group rides are safe and would be following the spirit of the rule, even if there might be occasions when the distance is somewhat less. We know quite a few of you were doing group rides this way last year without problems.

But when it comes to a club—our club—sanctioning rides, that's not all there is to it. Three complications immediately came to mind—milling around before/after rides, caring for an injured rider, and most importantly the possibility that someone in the group you want to ride with (or that you have agreed to lead) does not take "reasonable" safety precautions otherwise.

By now we've all developed our personal beliefs about what constitutes risky behavior. How do you feel about riding (obviously maskless) with your favorite riding buddies? Maybe better about some than others? Or what about a stranger (whose social distancing behavior is unknown) or with someone you do not trust to have taken sufficient precautions?

The answers to these questions are personal to each of us. For example, suppose you show up for a club ride, and along with the people you feel okay riding with, there are people who you simply don't know. Maybe they are new members, or a friend of another rider. There's peer pressure (real or imagined) to do the ride, and for sure you want to do a club ride or you wouldn't be there. Not a comfortable situation. Obviously we all get to make our own decisions about whether to join any ride, but if you are a ride leader for a club ride it's not that simple.

So the Executive Committee decided that with the current state of the pandemic, we cannot ask ride leaders to lead group rides. On the other hand, we have no problem with ride leaders volunteering to lead rides, or group rides taking place as long as everyone on the ride—especially any KBC sanctioned ride leader—is comfortable being a part of that particular ride. If you choose to ride in small groups and you have a KBC sanctioned ride leader on the ride, you will be still be covered under KBC's insurance. Whether you ride solo or in small groups, enjoy the journey on your bike and know that we will be back to groups rides in the future.

—Doug Kirk

KALTOUR 2021: OPTIMISM TEMPERED BY UNCERTAINTY

By Mike Krisher, KalTour Chair

KalTour 2021 is coming, but how and when has yet to be decided. It is my opinion that KBC's 29th annual summer tour should be held this summer. After a year of almost no organized cycling events, the demand for group rides is certain to be very high. In order to meet this demand, many options and choices must be examined, and a way forward must be determined. In a way, last year choice was easier, since cancelling KalTour was the only logical choice. This year offers a more nuanced set of options. In particular, date, price, food service, and pandemic-related precautions and procedures are all on the table. I have some ideas as to how we can run KalTour, but it is time for wider input and certainly time for some decisions to be made.

There will be a virtual (of course) meeting of the KalTour Committee on **Tuesday March 16 at 7:00 pm**. All interested KBC members are welcome. Please let me know (kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org or mkrisch@chartermi.net) if you would like to participate.



Before the meeting, I suggest visiting the websites of your favorite summer tour to see what they are doing this summer. I have been keeping track of the status of the following events: LMB tours, One Helluva Ride, Holland 100, Apple Cider Century, Amishland and Lakes, DALMAC, and a few others. Some rides are going ahead (at least for now) while others have postponed announcements, and others have cancelled.

The following issues will be the framework for our discussion:

Date: Should we go with our traditional end-of-June date or wait until later in the summer?

Price: Should we postpone price increases for a longer period of time before the ride?

Food Service: Should we use prepackaged items at rest stops?

Should we provide a boxed lunch at the end of the ride?

Precautions: What will be the rules and procedures for hand sanitation, food service, and masking?

We know that interest in cycling has increased since the start of the pandemic. Organized cycling events can play a role in sustaining this increase if they are done safely. A successful return for KalTour in 2021 can benefit both KBC and the wider cycling community.

From KBC's Instagram Page! Send your pics to communications@kalamazoobicycleclub.org



E-BIKE EXPERIENCE

By Terry O'Connor

A number of people have asked how I like my new Trek Domane +HP ebike and since I have only ridden it three times in very cold weather here is what I know and learned.

1. It is probably three times heavier than my previous bike.
2. Mat black is rather boring compared to my old fire engine red bike and what am I going to do with my F11 polish?
3. The Kiox computer will take any moments to figure out so I'll just leave it on speed, battery level and assist level for now. Calorie and cadence are not my thing.
4. The integrated lights are great. The head light has a bright 1000 lumens beam and the rear mounted on seat is hugely bright but not blinking. And it runs off the main battery so no recharging.
5. I knew the range was 75 miles and top speed was 28 mph, thus part of the reason for purchasing.
6. The Domane has four assist levels: Eco for max range and efficiency, Tour for long range, Sport unbelievable power, and Turbo -to put a smile on your face and bye to your friends!
7. Battery power is a 500 wh but still figuring out how to maximize battery life because of various cassette gearing.
8. The gearing is amazing 11-42 cassette and with the range of gearing pedaling without the e-assist works fine on the flats but hills are a different story.
9. Speaking of gearing, I was flicking my left handle bar with no results. Looking down I realized that I only had a medium size ring. Where is the small ring? Don't need it!
10. Confession-Thought I needed the Di2 auto shifting but with all these gears, I just need the right lever for any adjustments which with the assist is nominal.
11. Hey, a kick stand no less!! And it is in the rear so no reverse pedal block!
12. A key unlocks the battery which weights in about 8 pounds but the key has sharp edges which inserts into a small hole on the step through bar. I'll need to smooth off the edges.
13. The Domane even came with a bell...bong or bing bing to alert pedestrians.
14. The owners manual comes in English, French and Spanish but with Pedal three blocks away why complicate my life.

Oh, today my cycling buddies Idema, Marquardt, and Riggs did a short ride but on the way home near WMU's Stadium in Eco in highest gear got 27 mph. Just had to laugh!!!

More learning coming up. Keep pedaling.



I'M IN LOVE WITH A FAT BOY

By Rick Whaley

No, this isn't some sort of lurid tale, ripped from the pages of *Pedal Press Confessions*. I merely wish to sing (or more accurately, type) the praises of one of my bicycles, a type of bicycle that has been sadly and mostly overlooked whenever gravel road bicycle riding is discussed.

I suspect that I'm not the only one to have noticed the enormous increase in the popularity of gravel road bike riding and the bicycles that have been designed to cater to this interest. Gravel bikes have become the new "It Girl" of bicycles, the trendiest "+1" when defining the number of bicycles that a person with "n" bicycles should have. And I have no quarrel with gravel bikes. However, I don't own one and I don't think I need one, because I've already got a gravel/dirt road riding bike. My Specialized Fatboy fat tire bike.

I should note that when I bought my fat tire bike 3 years ago, I didn't buy it to ride on gravel roads. I didn't even buy it to ride on snow or sand, the soft riding surfaces for which fat tire bikes were designed. I bought mine for riding on roads that weren't completely plowed, allowing me to occasionally break free of the tyranny of the indoor stationary trainer on a winter day. And it has served this purpose well. However, I soon discovered that it was also a lot of fun to take it on gravel roads, on dirt roads, and on the Kal-Haven Trail.

"And just how is it fun?" you might ask, if you were so inclined to converse with *Pedal Press* articles. And even if you might not ask, I'll tell you why, anyway.

But first, let's bring up the elephant in the room, or more appropriately, the three-toed sloth in the room. A person does not ride a fat tire bike to see how fast he or she can go. This is because fat tires are (be prepared to be surprised) fat, tires that look and weigh like road bike tires after a steady diet of cream filled donuts and eggnog. The gearing is also quite low; my bike has a single 28 tooth chainring and a 10 speed cassette ranging from 12 to 42 teeth. I find it hard to ride 20 mph on level ground even briefly and most of the time, I'm riding between 11 and 12 mph. So, if speed is your reason for bicycle ride being, a fat tire bike is probably not the bicycle for you. But there are other items to consider.

For example, a fat tire bike is quite stable. When I'm riding my fat tire bike, I'm impervious to debris on the road. I figure that those manly 4.6 inch wide tires can handle just about everything, squashing twigs and sticks unlucky enough to be in its path. And with my hands placed widely apart on my handlebars in a manly sort of way, my back erect, my head imperiously turning from side to side to view the domain of my cycling fiefdom, I'm not riding



In South Haven, after riding from Bloomington (with the author) on the Kal-Haven Trail last October.

Continues on p. 10

2020 Bike Mileage Almanac— Paul Selden

The idea behind KBC's Annual Mileage Almanac is to share the joy of bicycling that these numbers represent -- with others -- regardless of the number of miles you ride or how and where you ride them. Thanks to all who submitted reports, and thanks for inspiring everyone to get out there and ride -- no matter how much!

<u>Miles</u>	<u>Member</u>		
1,423	Henry Apotheker	8,500	Tom Noverr
4,023	Shaun Ballard	3,700	Terry O'Connor
4,009	Stacie Ballard	9,300	Kevin Oostema
1,065	Marie Billen	4,173	Bill Price
1,125	Mike Boersma	1,860	Jacinda Roedel
2,061	Thom Brennan	2,642	Kathy Rubino
3,104	Randy Button	1,045	Paul Selden
5,021	Tory Cane	5,162	Pam Sotherland
10,260	Jamie Clark	7,535	Timothy A. Stewart, Jr.
4,085	Charlie Eaton	6,887	Tim A. Stewart, Sr.
2,600	Kitty Flatland	6,375	Greg Strader
4,025	Terry Florian	3,300	Bill Surna
2,600	Daniel Goldberger	3,935	Gordon Vader
16,450	Paul Guimond	9,489	Mike VanderMeulen
9,010	Paul Guthrie	1,425	Valerie Vuk
8,499	Barb Hart	4,824	Paul Wells
9,070	John Hart	5,737	Rick Whaley
6,610	Jillian Howland		
1,580	Jeanette Holm		
5,100	Mike Hughes		
4,288	Terry Hutchins		
4,400	John Idema		
9,140	Jim Kindle		
9,600	Doug Kirk		
6,021	Martin Knop		
4,060	John Knowlton		
1,728	Julie Knowlton		
5,687	Mike Krischer		

*Noted by rider as approximate. Based on member reports received in time for submission to the March Pedal Press; may be approximate or based on an estimate. Not responsible for errors/ omissions, etc. Please send any corrections/ updates to the Pedal Press Editor at editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org.

Keep track of your mileage for next year's KBC Member Mileage Almanac!

Throughout 2021 please submit reports of rides that may be of interest to others to editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org. Trips, adventures, long rides, race results, an experience on a trail, a pleasant outing with the family...in short, share anything you think may help our members get a feeling for the diverse and wonderful bicycling experiences out there.

Editor's Letter: Antidote to The Waiting

The waiting is the hardest part
Every day you see one more card
You take it on faith, you take it to the heart
The waiting is the hardest part*

By now you have probably heard once or twice that there is a pandemic ravaging the globe. And that most in-person events, including group cycling, has been forbidden or frowned upon. The first stay home order in Michigan came on March 16, 2020 which was one day after day light savings time started. Careful readers of the Pedal Press also know that KBC starts group rides on the Monday following the start of daylight savings time. There are many horrible milestones associated with COVID and I don't want to minimize the loss of life, health, income, and freedom that many people have experienced. I know that missing out on group riding events is an exceedingly small potato in a field of humungous tubers.

And yet, for me – and probably you – riding bikes with other people is a non-trivial part of our lives. Being outside with friends adds meaning to our days. Pushing ourselves to go a bit faster, harder, longer gives us a sense of really living . . . or maybe that's too cliché. The group ride provides social connection, physical challenge and logistical problem solving which add brio and dash to each of Helios' crossings. So, as we approach the anniversary of this sad milestone I am waiting. And as Tom Petty sang, waiting is hard.

Waiting is hard because we want it to be over. At this time last year, I was still training for a big summer on the bike. I was going to scratch my long-time itch to test my legs against the Italian Dolomites in July. My coach encouraged me to keep training because he was confident that we would be back to normal by June. So as we now approach the thirteenth month of social distancing, mask wearing, and restricted group events we're still waiting.

With the blessing, I have discovered a partial antidote to the hardest part of waiting. The best tool for me to get through the waiting is planning for what comes next. I know, I know, we are supposed to live in the present, and not wish our lives away. Call me unenlightened, not very Zen, or whatever. Looking at maps, building routes, and visiting big ride websites gets me through the hardest part.

My calendar is full of rides, destinations and events. Last year I rode the cancelled ODRAM on the day it was supposed to take place. There were five other cyclists on the start line at the pre-dawn starting time. Four of them were clearly riding together but there was one guy standing by himself. I asked if he was waiting for someone, which he wasn't. I asked if he was ready to start, which he was. We rode the whole



Antidote, cont.

147 miles together. I had planned to do that ride, and in the months prior, ODRAM reached into my present existence and pulled me toward it. Building routes to be ridden and adding events to the calendar are like anchors I use to winch myself through the waiting. We can be like Petty sitting at the big draw poker table of life, waiting to get one more card every day. Or we can grab the whole darn deck. What are you waiting for?

* I had originally selected a high-minded Carl Sandburg quote for this piece. However, I decided to go with southern fried rock instead. From The Waiting, by Tom Petty.

Fatboy, cont.

slowly. I'm riding stately. Just as when I'm pulverizing a pothole pocked steep hill on Mount Zion Road traveling 4.5 mph and not even in my lowest gear. I am indeed riding on the king of the bicycle kingdom.

But this king of bicycles is still a humble bicycle, majestic, yet approachable, because of its unique and dare-we-say even goofy appearance. There have been times when little kids have laughed and shouted "Big tires!" as I've ridden by. On other occasions, kids have grinned and pointed at my bike while telling their parents to look at my bike, too. When was the last time your bike brought joy to a child's heart?

Also, suppose your spouse, significant other, friend, etc. also enjoys cycling, but finds it hard to keep up with you. You can always buy a tandem bicycle, but you can also hop on that great speed equalizer, a fat tire bike, when riding with your partner. Problem solved.

And when the urge for speed finally becomes too strong to resist, even this urge can be sated (at least to some extent) on a fat tire bike by participating in gravel road bicycle races, such as Melting Mann or Barry-Roubaix. These races have fat tire divisions, albeit without any age group categories, so this late 60-something rider has found himself competing with 30-something whippersnappers; those riders in turn competing with 20-something whippersnappers. But I just think of it as one big happy fat tire bicycle racing family. I also find it quite satisfying while waiting at the starting line with a large group of fat tire bicycle racers to be with those of my kind and to hear the steady loud hum of wide knobby tires on pavement after the race has begun, like a swarm of two-wheeled bumblebees.

So, for me, buying a fat tire bike has definitely been a wise investment. I've ridden on roads that I otherwise would have never explored, such as the intersection of two gravel roads where 4 counties meet. (Oh, how I enjoyed riding in a circle, while exclaiming "Kalamazoo! Van Buren! Cass! Saint Joseph!" Because this guy knows how to have a good time.) I even do road rides on my fat tire bike occasionally just for a change of pace, both figuratively and literally.

I'm sure that gravel bikes are fun. But if you're in the market for one of them, why not test a fat tire bike, too? It could be a life changing experience.