

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER – DOUG KIRK****On the Brighter Side**

People are getting vaccinated! People are getting outside and riding! People are buying E-bikes! Wait...what? One thing at a time.

As I write this, Michigan's Covid numbers are headed the wrong way, but lots of people are getting vaccinated and lots of other people are theoretically protected as a result of having contracted the virus. Things are opening up a bit.

KBC is sticking with our plan to promote smaller group rides without designated ride leaders for now, but we are cautiously optimistic we will be able to host "Real" group rides before too many more weeks pass.

It's three more months till Kaltour, and Mike Krischer and the Kaltour Committee have decided to go ahead with Kaltour on Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars! Bike Camp is a tougher nut to crack. It generally starts in early May—several weeks ahead of Kaltour. And there's a lot more interpersonal contact at Bike Camp than at a ride. Hands-on stuff. Lots more up-close stuff. As this is written, Bike Camp is still on hold. But stay tuned.

On a completely different subject, the Executive Committee has talked about how e-bikes might integrate into group rides. Having done a couple of hundred miles on e-bikes myself and also having ridden my regular bike with three different e-bike riders, I understand the issue is not how e-bikes fit into group rides. The issue is how e-bike riders fit into group rides.

For e-bikes to work safely and happily in group rides, e-bike riders have to understand group riding dynamics and the capabilities of the riders in the group. This means that for an e-bike rider to participate safely in group rides, he or she needs to know how to ride in a group and have a good deal of practice doing so—on a regular bike.

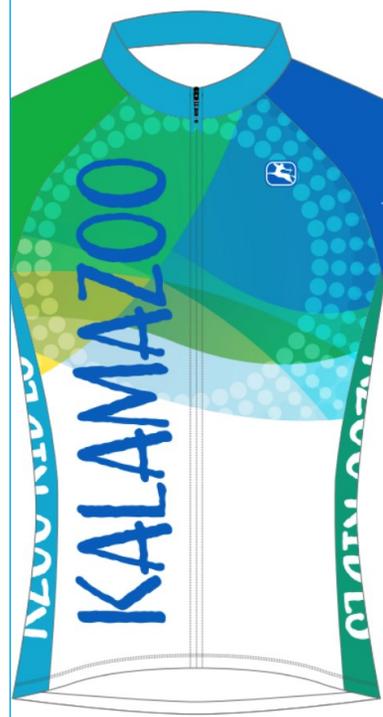
Then the e-bike rider needs to use the bike's power carefully to keep a pace the mere mortals on the ride can maintain. The object is not to show off—we all know e-bikes can drop us in a heartbeat. The object is to enhance the ride for the pedal-only people and still have fun. This means looking back frequently to see how other riders are doing and adjusting your speed accordingly.

Really, an e-bike rider's job in a group is the same as a domestique's job in a bike race—do everything you can to make your team leader's ride as pleasant as possible. Sit on the front and ride a pace that the group can manage. Pay special attention not to ride away on hills.

If someone gets dropped, use that extra power to tow him or her back, and to make everyone else's ride a better ride. And for sure, make your first few e-bike rides solo rides until you feel comfortable and in control.

So, go ride your bike. See you out there!

Email: [president@kalamazooBicycleClub.org](mailto:president@kalamazooBicycleClub.org)

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**Save the Date:  
Kaltour will be June  
27!**

editor@kalamazooBicycle  
Club.org

# KBC Meeting Notes—March 9, 2021

## Finance report as of 3/9/21

**Pam Sotherland**

**PREVIOUS BALANCE  
CASH (PNC Checking +  
PayPal) AC-  
COUNTS: \$13,355**

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash In): \$475

Monthly EXPENSES: \$225

**CURRENT BALANCE  
CASH ACCOUNTS:  
\$13,605**

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

Discretionary Expenses: \$500

Education Fund: \$6,180

**TOTAL ENCUMBERED  
EXPENSES: \$1,000**

KRVT Pledge: \$1,000

**AVAILABLE FREE BAL-  
ANCE: \$5,925**

Current Cash minus Designated Funds minus Encumbered Expenses

**CERTIFICATE OF DE-  
POSIT: \$6189**

**The next KBC meeting will be Tuesday, April 13 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Meeting ID: 857 8791 7257; Passcode: 537880**

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REPORTS:

**Treasurer:** Pam Sotherland

Presented the treasurers report and a brief update about plans to look further into moving KBC funds from the current CD into another entity which could gain more interest.

### DIRECTORS REPORTS:

**Education Chair:** Paul Selden presented on behalf of Paul Wells

235 of the free five-foot passing signs have been spoken for from various neighborhood associations, parks departments, and bike shops. It will be great to see many more signs out around Kalamazoo County.

**Communications Director:** Jillian Howland

Working on promotional materials and social media content. If you have any photos you want shared, send to Jillian at [communications@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:communications@kalamazoobicycleclub.org). Jillian has been fielding questions about rides this summer and a suggestion was made to be proactive and post the current stance of the KBC Executive Committee regarding official group rides. Time Trials can happen and more information will come out about that soon.

**KalTour Director:** Mike Krischer

Meeting next week (Tuesday, March 16 at 7:00pm). There are a lot of options and nothing has been decided yet.

### NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Ride 'Round the Town:** John Knowlton

A way to engage riders, 5-6 places have been identified throughout the summer to host community group rides. Community members, riders, volunteers, etc. will be there and any KBC member is encouraged to attend and participate. Jillian Howland is assisting with advertisements, more information coming.

**Smart Cycling Classes:** Renee Mitchell

The City of Portage will be holding 2 Smart Cycling classes (Saturday, May 8, 2021 and Saturday, June 12, 2021). Additionally, there are great resources/tools that can be found to learn more for anyone who is interested at [learn.bikeleague.org](http://learn.bikeleague.org).

**Ride Leader Sanctioning:** Doug Kirk

Check out meeting attendance and the notes listed under those in attendance for the March 9, 2021 meeting. Anyone interested in becoming a sanctioned ride leader needs to complete both the Ride Leader Sanctioning Registration form and attend a KBC meeting.

# KBC Meeting Notes Cont.

You can attend the April 13 KBC meeting via zoom. 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).

March Membership meeting Attendees:	Jillian Howland	*Ed Maring	*Lindsay South
*Shaun Ballard	*Chris Howard	*David Mitchell	*Bill Surna
*Stacie Ballard	*Henrik Holm	Renee Mitchell	*Monica Tory
*Marshall Beachler	David Jones	*Terry O'Connor	*Michael Vandever
Mike Boersma	*Tom Keizer	*Bill Price	*Rick Whaley
Clark Bennett	*Doug Kirk	*Paul Rehkopf	Mark Zettel
*Carolyn Douglass	Kathy Kirk	*David Riggs	
*Jonathan Evans	Mike Krischer	*Paul Selden	
*Paul Guimond	*Julie Knowlton	*Pam Sotherland	
	*John Knowlton	Paul Sotherland	

\*Indicates Sanctioned Ride Leader – as of March 9, 2021 the individuals listed with an asterisk next to their name completed **both** the Ride Leader Registration form **and** attended the KBC meeting to be appointed by the KBC Executive Committee.

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

Please check for your name here!

Total Memberships: 257 – Total Individuals: 461

**New or Renewed Members:** Chris Bol; Michael Brus; Anthony Callaway; Michael Connelly; Dan Frazier; Harold Gleaves; Gary Hammock; Susan Hubert; Caleb Kamphuis; Linda Kozacki & Family; Frank Machnik & Family; Ed Micalizzi; Jason Nicolai; Roger Pozeznik; Ben Shields; Stephen Sutherland; Michael Waldrop; Margaret & Dave Wochaski

**April Expiring Members:** Brett Dodds; Terry Florian; Andrea & Don Fore; Matt Hollander; Ann LaPoint & Family; Katie Little; Andrea Melchiori; Sharon Powell; Pam Stinchcomb; Darren Timmeney & Family

## The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual W Ride Is Coming Someday (But Not This Month)

Erring on the side of caution, the 21<sup>st</sup> What Used Be Annual W Ride is being postponed. The Ride Leader is optimistic, however, that it can be held later this year. But until then, there's nothing stopping you from taking an informal bicycling stroll of your own on W Avenue. (Twice!) But, be forewarned, if you decide to embark upon this journey without a map, don't come cryin' (via phone) to the RL to come rescue you, if you wind up in Indianapolis or Traverse City. (According to the compendium of all knowledge — Google — there is also a W Avenue in Brooklyn, New York, but it doesn't go through Fulton! - Ed.)

**Rick Whaley, W Ride Leader**

## Help New Bicyclists 'Know What They Don't Know'!

We all probably have family and friends who are renewing their interest in bicycling or discovering the joy of biking for the first time. Riding your bicycle on roadways, and even trails, can be very intimidating when one doesn't know the rules of the road or even proper etiquette when riding on a trail. As member of KBC and avid cyclist, I believe it is our responsibility to help those that are new or renewing their interest in bicycling to 'know what they don't know'. Renee Mitchell, LAB League Certified Instructor



### League of American Bicyclists (LAB) New Online Learning Center

[LAB Learning: Home \(bikeleague.org\)](http://bikeleague.org)

The online Smart Cycling program teaches bicycling skills and builds confidence to ride through several short videos and downloadable resources.

Participants will learn riding tips, bike parts and maintenance, riding in traffic, the rules of the road, shifting gears and more.

There are quizzes at the end of each section to reinforce participants understanding of the materials and a Smart Cycling Exam for those seeking certifications.

Coming soon... Bicycle Friendly Driver program. So excited for this!



### League of Michigan Bicyclists (LMB) Education Initiatives

[Education : League of Michigan Bicyclists \(lmb.org\)](http://lmb.org)

LMB works to develop safe behaviors for all roadway users.

They provide a downloadable version of the 'What every Michigan Bicyclist Must Know' book as well as the 'What Every *Young* Michigan Bicyclist Must Know' book. Priceless additions to any Michigan bicyclists collection.

LMB has developed videos to empower Michigan cyclists and drivers to use the roadway in a safe way.

How well do you know the rules of the road?

LMB has developed a Bike Safety Quiz to test your knowledge. Check it out!

## KALTOUR 2021: SAVE THE DATE – JUNE 27, 2021

**By Mike Krisher, KalTour Chair**

Sunday June 27, 2021 will be the date for the 29th annual Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's summer tour (KalTour). Ride distances will range from 10 to 100 miles. The gravel routes first offered in 2019 will return. Riders will be able to follow marked and mapped routes and will be supported by food stops along the way.

Details including starting location and the availability of online registration will be released soon.

### **City of Portage Offering Smart Cycling Courses**

The City of Portage will be offering two opportunities to take the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) Smart Cycling course this Spring. The Smart Cycling course is a great opportunity to learn how to ride your bike efficiently and safely and great for those new to bicycling or renewing their interest in the sport! In this course participants will learn and practice the skills needed to ride with confidence and competence under a variety of roadway, climate, and traffic conditions.

This curriculum is certified by the League of American Bicyclists and taught across the USA by League Certified Instructors with extensive riding and teaching experience. The course incorporates classroom learning, parking lot maneuvering drills and a group ride.

#### **What you will learn:**

- Basic bike fit, inspection, and maintenance
- How to ride safely and legally in traffic
- How to improve your riding skills
- How to avoid crashes. . .And much, much more.

This course will include an online self-guided component to be completed prior to the Saturday hands-on session. It takes about 3 hours to complete.

Bring your bike, helmet, water bottle and be sure to dress for the weather (layers, gloves, ear warmers, etc...). Attendees will not be able to participate without a helmet.

This program is designed for participants 18 and over. Class size is limited. To register, visit [Parks & Recreation | Portage, MI](#) and click on the purple Recreation Activities & Facility Rentals button.

When: Saturday, May 8 or June 12 , 9am-3pm

Where: Portage City Hall (7900 S. Westnedge Avenue)

Cost: \$50/Participant, per Class

Other: Online component to be completed prior to Saturday hands-on session

Registration deadlines: April 25th for May 8th course and June 5th for June 12th course.

**Renee Mitchell**

# RIDE OUR ROUTES

**By Paul Sotherland**

**What?** Ride Our Routes 2021 (ROR21) is a Summertime FUN-RAISER that invites you to get outside on your bike and pedal through the cities, villages, and townships in and around Kalamazoo County. Together, individually and in small groups, we will traverse at least 1<sup>st</sup> Street to 48<sup>th</sup> Street and A Avenue to Z Avenue and many trails across our beautiful county.

**What's more?** You can get a t-shirt to commemorate your ROR21 accomplishment. How?

Ride at least a representative sample of the approximately 500 miles of ROR21 routes shown on the map sometime during June-September 2021.

Record your rides on a Ride Route Record Sheet – available on paper at local bike shops or as a pdf file at this link ([RRRSpdf](#)) that you can print on paper.

Submit your paper Ride Route Record Sheet at local bike shops by September 30<sup>th</sup> and you will be eligible to purchase a t-shirt (for \$10) commemorating your ride.

NOTE: Participants younger than 16 years old, who successfully complete ROR21 and submit an entry form will earn a FREE t-shirt.

T-shirts will have a map of ROR21 routes (see image below) printed on the front and logos of ROR21 sponsors printed on the back.

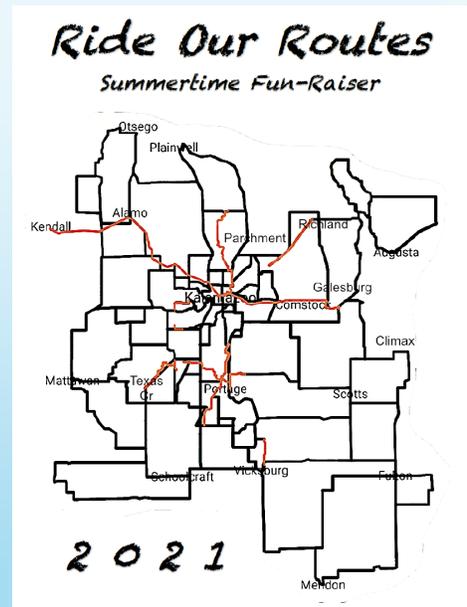
**When?** Summer (June-September) of 2021.

**Who?** YOU, your friends, and everyone else with a bicycle and a sense of adventure.

**Where?** The map for routes in ROR21, available in Google MyMaps via this link [ROR21Map](#), guides bicyclists along many popular routes in Kalamazoo County. Routes include trails (e.g. Kalamazoo River Valley Trail - KRVT), existing bike routes (e.g. Lovers Lane in Portage and East Main St. in Kalamazoo Township), and proposed bike routes (e.g. 11<sup>th</sup> St. in Oshtemo Township and Riverview Drive in the City of Parchment and Cooper Township), as well as routes used regularly by the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club (KBC).

Suggested route loops of different lengths (5-7, 10-12, 15-21 miles) are available on the KBC Ride with GPS (RwGPS) club account at this link <https://ridewithgps.com/events/144468-ride-our-routes-2021>. This “Ride Our Routes 2021” event in RwGPS will be available for use between June 1<sup>st</sup> until September 30<sup>th</sup>. You will have full club privileges to view and download routes from this event during that time. If you want to continue enjoying club privileges for all routes in the KBC library in RwGPS after September 30<sup>th</sup>, you must be a member of KBC. See the KBC “Membership” page (<https://www.kalamazobicycleclub.org/members/>) to join KBC.

**Bicycling Rally?** Imagine ROR21 as a summer-long bicycling rally challenging you to find clever and efficient ways to ride your bike on ROR21 routes throughout Kalamazoo County (and a bit beyond) and then completely fill in the Ride Route Record Sheet.





## Free Safe Passing Yard Signs - Want To Help?

This year many community partners are teaming up to distribute these **"Give Them 5 - Keep Them Alive" Signs**. Bike Friendly Kalamazoo is helping KBC set up a distribution network; we want to get the signs in front of as many motorists as possible. If you want to help, here are a few ways.

First, if you are in charge of a venue or run events and want to help distribute them to the public, please go to <https://forms.gle/qZvh4v3Yqee5Gd2x5> and let us know. We are working with BFK to find local "distribution outlets," and already have a number of neighborhood associations, city departments, bike shops, private businesses, etc., signed up. We can use more -- as many as possible.

Second, KBC will try to bring the signs to our rides, KalTour, etc. Bike Friendly Kalamazoo will be doing the same at its Fall Bike Celebration. Take one while supplies last -- show your support of bicycling and display them with pride!

Third, spread the word. If you have connections with others who may be able to help, please let them know by sharing this article, emailing your cycling friends and neighbors!

FAQs

**Q: Where can I get the signs?**

**A: At many local bike shops.** Thanks to Pedal Bicycle, W Michigan Ave. in Kalamazoo, Pedal Bicycles, Romence Rd in Portage, Zoo City Cycles, S Westnedge north of Kilgore, and KZoo Swift, S. Westnedge at Forest St. for volunteering to distribute them right away! Other locations will be announced.

**Q: Can the signs go up even in areas that don't have a 5-foot safe passing ordinance?**

**A; Yes.** These signs encourage the public to allow 5 feet -- about 1/2 a lane -- of passing distance between motorists and bicyclists. They do not declare anything about local ordinances (many of which mandate 5 feet) or Michigan law (which currently mandates a minimum of three feet).

**Q: Can they be posted anywhere?**

**A: Yes, within limits.** They can be posted wherever they are not prohibited. Generally, as long as they are on private property and outside of the public right of way, they are okay. If you are unsure just check with your local jurisdiction. We suggest putting them where road users can see them, but far enough back from the road so they are not prone as much theft or vandalism.

**Q: If mine "disappears" or wears out, may I get a replacement?**

**A: Yes.** As long as supplies last, you can have more than one. Replacing ones that are stolen or vandalized shows our commitment to public safety.

**Q: Is it worth it to display it if I live on a road that's not very busy and not many people will see it?**

**A: Absolutely.** Think of all your neighbors, letter carriers and delivery drivers who may see it. If even one of them gives a cyclist more room on the road, it will be worth it.

**Q: Is it worth it to display one if I live on a busy road where drivers may go by too fast to see it?**

**A: Definitely.** Those may be the very roads where drivers need to see it the most. Some may see it during the really busy times when traffic is backed up and moving more slowly. When traffic is lighter, sight lines for seeing them are longer.

**Q: How long with this program be running?**

**A: As long as we can, and can justify the budget.** Your membership \$, donations and grants are making this possible.

The more safe passing signs that are out there and the more people who see them, the more the message should sink in. You really can make a difference. So are the local bike shops and locations that are distributing them, so please thank them as you see best.



## 2021 KBC Jersey!

Yes, folks, the club has a new jersey design. Giordana will be making a club fit jersey for us in men's and women's sizes from XXS - 5XL, and club members will be able to place and pay for their orders through Giordana's online store. Ordering information and a link to the online store will be emailed to all KBC members right before the store opens. Ordering information will also be available in the members-only area of the KBC website.

Online store hours:  
12:00pm April 19<sup>th</sup> to 12:00pm April 26<sup>th</sup>.

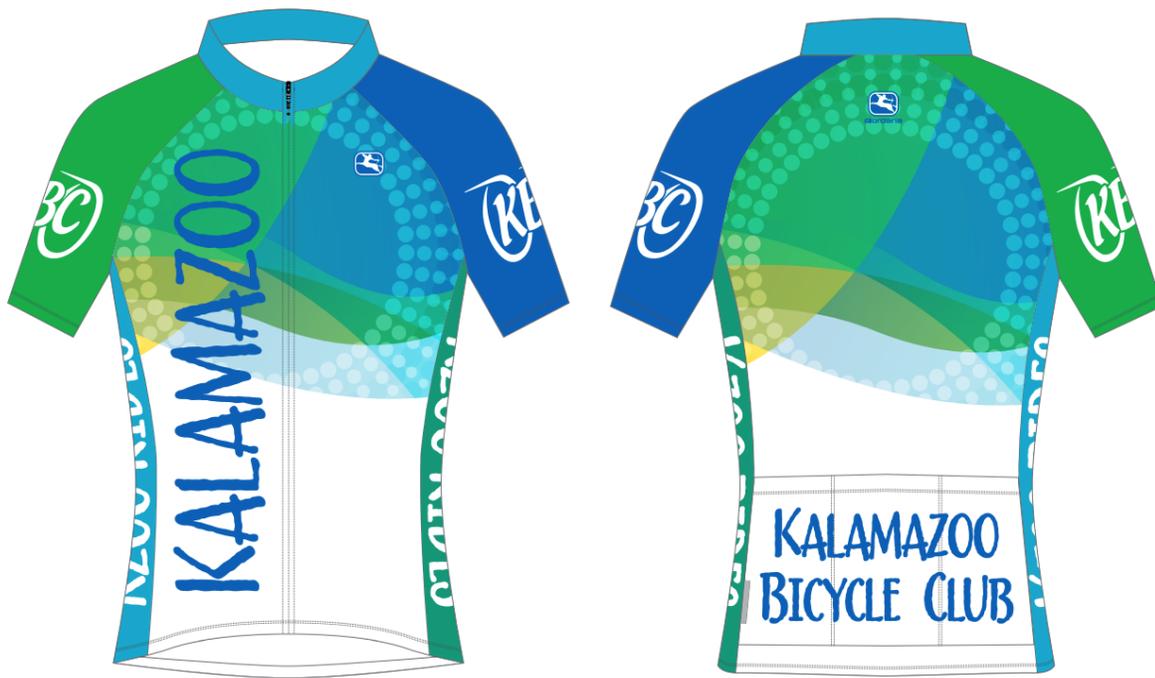
The store will be open for **one week** starting April 19<sup>th</sup> at noon. We're doing our best to let members know about the jersey. Please spread the word! [I have marked my calendar! -Ed.]

Cost of the jersey is \$62.10.

The jerseys will be delivered around June 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>. To save on shipping costs, jerseys will be delivered in bulk. With the weather warming up in June, we'll be able to have our June club meeting outdoors which will be a perfect time for members to pick up their jerseys. There will also be other dates and times available for picking up your jersey if you can't make it to the meeting.

Thanks to Clark Bennett for inspiring us to create a new jersey. We hope you like the new design by local graphic artist Carolyn Fink and look forward to seeing the new jersey out on the road!

**Kathy Kirk**



## Editor's Letter: Remembering our Friends

The month of March is often a study in contrasts. Indeed, the old saw says that March comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb. This may have been first recorded in Thomas Fuller's 1732 Gnomologia: Adagies and Proverbs; Wise Sentences and Witty Sayings, Ancient and Modern, Foreign and British. I know some of you think *I* write long sentences, but I could only dream of composing such a title!

March is mostly still winter, but two-thirds of the way through the calendar tells us that spring has come. The days get longer, and long enough that we apparently need to steal an hour of sleep so that we can save some of the morning to use in the evening. For cyclists, this usually means that we get to start group rides after months off the bike, or riding indoors or alone. Of course, the entire 2020 group ride season fell victim to the global pandemic. And this year group rides are informal, at least while we are still grappling with vaccines and variants.

There is tension for cyclists all over the northern hemisphere between our longing to connect with friends and the need to remain safely distanced. Cyclists everywhere feel incomplete as the weather calls for group rides yet we wait for public health conditions to improve.

But for some Kalamazoo Bicycle Club members the wait won't end. This March within a week we lost two members: Bonnie Conway and Marshall Beachler. Ride Captain Gordy Vader wrote moving memories of both Bonnie and Marshall:

KBC member Bonnie Conway passed away suddenly and unexpectedly this past week. She attended KBC Bike Camp in 2017, and was a constant rider at the KBC Monday Night Ride, Tuesday Night Women's Ride, and Friday Morning Women's Ride. At the 2018 KBC Winter Recovery Party, she was awarded The Most Improved Rider for the season. She loved to ride with her KBC friends, and will always be remembered for her enthusiasm and her bubbly personality! She leaves behind her husband Mike, and a teenage son and daughter. Please remember Bonnie and her family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.

We are shocked and saddened by the passing away of another member of our KBC family. Long time KBC member Marshall Beachler died in his sleep Saturday night. He was 64 years young. Marshall Beachler was originally a triathlon competitor, and started riding with the KBC around 2013. He started out riding with the groups I lead at the KBC Monday and Wednesday Night Rides, then later moved on to the next faster groups. Marshall and I rode many miles together - the Holland Hundred, Pumpkinvine Ride, Apple Cider Century, and the late fall Colorburst Tour, to name a few, plus countless Monday and Wednesday Night Rides and weekend rides. He was a very competent co-ride leader and sweeper, and also helped out as a ride leader/sweeper at KBC's Bike Camp. He was a kind and gentle man, always willing to help. With his wife Charlotte, he operated a beekeeping business. They traveled the midwest doing lectures and demonstrations for amateur beekeepers, and loaned out their hives to area farmers. Riding for hours and hours with Marshall, I learned all there was to know about bees and beekeeping! He loved to ride with his KBC cycling friends - we will all miss him, he left us much too early... Please remember Marshall, his wife Charlotte, and his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.



Bonnie is in the pink jersey, second from left. Photo: Julie Knowlton. Marshall photo from John Olbrot.

