

**PRESIDENT’S LETTER – DOUG KIRK**

I truly hope you have been getting outside to ride your bike! ‘Tis the season to leave Zwift alone and enjoy the great outdoors. Spring is truly a wonderful thing. May I suggest that as you watch the countryside become more and more verdant this month you pause to be awestruck at all that green popping out? At the lavender smell of the lilacs on Crosstown Parkway? At the fragile, fleeting beauty of the trillium along the Kal-Haven Trail and Hart Drive? At the brilliant yellow of the forsythias in so many people’s yards?

Maybe even more wonderful than all the leaves and the flowers, take some time to reflect on the out-and-out miracles of germination...of all those seeds sprouting and all those bees and flowers pollinating. It’s just amazing!

Okay, enough wonderment for now. What about KBC club rides? Here’s where we’re at: Around the time of the April meeting, PedalPress Editor John Knowlton made an excellent point. Exactly how will KBC decide when to restart club rides? Rather than the Executive Committee mulling it over...and over...John thought we ought to have some real, objective basis for our decision. He had a good point.

The EC, particularly Pam Sotherland and Paul Guimond put some real thought into this. And they talked to knowledgeable people, including Patricia Randall (Mayor of Portage and avid cyclist) and Tim Krone (Owner of Pedal). With Covid-19 tests in Kalamazoo County currently running around 15% positive (hopefully less by the time you read this), any kind of large group setting is a bad idea. When the positivity rate drops to somewhere around 3 – 5%, it should be okay to resume club rides. So we have a ways to go.

This is NOT to say that you shouldn’t ride your bike in smaller groups composed of people you know and trust. We at KBC continue to believe this is just fine. But keep the group size under 8 – 10 riders. Split your group in half if you need to. And especially pay attention to social distancing before and after rides.

I saw a news item today that quoted an epidemiologist who said that Covid-19 is now largely preventable as long as people get vaccinated and social distance from one another. The vast majority of the people testing positive haven’t been vaccinated. Please do your part, and for sure have fun riding your bike!

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



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# KBC Meeting Notes—April 13, 2021

**Finance report as of  
04/12/21**

**Pam Sotherland**

**PREVIOUS BALANCE  
CASH (PNC Checking +  
PayPal) AC-  
COUNTS: \$13,605**

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash  
In): \$2,350

Monthly EXPENSES: \$1,515

**CURRENT BALANCE  
CASH ACCOUNTS:  
\$14,620**

**TOTAL DESIGNATED  
FUNDS: \$6,714**

Discretionary Expenses:  
\$500

Education Fund: \$5,008

ROR21: \$1,205

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

KRVT Pledge: \$1,000

**AVAILABLE FREE BAL-  
ANCE: \$6,906**

Current Cash minus Designated Funds minus Encumbered Expenses

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

**The next KBC meeting will be Tuesday,  
May 11 at 7:00 p.m. at Texas Drive Park,  
safely distanced**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REPORTS:**

**President:** Doug Kirk

The Executive Committee met about a suggestion from the February meeting to create a new position on the Board of Directors, Director of Ride with GPS. John Olbrot has accepted this position and will be working to get the word out about this app that members have access to and may not know its full potential.

**Treasurer:** Pam Sotherland

Presented the treasurers report and discussed a comparison from last year to this year at this time. She discovered the membership dues and income is up and expenses are down.

**DIRECTORS REPORTS:**

**Education Chair:** Paul Wells

Received more 5-foot passing signs and has been distributing widely (kudos to Paul Selden for helping to distribute the signs!) as these need to be as visible as possible. If anyone is interested, visit the local bike shops to get your sign today! Additionally, Bike Camp is still on hold for now and the committee is hopeful but unsure at the moment if it will happen.

**Communications Director:** Stacie Ballard shared on behalf of Jillian Howland

Working on promotional materials and social media content. If you have any photos you want shared, send the photo and caption to Jillian at [communications@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:communications@kalamazoobicycleclub.org). If anyone needs any promotional materials or artwork created let Jillian know sooner rather than later.

**KalTour Director:** Mike Krischer

The committee met on March 16 and determined KalTour would be happening on Sunday, June 27, 2021. Schoolcraft High School will be the location with port-a-johns in the parking lot. The routes are set. The food is the biggest question to figure out and what COVID precautions need to be taken. Mike will be scheduling a KalTour meeting before the end of April. Anyone interested in volunteering should reach out to Mike at [kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org).

# KBC Meeting Notes Cont.

## **Race Team Delegate:** Tim Stewart

The team is using a new communication tool, Discord, and doing a great job connecting with teammates even though organized rides are paused. A new race team kit is in the works. There are races happening with limited numbers. Dan Frazier is putting on the Dirty Donut on June 6, 2021. More information coming soon! Time Trials will be happening beginning May 18 at Pavilion Township Hall. Registration starts at 6:00pm, first rider out is at 6:30pm. It is a flat 10 mile route.

## **Grants & Awards Committee Chair:** Valerie Litznerski

This committee has been working on streamlining and revising the rules and timelines for the grants and awards to happen throughout the year on a timely basis as needed as opposed to only recognizing awards at the end of the year. The committee also revised forms for the grant applications process and follow up process.

## **NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **KBC Jerseys:** Kathy Kirk

Orders may be placed between April 19-26, 2021 at noon. Sizes range from XXS-5XL and club members will be able to order directly through Giordana's online store. The cost of the jersey is \$62.10. Members will be emailed a link to the online store before it opens and the link will also be available on the member portion of the KBC website. Thanks to Clark Bennett and Kathy Kirk for coordinating the jerseys with a local graphic artist Carolyn Fink.

### **Texas Drive Park Office Building Proposal:** Rick Whaley

Changes are being proposed to Texas Drive Park (location for Monday KBC rides – pre-COVID era) in order to build an office building for the Township Hall. For more information about the potential changes or if are interested in voicing your opinion visit this site: <http://www.texastownship.org/township-hall-project/>

### **Amendment to Item #7 of ByLaws:** Doug Kirk

In February, there was a proposed amendment to adapt Item #7 of the ByLaws. When the board members discussed the proposed amendment, they agreed on the following amendment to be voted on during the KBC general meeting:

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

The members in attendance voted in favor to pass this amendment.

### **Ride Our Routes 2021 (ROR21):** Paul Sotherland

This summer there will be an opportunity to participate in Ride Our Routes 2021. There is about 500 miles of routes across the Kalamazoo County and if participants complete this they can get a t-shirt. Check out more information and register on the KBC website <https://www.kalamazooobicycleclub.org/events/ride-our-routes-2021/>

### **Group Rides:** Doug Kirk

How will it be determined when club rides can happen? Discussions were had regarding comfort levels, making decisions, what others clubs are currently doing, etc. The Executive committee is concerned primarily about the ride leaders and putting ride leaders in tough situations. When will a decision be made? A suggestion was made to maybe discussing matters with the county health department. No decisions were made during the meeting.

**ATTENDANCE:** \*Shaun Ballard, \*Stacie Ballard, \*Mike Boersma, \*Clark Bennett, \*Thomas Dewhirst, \*Paul Guimond, \*John Idema, \*David Jones, \*Dan Kallewaard, \*Doug Kirk, \*Kathy Kirk, \*Mike Krischer, \*John Knowlton, Valerie Litznerski, \*Renee Mitchell, \*John Olbrot, \*Teri Olbrot, \*Bill Price, \*Paul Rehkopf, \*Paul Selden, \*Pam Sotherland, \*Paul Sotherland, \*Steve Stapleton, \*Tim Stewart, \*Bill Surna, Paul Wells, \*Rick Whaley

*\*Indicates Sanctioned Ride Leader – as of April 13, 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.*

*Any member who completes the registration form after April 13, 2021 may attend the next KBC meeting to become sanctioned.*

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

**Please check for your name here!**

Total Memberships: 270 — Total Individuals: 480

**New or Renewed Members:** Collin Bates; Max Beffel; Adam Bradley; Bruce Caple; Jamie Clark & Family; Laura Doherty; Philip Fisher; Terry Florian; Andrea & Don Fore; Sherrie Glas; Katie Grabiec; Andrew Graham; Rick & Faith Huyser; Tana Jackson & Family; David Jones & Leslie Mars; Michelle Karpinski; Ann LaPoint & Family; Katie Little; Wes McGee; Roger Poorman; Scott Powers; Paul Stevens; Pam Stinchcomb; Bill & Sharon Surna; Darren Timmeney & Family; Ann Weltevreden-Penix; Carolyn Wyllie; Nancy Wyman; Jason Young; Eric Zahrai

**May Expiring Members:** Collin Greenop; Kate Hamann & Family; Charles Henderson; Steven Phelps; Shannon & Adam Potgiesser; Paul Rehkoft; Becky Scott; Flint Wiles; Joe Williams; Cindy Workman

## **Education Committee Update—Paul Wells, chair**

As we roll into spring, and warmer weather, we are all getting out there on the road, and we need to remind everyone that we are there, and we are vulnerable. Driving a car or truck requires being responsible for a potential deadly weapon. I remind myself of that every time I drive. Some say that bicycles are dangerous. I disagree! I don't fear for my life from other cyclists. Sure, I could be seriously injured by crashing or falling off. But I do fear for my life, and yours, because motor vehicles are dangerous. Bicycles don't kill cyclists, cars and trucks do. Unsafe, unpredictable, and impulsive cyclists can get killed, but it's still the vehicle that hits them that kills them. So the responsibility of all drivers is to not hit any cyclist, or pedestrian, or any other vulnerable road user. We don't hear folks describe pedestrians as "dangerous." Yet, many more pedestrians than cyclists are killed by drivers. I think as cyclists we should all dispute the "bicycles are dangerous" notion by responding to that comment, "no, motor vehicles are what's dangerous."

Our KBC resident Licensed Certified Instructor, Renee Mitchell sent me this link to the League of Michigan Bicyclist's Bicycle Friendly Driver program: [Bicycle Friendly Driver : League of Michigan Bicyclists \(lmb.org\)](http://BicycleFriendlyDriver:LeagueofMichiganBicyclists(lmb.org)) It's a good educational program for drivers and cyclists as well. Take a look. The more 5' yard signs we can get placed anywhere drivers can see them, the more we remind folks to be aware and patient, don't pass into oncoming traffic, and give plenty of space for cyclists. "Three feet is not enough" has become my mantra, and it can be yours too.

Of course, I'm reminding you to get 5' signs placed. You can get them at Pedal Bicycles North and South, Zoo City Cycles, and Kzoo Swift. Drop some cash in the donation jar, so we can order more signs (they cost us \$5.07 each). The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will be displaying 5' yard signs at all locations for two weeks in May, coinciding with Kalamazoo Bike Week. Thanks to Paul Guimond for making that connection. We just placed signs for pickup at City of Kalamazoo Parks office, 251 Mills St, Barry Dickinson Insurance, 8125 Valleywood Lane, Portage, Edison Neighborhood Assoc., Vine Neighborhood Assoc., and Oshtemo Twp. Hall, on W. Main St. More distribution locations will get signs in the near future. I'll keep you posted here.

Unfortunately, KBC's 'Round the Town community bike rides are on hold until we get clear of the pandemic. John Knowlton's ride at Stone's Church was scheduled for Thursday, May 20, but will be postponed for now. The other four "Round the Town rides might be possible, so we'll keep you posted on the KBC website, and via the KBC Facebook page.

There are still some slots open for the Smart Cycling training course at Portage City hall on Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. If it fills up, or you miss the sign-up deadline, you can sign up for the Smart Cycling session scheduled for Saturday, June 12, also at Portage City Hall. Check out Renee Mitchell's Smart Cycling sign up information elsewhere in this Pedal Press.

Thanks for promoting safe cycling!

## KALTOUR RETURNS! – JUNE 27, 2021

### By Mike Krisher, KalTour Chair

The road routes will range from a 10 mile guided family ride to the 100 mile “Around the County” Century. The other road routes are 15 miles, 31 miles, and 62 miles. The Century route does have a few hills, particularly in the northwest part of the county while the other routes are mostly flat.

Gravel routes, first offered two years ago, return with distances of 32 and 64 miles. These routes travel west and south of Schoolcraft with the longer route extending into Cass County. You don’t have to go far from Schoolcraft to find gravel roads; add a few hills, and the result is a challenging course.

As usual there will be plenty to eat at rest stops and for lunch. However, there will also be some changes. You can expect more individually wrapped and bagged items such as trail mix, bars, cookies and chips. Some staples such as peanut butter and watermelon may not return.

All riders must have masks, and mask wearing will be required when not riding or seated for eating. Also, riders must follow signs and verbal directions from volunteers when obtaining food and drink. Of course all riders will wear helmets and follow the rules of the road.

Registration is open now on the KalTour page of the KBC web site. Just follow this link:

(ctrl+click) [KalTour 2021 is back! Sunday, June 27th. - Kalamazoo Bicycle Club](#)

KalTour can also use your help! Please let me know if you would like to help out with road painting, shopping for supplies, or working on the day of the ride at registration or one of the sag stops. My email is [kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org)

### 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**

## EXCLUSIVE PP INTERVIEW: ROAD COMMISSIONERS

Pedal Press editor John Knowlton interviewed Road Commission of Kalamazoo County members Thom Brennan and Mike Boersema on April 13, 2021. You may recognize those names, as both Commissioners are KBC members and have served in various leadership capacities. As many KBC members ride on roads in Kalamazoo County, in this interview I sought to learn more about the decision-making process and priorities on the RCKC.

As I did, you may wonder how one becomes a member of the Road Commission. Mike shared that Road commissioners are appointed by the Kalamazoo County Board for staggered 6 year terms. When there is an opening, citizens may apply. Applicants are interviewed by the County Commissioners and then voted onto the RCKC. Both Mike and Thom have been on the



RCKC for about three years and they are required to attend a lot of meetings. There are 26 regular meetings each year, plus each Road Commissioner is appointed to liaise with three townships, and there are meetings with the press, concerned citizens, road tours and special meetings. Thom has recently become the chair of the Road Commission and Mike is involved in a project to replace the current RC complex and buildings.

The road commissioners' responsibilities include hiring and managing the managing director of the RC. They approve disbursements, purchases and contracts. In addition, they set the policy of the RC. As an example, the RC recently adopted a traffic calming policy. The RC department's core function is to maintain primary and local public roadways. Primary roads include Gull Road and Sprinkle Road and are funded 100% by the RC. Local road maintenance is funded by at 50/50 split between the RC and the townships. Funding for the RC comes from state and federal funds, each of which have different rules or stipulations on how the funds can be spent. RCKC's budget is between \$30 and \$35 million per years. Most of this money ultimately comes from gas tax and vehicle registrations. Townships' share of matching funds come from property taxes and special millages.

PP Editor shared a conversation I had with a former Road Commissioner who said, "We build roads for cars, not bikes." I asked Mike and Thom how the RCKC manages tension between motorized and non-motorized road use. Thom was clear that for every project there is a complete streets plan and the RC completes an assessment for non-motorized access. An example is the recently completed project on Drake Road (jointly funded with Oshtemo Twp.). This project included a non-motorized pathway alongside the road. As roads are rebuilt in the county, wider 3 foot shoulders are often included to provide for non-motorized road use. The RCKC also does engineering work for non-motorized projects such as the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail. The RC is required to spend at least 1% of its budget for non-motorized access, but the RCKC actually spends about 5.8% of its budget in this way.

## ROAD COMMISSION INTERVIEW, CONT.

Cyclists have a role in helping to maintain a safe and effective road system in the county. Mike and Thom both suggested getting involved in local government where road building and other infrastructure decisions are made. They suggest showing up to meetings and being involved. Ask questions of officials such as why the shoulders aren't being widened. Making public statements often helps commissioners overcome objections to non-motorized use improvements. Finally, cyclists can help by adopting safe riding practices.

When you see Mike and Thom, I encourage you to thank them for their service to the county and to cyclists. They spend a LOT of time in meetings on behalf of the community.

### **Rota-Kiwan is now Woollam Preserve**

The Boy Scouts recently sold a 212 acre camp to Kalamazoo County. This future park is being named the Arthur E. and Mildred H.

Woollam Preserve. PP Editor John Knowlton has been attending virtual meetings of the Kalamazoo County Parks Commission to follow progress and advocate for bicycle infrastructure development on the new parkland. The County is concerned about the lack of supervision on the adjacent City-owned 741 acre Al Sabo Land Preserve and the "leakage" of pedestrians and cyclists onto the Preserve. As such, they have set up fencing to warn and prevent trespassing. I anticipate some inter-governmental finger pointing about land management techniques.

So, why do I bore you with these municipal minutiae? The Parks Commission is expected to create a citizen's input panel as the County begins to envision how the Preserve might be developed. It turns out that the donor has asked that the site be placed in the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and there are limits on how many square feet of impermeable surface can be built. The upshot is that there won't be tennis courts or the like. As you have probably already discerned, mountain biking trails (and pump tracks and skills courses) are permeable. I will continue to advocate strongly for the construction of MTB cycling infrastructure. When the time comes, I may seek input from SWMM-BA, KBC, and others on what a skills course and pump track might look like.

You may also expect that the county will also be seeking donations to fund the purchase, and development (which currently looks like fencing) of the property.

This county project has been cited by Texas Township officials in an attempt to mollify Texas Township residents about the loss of the ball field on the proposed site of the new Township Hall. However, the County Parks Commission has explicitly stated that there will not be ball fields or equivalent infrastructure developed at the Preserve.

Parks commission meetings are usually the third Thursday of each month at 3:00 p.m. Details at <https://www.kalcounty.com/parks/ag-min.htm>



## Ride with GPS—A great benefit of KBC Membership! - John Olbrot

As the newly appointed KBC director for the Ride With GPS club account I thought I'd introduce myself and fill you in on some of the value you can get as a KBC member.



Ride with GPS ([www.ridewithgps.com](http://www.ridewithgps.com)) is a cycling specific web and mobile app providing great route planning and navigation tools enabling you to go on better rides more often with less hassle. With RWGPS you can access detailed routes with customized maps and cue sheets then navigate using optional turn-by-turn voice navigation on a smartphone, or other GPS device or, you can create your own route.

RWGPS is such a great tool that I sometimes marvel how trips were planned when only paper maps were available. I remember having to make so many stops to check paper maps while getting through someplace like Ann Arbor that it just drove me nuts. In any case, it's a valuable app and worth the time it takes to learn. If you get stuck, feel free to reach out to me at [routesandrides@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:routesandrides@kalamazoobicycleclub.org).

I certainly don't know everything about RWGPS, especially since it's constantly being improved but, I've used it for a number of years and I'm happy to help. When I don't know how to do something I've gone to RWGPS support who have been very helpful. As an additional note; the tutorials on RWGPS are excellent.

If you haven't already signed up you can go to <https://www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/members/ride-with-gps/> to start the process. If you have any questions after checking the web site feel free to contact me, John Olbrot, at [routesandrides@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:routesandrides@kalamazoobicycleclub.org).

## Inaugural Gilmore Gravel Grand Prix — Jason Young

Will occur **May 22nd** at the Gilmore Car Museum in Hickory Corners. Both the gravel road courses and host venue are world-class, and I'm excited about the opportunity to create a staple event for the local bike community.

We have just updated the routes and have 3 distances to offer. A 23-mile short course, a 63-mile course, and an 83-mile course (achieved by looping the short course after completing the long course). The Gran Fondo categories include a free entry into the Gilmore Car Museum and lunch. Also, we will have an outdoor bar set up for adult beverages, and the Museum has a frozen custard stand for your sweet tooth.

Please let me know if you have any questions, and forward my information to members who may have questions. I'll place links to the website and BikeReg below and forward any new information as it becomes available.

<https://www.bikereg.com/gilmore-gravel-gp>

<https://www.gilmoregravelgrandprix.com/>



## Kalamazoo Bike Week Kicks Off Saturday, May 8, 2021

Paul Selden, KBW 2121 Chair / KBC Member

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Kalamazoo (Area) Bike Week starts Saturday May 8 and wraps up on Saturday, May 15. Warming weather and the urge to bust a move as COVID restrictions ease up may encourage more bicycling than usual--including families and children. Cyclists are riding the roads as a way to maintain fitness and stay healthy. Training for sanctioned events is also picking up.

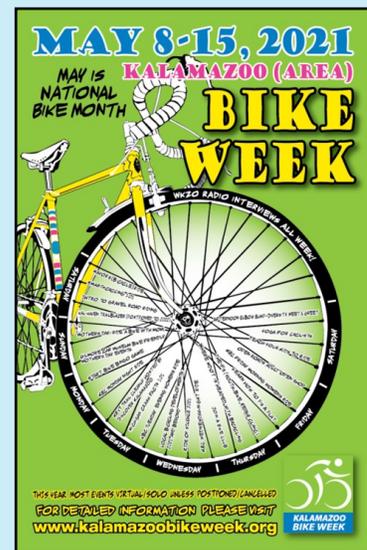
This year many events and featured Bike Week activities will be virtual, conducted solo or with family members and trusted circles, mindful of safe social distancing, if not postponed or canceled. With all this in mind, this year Bike Week is using the opportunity to underscore the need for motorists and bicyclists alike to drive and bike safely. As promoted by KBC, this means for everyone to follow the rules of the road, asking motorists to give us at least five feet (half a lane) of safe passing distance, reminding cyclists to stay visible (more of us are using daytime running lights) and for motorists and cyclists to use extra caution at intersections.

Bike Week events and activities will still be listed on its calendar at [www.kalamazoobikeweek.org](http://www.kalamazoobikeweek.org) to make the community aware of the many opportunities to bike throughout a more normal year. An Announcements page will list where to get free safe passing yard signs and places to pick up bike safety tips and maps while supplies last at a number of municipalities as they open their doors to the public. It also suggests a way to participate in the spirit of the Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive and take advantage of Morris Rose Auto Parts' offer to accept -- at no charge -- those beat up bike tires and inner tubes filled with holes piling up in the 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
- Lessons on how to get bikes ready to ride and fix a flat
- Teaching kids to ride safely
- Local bicycling developments
- Special webinars
- Ride of Silence Tribute Ride
- Dirt & gravel road riding
- Public safety messaging
- Yoga For Cyclists
- Diversity & bicycling leaders meet & greet
- 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 still 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 by practicing the Golden Rule.

## 2021 DIRTY DONUT RACE DISCOUNT!!!!

The 2021 Dirty Donut Race is **June 6, 2021** at the Martin High School, in Martin, Michigan. Some of you are already registered because you deferred your entry from the canceled 2020 race. If you are registered already, you should have gotten an email already to confirm this.

For those of you who have not yet entered, I want to offer my awesome fellow KBC members a discount for the race. When you register, use the following **15% OFF** promo code at registration – **kalamazoobc21**

So far, early races in Michigan have “entry caps” and every one that I am aware of has sold out well before race day because of covid related field limits. We will also have a field limit this year. **WE ALREADY HAVE OVER 280 PEOPLE REGISTERED FOR THE RACE**, so please don't delay if you want to race this year. We are fairly sure we will be sold out before race day.

We also have started a Facebook promotion with “Fred”, our 1954 International Pickup emblazoned with the Dirty Donut Race logo. If you see Fred anywhere between now and May 23, stop and take a picture with him and post it on social media, and you may win a **FREE** entry in the 2021 Dirty Donut Race. You may have seen him a few days ago at the Kal Haven Trailhead. Over the next few weeks, he will be visiting places in the Kalamazoo area. Much like finding Waldo, you may see Fred at a popular riding location, a local bike shop, or even at one of our local watering holes.



On May 24 we will announce the winner of the raffle on our web site and Facebook page. If you have already registered for the race, you can still participate. If you win the raffle, we will refund you at packet pickup.

Here is what you have to do to be registered for the drawing

Like the *Dirty Donut Race* Facebook page.

Post and share your photo with Fred on Facebook

Tag your photo with the *Dirty Donut Race* Facebook page.

Take a screenshot of your post and email it, along with your name and phone number to [dirtydonutracer@gmail.com](mailto:dirtydonutracer@gmail.com)

If you're interested in volunteering for the race, we have a spot for you. We have openings for registration as well as corner workers on the day of the race. If interested please send us an email at [dirtydonutracer@gmail.com](mailto:dirtydonutracer@gmail.com) and we will send you a list of what jobs are available.

For a bunch more information, please visit us at [dirtydonutracer.com](http://dirtydonutracer.com)

Dan Frazier, race director

## Editor's Letter: WV Adventure Ride (land of the wrong bike)

"Don't believe everything you read."

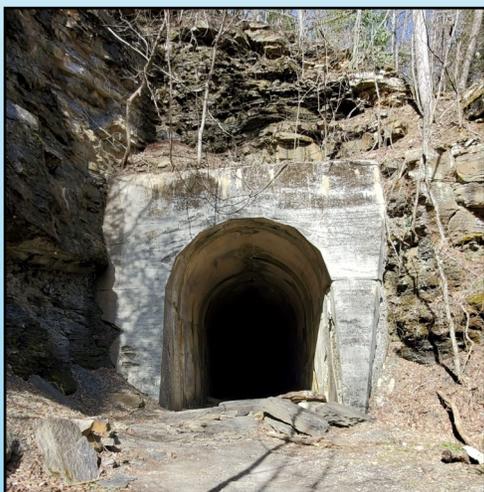
"Caveat Emptor (let the buyer beware)"

"Don't judge a book by its cover"

There are so many aphorisms like this that I should have known better. Next time (maybe) I'll remember to look a little deeper than the title of a ride.

On Ride with GPS this one was called "Fayetteville Road/Rail-Trail Route." I knew it would be a challenge: 47 miles, 5,000 feet of elevation gain, including a 3-mile 850 foot climb from the New river to the top of its gorge. Nevertheless, I wasn't ready for *this!*

The ride started pleasantly with curvy, hilly paved and gently unpaved roads. Then I got to an area called "Confluence Resort" and by the map I could tell there would be a rail trail along the Meadow River. My first clue that WV rail trails are different than Michigan rail trails was that I couldn't find the route down to the river. (By the way, I keep typing "trials" as in *adversity, affliction, anguish* instead of "trail.") It turned out to be the little two-track marked "Private trail: No public access." After about 50 yards the two-track turned and pointed downward toward the river. For about a half mile this "track" was actually a creek. Pointy rocks, big drops and flowing water. I was on my fully rigid gravel bike with smooth supple René Hearse 38 mm tires. My son subscribes to Motortrend TV and watches a show called "Dirt Every Day."



Creepy Tunnel



West Virginia "Rail Trail"

The hosts frequently build off-road vehicles and push them through terrain that is increasingly difficult until the vehicles fail. This track looked like the terminal point in a Dirt Every Day episode. I walked and carried my bike down much of this earth-scar, consoling myself with the belief that a nice smooth rail trail would await at the bottom.

As it turns out, the Meadow River is amazingly wild and gorgeous. Literally. Down in the bottom of a gorge. A poem I once read described West Virginia as "painfully beautiful." That fits. And what West Virginians call a rail trail, Michiganders call a rock garden. My poor tires were

set up tubeless and the sealant valiantly rushed to the growing number of sidewall cuts. At this point in the ride, I realized that it might be a long day. I followed the river for about 6 miles. That 6 miles included an abandoned rail tunnel with multiple roof falls, dripping water and high levels of creepiness. And 6 miles took a little more than an hour. After leaving the river the road slowly improved until I was back on tarmac. It climbed steadily for another 8 miles

## Editor's Letter: WV Adventure Ride (land of the wrong bike)

until passing what may be the world's smallest post office in Edmond, WV. A few pleasant miles later the route ended at a cell phone tower overlooking the New River gorge. It took me three attempts carrying my bike down a steep slope, over broken rocks and slippery mud to find the "trail." It was one hand on the bike (holding it cyclocross style over my shoulder) and one hand on the rocks and roots. After a few hundred yards the trail widened slightly into an overgrown fire road. This ultimately led back to pavement. After 42 miles and 4 ½ hours I decided to skip the drop into New River gorge and the inevitable 30-minute climb back out.

A slow learner, I decided that my route the next day couldn't be worse, so I set off. The first 4 miles were very slippery, steep, rooty, often off-camber single track. And I was still on my rigid gravel bike with 38 mm file-tread tires. The singletrack ended and I had about 100 yards of pavement before descending 500 feet into the New River gorge. But this wasn't a bike trail. It was a very steep hiking path with ladders to manage some of the cliff walls. Back to carrying the bike! Literally along and around waterfalls. But I was once again reassured that there was a nice smooth railbed at the bottom (remember, I am a slow learner). This was formerly a railroad used to haul coal out of the Kaymoor mine. How bad could it be? There were bear tracks in the mud. Well, After 2 ½ hours and 12 miles I bailed out because my family needed to head back north. My son met me with the van at Cunnard Baptist church.

I wanted an adventure and these routes delivered. But my poor tires! There were at least 20 cuts and abrasions of the gum sidewalls. I removed the tires and had to toss them out. The rim tape also needed to be replaced. That wasn't the fault of the trail or the tires, rather poor equipment selection on my part. I will be back – with a full suspension mountain bike for the "rail trails!"



Wet road at the top of the Confluence descent



The "trail" follows the dark rocks at the base of the waterfall