

**PRESIDENT’S LETTER – DOUG KIRK**

**NO AUGUST KBC MEETING, AND ANOTHER CHANCE TO ORDER KBC JERSEYS**

There will be no KBC meeting in August. Several of us on the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors will be on vacation or otherwise indisposed. Besides, in the words of a song I recall from (way too) many years ago, “No time for work, just time for play—it’s summertime!” (Editor’s note: the song is Summertime, Summertime recorded by the Jamies and released in 1958.)

But we do plan on meeting as usual the second Tuesday in September (the 14<sup>th</sup>) at 7:00, and barring further Covid-related issues, we plan to return to Shakespeare’s Pub starting at that meeting. Shakespeare’s is a great location with plenty of space, seating, and refreshments. I cordially invite you to join us.

KBC has arranged with Giordana, our jersey supplier, to re-open the online store for folks who missed the previous opportunity to order jerseys or were not happy with the size they received. As before the store will be open **ONE WEEK ONLY**, August 24 – 30. The link to the store will be sent to all club members via Mailchimp—the same group email service that sends you the link to this newsletter every month, so keep an eye out for it.

It has been truly heartwarming to watch the turnouts for club rides growing every week. We had around 80 people at the Monday Night Ride the week after July 4<sup>th</sup>, and the 20-ish miles-per-hour ride Kathy & I lead has been so big we’ve had to split it in half a couple of times. Lots of strong riders! Lots of women at the women’s rides, and a number of brand new club members coming out. Wonderful to see things working their way back to normal.

Email: [president@kalamazoo bicycle club.org](mailto:president@kalamazoo bicycle club.org)



**HIGHLIGHTS**

- President’s letter .....1
- Meeting notes.....2-3
- W Ride Report!.....4
- KalTour Report.....5
- AMBUCS Partnership....6
- Ghostbike.....6
- Alone but not lonely...7-9
- KBC History, Mission and 50 years question.....9

**As KBC resumes group riding activities, please send photos of your rides to:**

editor@kalamazooBicycle Club.org

# KBC Meeting Notes—July 13, 2021

## Finance report as of 07/13/21

**Pam Sotherland**

**PREVIOUS BALANCE  
CASH (PNC Checking +  
PayPal) AC-  
COUNTS: \$15,379**

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash  
In): \$4,895

Monthly EXPENS-  
ES: **\$3,159**

**CURRENT BALANCE  
CASH ACCOUNTS:  
\$17,116**

**TOTAL DESIGNATED  
FUNDS: \$6,554**

Discretionary Expens-  
es: **\$500**

Education Fund: **\$5,008**

ROR21: **\$1,045**

**AVAILABLE FREE BAL-  
ANCE: \$10,561**

Current Cash minus Desig-  
nated Funds minus Encum-  
bered Expenses

**CERTIFICATE OF DE-  
POSIT: \$6,189**

**The next KBC meeting will be Tuesday,  
September 14 at 7:00 p.m. at Shake-  
speare's Pub, 241 E Kalamazoo Ave. Up the  
steps, to the back and left.**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REPORTS:**

**President:** Doug Kirk

Monday, July 12, 2021 Doug Kirk and Pam Sotherland placed a Ghost Bike on the corner of KL and Drake Road for **David Conley** who passed away recently while he was riding his bike to work. (See photo in this issue of Pedal Press. –Ed.)

The August meeting may be canceled, stay tuned. A question was raised about whether the **KBC Anniversary Ride** was occurring this year. Bike Friendly Kalamazoo is hosting the Fall Bike Celebration on September 17-19, therefore it was discussed the KBC Anniversary Ride could take place Saturday, **September 25, 2021**.

**Vice President:** Paul Guimond

Thanks to Trevor Howland for taking photos and bringing the drone to take pictures of KBC during the most recent Monday Night Ride.

**Treasurer:** Pam Sotherland

Presented the treasurers report. Kudos to Mike Krischer for his remarkable work with **KalTour**, he does a fabulous job with organization. KBC also received a thank you note from the leadership of the Parks Department of Kalamazoo County for the \$1,000 donation for the **Kalamazoo River Valley Trail**.

### **DIRECTORS REPORTS:**

**Kaltour Director:** Mike Krischer

115 pre-registered + 21 day of registrations = 136 total registered. Because of the weather, the most popular routes were the 30 & 62 mile routes. Lunch took place at Schoolcraft High School after the ride, which was a change, and seemed to go over well. Thanks to all the volunteers! Mike presented Donna Whitcomb with the AMBUCS contribution. Donna shared that AMBUCS has placed 10 kids on bikes since August and has six more in the works. Donna will send John Knowlton information on

# KBC Meeting Notes Cont.

history of working with KBC, Paul Guimond will send pictures, and John will put an article together for the Pedal Press. (See in this issue of Pedal Press. –Ed.) Lastly, thanks to Paul Guimond for taking the remaining sandwiches from KalTour to tent city and Mike for donating other remaining food to the Gospel Mission.

## **Education Chair:** Paul Wells

League Certified Instructor (LCI) training is happening August 13-15, 2021. Bill Surna, Jennifer Johnson, and Paul Wells plan to attend this training and are earning the \$400 scholarships through KBC which comes from the **Chain Gang Memorial donation**. Bike Friendly Kalamazoo wants to thank KBC for their involvement with the smart cycling and LCI training program.

**‘Round the Town** is happening one Thursday each month at 6pm on the following dates at the following locations this summer:

July 15, Gull Lake High School

August 12, Schrier Park – preregistration is necessary (no cost is associated)

September 9, Lewis Park

This event is an outreach program that is a short, community ride that is family-oriented and KBC members are encouraged to attend and volunteer. 10 riders showed up to ride the first ‘Round the Town event at Open Roads on June 17.

## **NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **The W Ride:** Rick Whaley

Six people rode and it was a great ride!

### **Woollam Nature Preserve:** John Knowlton

John plans to attend the meeting in August to continue promoting bicycle infrastructure. Camp Rota-Kiwan was recently purchased by Kalamazoo County and the name has changed to Woollam Nature Preserve (212 acres). (Parks Commission of Kalamazoo County has cancelled both their July and August meetings. –Ed)

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

All jerseys have been distributed. There will be another order in the last week of August or early September. An idea was brought up to have a KBC jersey size chart with current members and what sizes work best for them. Jillian will put together a Facebook post about jersey ordering and sizing.

Meeting adjourned 7:51PM

<b>ATTENDANCE:</b>	Paul Guimond	Mike Krischer	Paul Wells
Shaun Ballard	Jillian Howland	John Knowlton	Rick Whaley
Stacie Ballard	Marc Irwin	Pam Sotherland	Donna Whitcomb
Clark Bennett	Doug Kirk	Paul Sotherland	
Thom Brennan	Kathy Kirk	Bill Surna	

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

[Please check for your name here!](#)

Total Memberships: 297 — Total Individuals: 513

**New or Renewed Members:** Heather Boersma; Paul Bushnell; Jeff Daniels; Rick Freiman; Vince Groppi; Daryl & Amber Hutson; Mostyn Lombard; Sharon Powell; Venkata Turlapati; Julie & Dave Weighman; Adam Young;

**August Expiring Members:** Cheryl Butler; Kyle Douglass; Kristopher Ouvry; Matt Sides; Matthew VanMiddlesworth;

### 21st Almost Annual W Avenue Ride Report—Rick Whaley

An unusually warm temperature greeted this year's W Ride riders, which could have been due to the fact that the W Ride was held in July rather than in April. There were 6 riders this year, Rick Huyser, Dan Kallewaard, Susan Hubert, Herman Evenboer, Bill Surna (wearing a W jersey for the occasion), and Marty. There could have been a 7<sup>th</sup>, but the W Ride Leader managed to get sick just before the W Ride for the second W Ride in a row! And so, the W Ride Leader dragged himself out of his house in order to hand out this year's Q-Tip W Ride Maps and Gatorade, orange being this year's flavor of choice. Then, after seeing the riders off, the RL headed back home for some Tour de France watching and sleep.



Rick, Susan, Herman, Dan, Marty, Bill

And let the record state that there were no pictures taken of the RL napping on his couch.

Rick Whaley, W Ride (Again Sort-of) Leader

Photos courtesy of Rick Huyser



Susan, Herman, Dan, Marty and Bill

## KAL TOUR REPORT — MICHAEL KRISCHER

Despite consistency in routes, food, and volunteer support each KalTour manages to be unique. KalTour 2021 was probably more unique than most. (The previous statement is a logical impossibility, but nevertheless is still true). Probably the most remarkable aspect of KT 2021 was that it happened at all. The Trail Blazer, One Helluva Ride, Northwest Tour, and the LMB Shoreline Tour were all cancelled many months ago.

Due to the pandemic arrangements had to be made much later than usual: Permission to start at Schoolcraft High School was not secured until April after I suggested that we could use portable toilets instead of access to inside restrooms. Managing food and food service was a series of decisions. We were able to use our usual water supplier, Gordon Water, who as usual donated the five gallon jugs and dispensers for all of the rest stops. However, Gatorade powder turned out to be a rare commodity; I bought the last two cans at one WalMart, and couldn't find any at two Meijer stores.

Luck, both good and bad also played a part. The easing of restrictions on outdoor gatherings and mask wearing could not have been predicted before the vaccine rollout. Even so, we had previously made changes to simplify food service by using prepackaged and premade bagged items and eliminating "hands-on" items such as watermelon. The unlucky aspect of KalTour 2021 was, of course, the weather. Inquiries and Facebook posts about the possibility of cancellation swirled around on the Friday and Saturday before the ride. Even so the weather on KalTour Sunday was almost completely dry. (Riders struggling against the wind on their return to Schoolcraft might not have considered themselves quite so lucky.)

The ride itself was a mixture of achievements and disappointments. Three riders attempted the century, and two John Hart and Savvna Pava finished. Rick Whaley and his fat tires was one of two riders who completed the long gravel route. The vast majority of riders were content with the 62 and 31 mile routes that brought them to Scots Mill County Park sag stop. The disappointments were mostly related to the low day-of-ride registration and the diminished presence of less experienced cyclists. Unfortunately the family ride did not have any takers. We had about 110 riders and at least an additional 25 who registered, but did not ride.

The AMBUCS service organization both supported the ride and provided the single most memorable moment of the ride, the presentation of an Amtryke, an adaptive bicycle. The recipient was present along with his family, and he was able to take advantage of the parking lot location to put his new bicycle to immediate use. Although he is nonverbal, no one will forget his smile as he rode around the parking area.

KalTour could not have happened without the following volunteers:

KBC volunteers: Clark Bennett, Mike Boersma, Paul Guimond, Barb Hart, Marc Irwin, Tom Keizer, Jim Kindle, Doug Kirk, Kathy Kirk, Ann La Point, Terry O'Connor, Doc Rehkopf, Paul Selden, and Nancy Wyman

AMBUCS volunteers: Jack Bellware, Brenda Eberstein, Craig Eberstein, Rick Remynse, Teresa Post, Fred Sammons, Barb Rider, Sarah Rider, Denise Turner, and Donna Whitcomb.



## AMBUCS AND KBC: A 14 YEAR PARTNERSHIP

Kalamazoo Valley AMBUCS is a local organization dedicated to creating mobility and independence for people with disabilities. One of their primary tools is providing therapeutic tricycles to individuals who are unable to operate a traditional bike. AMBUCS has a number of fundraisers to gather the resources to pay for the AmTrykes they distribute.

Since 2009 AMBUCS has provided volunteers to staff SAG stops for KBC's annual KalTour bicycle tour. KBC initially donated \$300 to AMBUCS in exchange for their support. In 2013 KBC board voted to donate half of the KalTour proceeds after expenses. The best year was 2018 when KBC contributed \$2,052. In 2020 KalTour was cancelled due to COVID. Some KBC members made individual contributions to AMBUCS anyway. Over that time period the total amount donated from KBC to AMBUCS is \$13,192. This amount of money has helped purchase approximately 80 AmTrykes.

At the July 13 KBC membership meeting, KV AMBUCS president, Donna Whitcomb, accepted this year's contribution of \$636.



Donna Whitcomb, Michael Krischer and Doug Kirk

You can learn more about AMBUCS at: <https://www.facebook.com/Kazoo-Valley-Ambucs->

### Ghostbike in memory of David Conley

KBC President and webmaster, Doug and Kathy Kirk placed a Ghost bike at KL Avenue and Drake Road in Kalamazoo. This bike is to honor the memory of David Conley who was killed while riding a bicycle.

Mlive.com ran a story about the memorial which can be read at <https://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/2021/07/ghost-bike-memorial-placed-at-site-were-cyclist-was-killed-near-kalamazoo.html>.



## Alone But Not Lonely - Editor's Letter

Group bike rides are like a rolling party. Sometimes they are slow and social. Social rides are a great chance to catch up with friends, learn something new about them, meet new people and hear about rides and events you might want to do sometime. In my experience cyclists tend not to talk about politics much on the bike, which is a relief. One guy I ride with brings up obscure rock and roll trivia, which is a perfect discussion topic on a sunny summer afternoon. (Which is the only Beatles song on which Paul McCartney doesn't play?)

Other group rides are friskier. The bunch want to push the pace, attack the hills and contend for the stop-ahead sign sprints. These quick rides are fun in a different way. Not much British Invasion minutiae, but the spirit of competition is exciting and pushing your heart rate near threshold is a thrill. And a twist on the fast competitive rides is the fast cooperative ride. This is where the group works together, often in a paceline to bring everyone to the finish as fast as they can. The aerodynamic advantage of drafting becomes super noticeable at speeds over 20 mph. When you are riding second wheel in a fast paceline and the rider in front pulls off, keeping the pace can feel like you suddenly started up a 6% grade. I have read that the energy savings can be somewhere around 25% from an effective draft. During the year of the plague, I rode the course for the One Day Ride Across Michigan on the originally scheduled day of the event, though it had officially been cancelled. I met a guy at the start around 6:15 in the morning and we rode all 147 miles together. He had a calibrated power meter on his bike and near the end of the day did an experiment. He was pulling on a flat road near Auburn and his power meter showed 160 watts. He pulled off and started drafting behind me. I kept the speed exactly the same as when he was leading. His power meter said he was generating 120 watts. That is 25% less than when he was in front. The quicker the ride, the bigger that 25% energy savings feels in the paceline and that only comes with a fast group working together.

Despite my love of the group ride, most of my miles are solo. Al Sabo's 6 miles of mountain bike trail begin less than a mile from our driveway. I'll often slip over there for an hour of bouncing around in the woods, usually by myself. And the location of our home is ideal for riding the bike to do errands in downtown Kalamazoo, about 10 miles away. Better yet, we can ride the rollers on R Avenue, the hills in Mattawan and Lawton or the flat roads south of Schoolcraft right from our door. And don't get me started on gravel/dirt roads we can access without a car! In fact, I can't believe that cyclists live anywhere besides my neighborhood! Partly due to this embarrassment of riding

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for cycling activities. At the top, the status bar shows 5:28 Sprint, signal strength, Wi-Fi, and 17% battery. The app header is orange with a back arrow, the word 'Activities', and a search icon. Below the header, there's a profile picture and a date/location: 'July 21, 2021 at 8:07 AM · Texas Charter Township, Michigan'. The main title is 'Ride to Camp'. Below that, there are three columns: 'Distance' (106.53 mi), 'Elev Gain' (2,441 ft), and 'Achievements' (two icons). A green banner with a checkmark says 'Congrats! You accomplished your weekly time goal.' Below the banner is a map showing the route in red, starting near Muskegon and ending near Kalamazoo. At the bottom, there are icons for thumbs up, comments, and share, and a notification that '16 gave kudos'.

route riches, I don't wait for anyone else to get my ride started. Have a couple hours? Hop on a bike! No need to drive, find a buddy, or wait for the next scheduled group ride. Just hit the road.

My family was camping in White Cloud last week starting on a Monday. In preparation for this year's ODRAM I decided to ride my bike to camp. It was 106 miles and I happened to be talking about it the week before with a young man about 20 years old. He was astounded that I would do such a thing, and by myself and was filled with wonder:

"Who will you talk to?"

Well, I will be alone, so I won't have anybody to talk to unless I stop at a restaurant or convenience store.

"What do you listen to?"

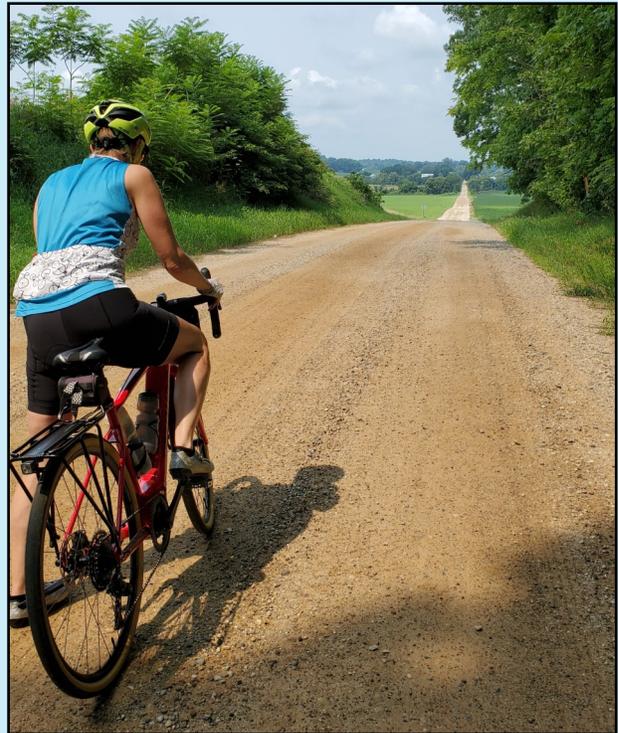
The wind, the birds, the Lord.

"I couldn't stand that. I can't be alone with my thoughts. There has to be music or at least a podcast."

A phrase popular amongst some psychologists says, "Teach your children to be comfortable alone or they will always be lonely." And loneliness seems to be a pretty big problem. If you want to bum yourself out, search the internet for Loneliness. You will find page after page of article detailing the "crisis" or "epidemic" of loneliness and its exacerbation by COVID, video games and social media. It seems all kinds of outside forces cause people to feel lonely, including "Social" media. Maybe it should be more truthfully labeled "anti-social" media?

But none of the articles I scanned showed that choosing to ride your bike alone causes loneliness. I can think of a few reasons why. First is the choice. The decision to ride your bike (or read a book, or write a play, or carve pipes out of wood) alone is an act of agency. It is something you do as a sovereign individual. An expression of your own power to guide your life. Loneliness is something that happens to you. It is imposed externally. I chose to be on my bike by myself for 6 hours while I rode to camp. (Due to heat and undertraining it turned out to be 7 hours, but I wasn't lonely, even during the extra 60 minutes!)

Second, we are never really alone. We are always surrounded by creation. There are trees to observe. There are birds to look at. There is wind to listen to. There is heat or cold or rain to feel. There is road or ground or forest or field to smell. I am much more observant of creation while riding alone than in a group. As social creatures, when we are with other people our limited powers of observation are almost entirely occupied with the people. We miss the birds, insects, mammals, amphibians, fish, rainbows, dust devils, clouds, mist and fog. Early one spring I showed up for a group ride despite cool, rainy weather. I more than half expected the group would be small. As it turned out, I was the only member of the group! Due to the wet roads I had chosen to ride my gravel bike with fenders,



so I set out on a dirt road ramble. Riding an isolated road between two fields I saw a large bird eating dinner up ahead. As I came closer the bird's white head become clearer. Sure enough, it was a bald eagle! He let me ride within cell phone camera range. Then I turned the corner and came to a large pond where I saw 18 mute swans. These birds are usually found only in pairs, and I had never seen so many sharing a small space except in a formal bird sanctuary. One bird watcher I mentioned this to suggested that it was early enough in the spring that they hadn't started nesting yet. And the final wonder of the ride was a pair of trumpeter swans. I didn't ride with any people, but I wasn't lonely at all. And I suspect that had this been a social, chatty group ride, the eagle would have flown away before we got in range and I wouldn't have noticed the swans.

Finally, alone is the primary place where we can be with ourselves and our creator for the purpose of transformation. Jesus of Nazareth spent a lot of time alone. Or at least away from other humans. He would rise early and pray, talking to and hearing from his heavenly father. I am utterly convinced that I need more change and re-direction than Jesus did. And it doesn't come from podcasts, chatting with friends, or listening to the Beatles (BTW the trivia answer is the song "She Said, She Said" from the Revolver album). It comes from being "alone" in the presence of the God of the universe.

I love riding with my friends. But the deep work, the soul craft, gets done when I choose to be alone on the bike.

*This piece was originally published on my blog "Thinking for Success" at [johnknowlton.substack.com](http://johnknowlton.substack.com). Every Wednesday I sent out mental models for being more productive, efficient, and better relationships. Weekends are for cycling, travel, song lyrics and other things that fall out of my brain.*

## **KBC History and Mission** (found on our excellent website, [kalamazoobicycleclub.org](http://kalamazoobicycleclub.org))

Established in 1971, the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club (KBC) is an organization devoted to addressing the needs of bicycle-riding enthusiasts in the Kalamazoo area by offering a variety of rides throughout the bike season, engaging in community bicycling advocacy, and educating both its members and the general public about bike safety.

From KBC's Constitution: The purpose of the Club shall be to promote bicycling; to encourage and facilitate touring, races, bicycle outings, and all forms of recreational bicycling activities; to defend and protect the rights of bicyclists; to secure a better understanding and recognition of the need for safer riding conditions; to encourage the allocation of facilities for bicycling on public lands; to cooperate with the public authorities in the observance of all traffic regulations; to provide an opportunity for members to socialize with others who have an interest in bicycling; and to recognize bicycles as vehicles used for pleasure, fitness and transportation. The Club will cooperate with other organizations with a similar goal and purpose.

**From the editor: You may have noticed that the club was founded in 1971 — that's 50 years ago. How might we acknowledge or celebrate a half-century of service to the cycling community in Kalamazoo? A half-century ride? Surely you have some good ideas! Please send them to [editor@KalamazooBicycleClub.org](mailto:editor@KalamazooBicycleClub.org).**