

**PRESIDENT’S LETTER — JOHN KNOWLTON**

**President’s message at 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

I want to say, “Thank you.” Thank you to the cyclists who gathered in Kalamazoo during the Nixon Administration and decided to set up a club. While their exact motivations are lost to time, they have left a legacy of group rides, racing, education and advocating for safe infrastructure in SW Michigan.

A lot has changed in the past 51 years. Cars have become much safer with airbags, anti-lock brakes and better stereos. Seriously. Remember 8 tracks? Bikes have a lot more gears, disc brakes and some are made out of plastic and even have motors now. But more importantly, there have been at least two major positive changes for bicycling over the past five decades:

First, there is a growing awareness among planners that roads should be safe for non-motorized users as well as automobiles. I know that some people make fretful comparisons to European cities. But Kalamazoo County is building more and more accommodations for multiple users. The Road Commission dedicates about 8% of its budget to non-motorized projects including wider shoulders when roads need to be rebuilt. KBC has written a letter of support for federal grant dollars to fund expansion of the County’s non-motorized infrastructure plan. There will be a representative of the Road Commission at the July Member meeting to share updates on that plan. The cities of Kalamazoo and Portage have implemented 5-foot passing laws and continue to integrate safe streets into their road plans. And the State of Michigan has a 3-foot passing law across all 83 counties. Each of these items was inconceivable 50 years ago.

Shared-use off-road paths have become more common, too. The Kal Haven Trail, Kalamazoo River Valley Trail, Portage Bicentennial Trail and others provide safe access to nature, culture and exercise. There are ongoing projects to add more dedicated off-road trails including about 1.6 miles of rail trail in Oshtemo. This project is called the Fruit Belt Trail and several KBC members have been active in providing input and moving the project forward.

Second, sometime in the 1980’s mountain biking was invented. This sport has developed with great equipment and amazing trail systems.



**HIGHLIGHTS**

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**Please send stories and photos of your rides to:**

editor@kalamazooBicycle  
 Club.org

Mountain biking is a way for people to fall in love with bikes, get a great workout, spend time outdoors and have virtually no contact with motor vehicles. The Kalamazoo area has a few real gems in the Maple Hill Trail, Al Sabo, Warnaar Trail in Three Rivers and Fort Custer. Kalamazoo County recently acquired about 200 acres from the former Rota-Kiwan Boy Scout camp adjacent to Al Sabo. KBC, along with SWMMBA leadership are already engaged with the County Parks Commission to encourage development of cycling infrastructure at this new Woollam Preserve. KBC has also written a letter of support for Federal grant money to fund this infrastructure development.

This message is going too long, which means there is a lot of good stuff to share about cycling in the area! Let me end with this encouragement: Fifty years ago riders formed a cycling club to ride together. Please maintain and further this goal by coming to as many club rides as you can, leading new rides, and being the best cycling friend you can! Here's to the next fifty years of bicycling in Kalamazoo!

-John Knowlton

### **Volunteer of the Year Award**

The club depends on scores of volunteers to organize rides, bike camp, parties, Kal Tour, and administrative tasks. One of the hardest jobs for the President is to choose one of these many awesome people to honor as volunteer of the year. For this year's award I have chosen our communications director, Jillian Howland. Jillian has raised the quality and frequency of messaging, keeping the club better connected. For her creative approach to design, thoughtful collaboration and witty messaging, please join me in honoring Jillian!

## **KBC Business**

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

### **Kalamazoo Bicycle Club**

**May 10, 2022**

**Shakespeare's Pub**

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Paul Guimond	Jillian Howland	Clark Bennett
Thom Brennan	Gordy Vader	Paul Wells
Marc Irwin	Paul Wells	Teri Olbrot
Charlie Grdina	Mike Krischer	Paul Selden
Kathy Kirk	Doug Kirk	Mike Boersma
Rick Whaley	John Knowlton	

**President:** John Knowlton

On behalf of KBC members, John has written letters for both the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County (RCKC) and the County Parks Commission in support of their requests for Federal relief money to help implement their non-motorized improvement plans. John has walked the property of the former Rota-Kwan camp with a Parks commissioner and Dan from SWMBA and discussed the possibility of building infrastructure in the park for bicycle use. "The Club on your behalf is building connections with County government."

#### **DIRECTORS REPORTS:**

**Communications:** Jillian Howland

Jillian has posted her first "Reel" on Instagram. Please check it out and "like" it to help spread the message. She is also taking and collecting pictures from KBC events for publication on social media.

**Membership:** Rick Whaley

Rick has recently cleaned up Mail Chimp to improve accuracy. These emails can be used to promote KBC activities, such as Kal Tour.

**Pedal Press Editor:** Charlie Grdina

Requested any suggestions for Pedal Press changes & improvements. He will look to start oral interviews with key bike club members for historical purposes in the coming month.

**Fundraising:** Mike Boersma

Please let Mike know of any fundraising opportunities you might know of.

**Ride Captain:** Gordy Vader

Attendance at the MNR is way up from last year, with a wide variety of paces represented. The WNR is also well attended for paces of 18 mph and up. Gordy would like to build a 15-16 mph ride on Wednesday night.

**Kal Tour:** Mike Krischer

Mike has a stack of flyers to take and distribute. **Road painting is scheduled for Thursday June 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM, starting at Schoolcraft High School.** The committee is looking to improve signage at Scotts Mill County Park this year to clarify routes. He and Terry Butcher will get signs printed. AMBUCS will be at Scotts Mill to help facilitate lunch. Mike will prepare a KalTour display for the Anniversary Party, giving people an opportunity to sign up as a volunteer or to attend KalTour. So far, registration is low.

**Website:** Kathy Kirk

Rick Whaley did an amazing job working on the timeline for the website. Now there is a history page where you can see a bullet-ed list of our fifty-year history. If anyone sees anything on the website that needs updating, please let Kathy know.

**Insurance Coordinator:** Doug Kirk

Doug confirmed that KalTour participants will be covered by our insurance. He also confirmed that if someone goes off ahead on a club ride, they are still covered.

**Education Chair:** Paul Wells

Pedal North has *Give them Five* signs available, but we are out of magnets. Bike Camp is going well and it's a good crew of campers. Attendance is low, only 19 participants, the lowest we've had. There have been a few minor mishaps, but no injuries.

**Grants and Awards:** (Position Vacant)

Paul Guimond proposes that in addition to helping individuals and groups outside the Club with funding for their projects, that KBC consider what we want to do with the money to benefit the cycling community by developing internal grant requests.

**Social Director:** Paul Sotherland

John Knowlton reports on behalf of Paul in his absence: The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary extravaganza is coming together. 50 mile and 50k rides will begin and end at Wind + James at 9:00 o'clock AM on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Paul Wells is organizing another ride for Bike Campers. The celebration begins at 5:30 PM at the same location. KBC will provide sandwiches and beverages and asks members to bring a dish to pass.

**Secretary:** Teri Olbrot

We will address the topic of formatting consistent and clear role descriptions for the EC and Board of Directors later in the year, when we have more time away from our bicycles, vacations, and other summer fun.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM



### KalTour Ride Groups

In the "old days," that is 2019 and earlier, ride groups were a popular aspect of KalTour. It's time to bring them back for 2022! Anyone, KBC member or not, can form or join a KalTour ride group. There are three decisions to make when forming a KalTour ride group: distance, departure time, and pace. The most popular distances for ride groups are 62 and 31 miles. Since we have a new 50 mile route this year, that would be a good candidate for a ride group also. Determining a departure times is simple: between 8:30 and 9:15 works well for the 62 mile route. The same time window would work for the 50 mile route. I always recommend that 31 mile riders start after 9:00 since lunch at the end of the ride will be available starting at 11:00. Pace at least in general terms such as fast or moderate should be mentioned in a ride group announcement. "No-drop" can also be part of the announcement if that applies to your group. The two main avenues for ride-group publicity are the KBC Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/125535317736/> and the KalTour web site.

To get group information posted to the club's web site, email me at [kaltour@kalamazooobicycleclub.org](mailto:kaltour@kalamazooobicycleclub.org). At the ride, the people working registration will let riders know when a group ride start time is approaching. It's also a good idea for the ride leaders to line up at the start about fifteen minutes ahead of time to attract last-minute arrivals.

Meanwhile there is still a lot to do and help is needed before and during KalTour. Road painting will take place on Thursday June 16 at 6 pm starting from Schoolcraft High School. If you can help, but the time doesn't work for you let me know. We may need help after that date as well. If you can help with registration, sag stops, or cleanup, on the day of KalTour please let me know. In case you have forgotten, KalTour happens on Sunday June 26 starting from Schoolcraft High School. I hope to see all of you there!

Mike Krischer  
KalTour Director

## KBC Bike Camp

Bike Camp returned after a two-year hiatus and was a success. We had a small but enthusiastic group of 17 folks from 13 to 70 who learned the rules of the road, group riding skills, and bike maintenance. Our promotion was about the same as in the past, so I'm blaming the cold, wet weather in April, and COVID reluctance as the culprits for the low turnout. We had three sessions at the Portage Senior Center, and two sessions at the Monday Night Ride. The weather was good, with no rain.

Thanks go out to the Bike Camp volunteer crew, Thom Brennan, Zolton Cohen, Renee Mitchell, Jen Johnson, and Bill Surna, who spent many hours preparing for and presenting Bike Camp. We created some great bike maintenance and shifting videos, which you can see here.

[Shifting Gears](#)

[ABC Quick Check](#)

[Bike Cleaning and Maintenance](#)

As she has for so many years, Renee Mitchell kept me as organized as she could manage, and presented, with Jen Johnson, the bike law, and rules of the road. Renee and Bill Surna conducted the Drills and Skills portion of Bike Camp. Bill Surna also created our rides from the Portage Senior Center, which included a short bit of the Portage trail system, and the bike lane network of Portage. Thom Brennan organized routes and led campers on the MNR. Gordy presented an explanation of shifting. Thanks also to Clark Bennett was there when we needed a ride leader for the short ride on the 50th Anniversary day. Clark was there in the rain, when no one came!

We also had a big number of KBC volunteers, many more than we needed, who stepped up to be ride leaders and ride guides for Bike Camp. We ended up cancelling a lot of you, but we will be back next year asking for your assistance again, when we get a hopefully much bigger sign up. Thanks to all of you for being there when we needed you!

Paul Wells, Bike Camp Director

## June 2022 KBC Membership

Total Memberships: 311

Total Individuals: 493

**New or Renewed Members:** Karen Applebey, Mark Atkinson; John Austin & Family, John Ballema & Family, Jenny Braga, Sarah Burhans, Melissa & Dale Capman, Amanda Cunningham, Phillip Fisher, Terry Florian, Sherrie Glas, Teri Goodman, Marc Irwin, Megan James & Family, Kelly Jones, Bruce Justin, Tom & Celine Keizer, Dean Kindler, Jenna Kovach, Linda & Jeff Kozacki, Ann LaPoint & Family, Tricia Lutz, Anna Lyons & Family, Geoffrey Mallett, Dave Mange, Dan Martz, Jean Mohny, Bob Mrva, Danielle Palmer, Vijaya Pattamatta & Family, Bill Price; Kyle See, Kelly Smith, Jeff Sobelewski, Tom Sprinkle, Tyler Stewart, Jason Swafford, Dan Underhill, Jan Utter, Gordy Vader, Kitty Vader, Adrienne Wiltzer

**June Expired Members:** Dale Abbott & Tomme Maile, Ethan Alexander, David Asper, Randy Button & Linda Hampshire, Michael Conway, Lauren Cummings, Thomas Dewhirst, Tom George, Charlie Grdina, Vince Groppi, Madison Hooley, Mecka & Robert Lassitter, Val Litznerski-Eicholtz, Nathan Mack, Cheryl-Marie Manson, Rob McDougall, Jeanine Michael, Chris Mowell, Marilyn Munro, Sharon Powell, Richard Schau, Leslie Scheffers, Cathy Simms & Family, Dave Warwick & Family, Mitch Wilson



## The 22<sup>nd</sup> W Ride Report

April 30 was a rather dreary, windy day with the threat of rain, i.e., a typical W Ride day. Despite the iffy weather, 5 riders, plus the Ride Leader, were at the Vicksburg High School parking lot at 9:00 AM, ready to cycle their way into W Ride history. The riders are shown above; Left to Right: part of the RL's finger, Gordy Vader, Dan Kallewaard, John Knowlton, Kathy Zimont, and Ben Zimont.

Fueled by the W Ride Map Tootsie Roll Midgees that, if interpreted to scale, indicated that W Avenue has 8,192 lanes, and cookies from Kathy Zimont, the riders began their journey to Van Buren County with an appreciable tailwind. Dan, John Knowlton, and Gordy broke away from the Zimonts and the RL; the former group joined by Marty Knop about a mile into the ride. The remaining riders kept the 4 others in sight and all 7 riders regrouped at the Van Buren County line.

Heading back into the wind, however, the cyclists quickly broke up into smaller groups. Dan, John, and Marty quickly sped away from the rest of the riders, with the Zimonts ahead of the RL, and the RL ahead of Gordy. Riding solo, the RL can attest that the wind wasn't an experience to be savored, particularly during a period of gusty winds on a stretch of open road around 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Gordy caught up with the RL and they regrouped with the Zimonts at the Vicksburg High School parking lot for more cookies and W Ride Map snacks. Here they were joined by Jillian Howland who rode out to the high school.

Gordy wanted to take a slightly longer break, so the other 4 riders set off into the wind again, all the way to the Calhoun County line. They stayed pretty close together and watched Dan, John, and Marty pass them in the other direction between 38<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Street, indicating that they had gained only 9 miles on the RL's group.

The riders reaped the reward of a strong tailwind for the last 12 miles. Ben, Kathy, and Jillian quickly broke away from the RL, but the RL didn't mind having 3 rabbits to chase, and he kept them in sight all the way back to the high school, while seeing a lot of 18s and 19s on his speedometer.

Back at the high school, he joined Jillian, Kathy, and Ben, as well as Gordy, who had ridden to Fulton and back, where they ate pretzels and more cookies. Curiously enough, the RL was the only person to drink Gatorade. He wondered whether the other riders were members of some sort of Gatorade temperance cult, but he didn't ask, as he didn't want to pry. As for Dan, John, and Marty, who knows what they ate or drank; they were on their own at the end of the ride. That will teach them to not ride too fast. Meanwhile, the RL averaged a sometimes pleasant 14.9 mph, although the mph varied wildly, depending on the wind direction.

A light rain finally appeared shortly after the ride. However, it started raining harder during the RL's drive home, where he passed Jillian, who was unfortunately riding home. But thanks to the rain, he didn't have to worry about mowing the lawn, although that actually had more to do with the fact that he had mowed the lawn the day before the ride.

Rick Whaley; W Ride Leader



## KBC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party

Though the planned rides were canceled due to rainy weather no one's spirits were dampened who attended this year's recovery party. KBC's 50 years of thriving existence is a milestone event that was celebrated in grand fashion at Wind + James in Schoolcraft. The food was outstanding and many a great dish shared amongst the club. Thank you all for the many culinary treats and hats off to Fawn and Rudy Callen for the creative and delicious cookies marking the event.

Jillian Howland, KBC Communication director, received the KBC Volunteer of the Year award for her outstanding work shaping communications for the club and keeping us current with technology and design. Nicely done, Jillian!

The Old Crank Award, fresh from the creative minds of Zolton Cohen and Paul Sotherland, honors club members who have provided "enduring service to KBC." Recipients Doug and Kathy Kirk have been major influencers in the Kalamazoo bike community and KBC for decades and Mike Krischer has been the lead of Flowerfest and KalTour for nearly uncountable years. This award will decorate the mantle of many club members in its lifetime as it's passed along from one recipient to the next. When there are co-recipients, as in this inaugural year, the award will be handed off six months after the Anniversary Celebration. Doug and Kathy will pass along the award to Mike in November, making it a "Cranksgiving" event. A photo of the recipients (on the right): Doug Kirk, Kathy Kirk, and Mike Krischer (with Paul Sotherland, MC of the celebration, to Mike's right).



A nice raffle of gifts was presented with many people winning BIG. The Grdina family walked away with two gifts and were rightfully accused of dog-eared raffle tickets and other malfeasance.

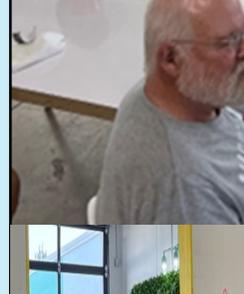
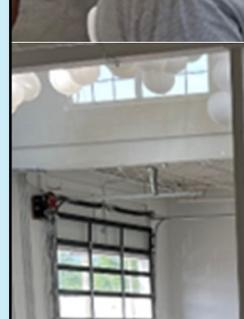
Zolton Cohen cranked up the way-back machine slide show and there was a crowd around the screen recognizing the many faces of KBC over the decades. Hair color had changed significantly but the smiles still looked the same.

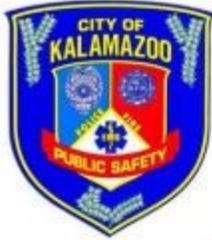
Several new KBC members, fresh from Bike Camp, attended and spoke highly of their experiences. Welcome aboard—it's great to see the bike community growing!

The smashing success of this event rested squarely on the shoulders of KBC Social Director, Paul Sotherland. An outstanding Master of Ceremony his creative energy, hard work and quick wit made the evening special. We all lift our water bottles to you!

If ya missed it, ya really missed it this time and if you don't believe you will stick around for the 100<sup>th</sup> come back for the 51<sup>st</sup> – it will be grand I assure you. Many thanks to Jamie Clark for both the venue space and photos.

Charlie Grdina  
KBC Editor





# BIKE WITH A HERO



**KDPS will host BIKE WITH A HERO events on Thursday, May 26, June 30, July 28 & August 25, 2022. The start time will be 10 a.m. Citizens of all ages and professions are encouraged to join us. Participants will ride alongside on bicycles with police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical staff throughout the city of Kalamazoo.**

**Bicycle routes will be created ahead of each ride and shared with the community via KDPS' Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. The routes will consist of 2-3 miles throughout different neighborhoods in Kalamazoo City. Our focus is to engage with the community as we promote health, fitness and fun!**

### Protection

Riders are encouraged to wear proper head protection.



### Age

Minors under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. All minors will need a guardian to complete a written waiver (available on site) to participate.



### Bicycles

All bicycles must be in proper rideable condition.



For more information, contact CPO Jeff Townsend ([townsendj@kalamazoozcity.org](mailto:townsendj@kalamazoozcity.org)) or CPO Grant Allers ([grant.allers@wmich.edu](mailto:grant.allers@wmich.edu))

KDPS will be hosting several "Bike with a Hero" events over the next 4 months to promote health, outreach, and fun. Our first event will be Thursday, May 26, 2022. All are welcome to join our Community Policing Unit for a bike ride through downtown. Each month, a different route will be chosen to highlight Kalamazoo's diverse neighborhoods and trails.

The route for May 26 is still being finalized, but we will be starting from Public Safety Headquarters (150 E. Crosstown) at 10 a.m. Routes will typically be 2-3 miles of easy terrain. Riders are encouraged to wear proper head protection and minors will need a guardian to sign a waiver before each ride. Those age 15 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Hope to see you there!

# MAKE GREATER KALAMAZOO YOUR CYCLING DESTINATION!

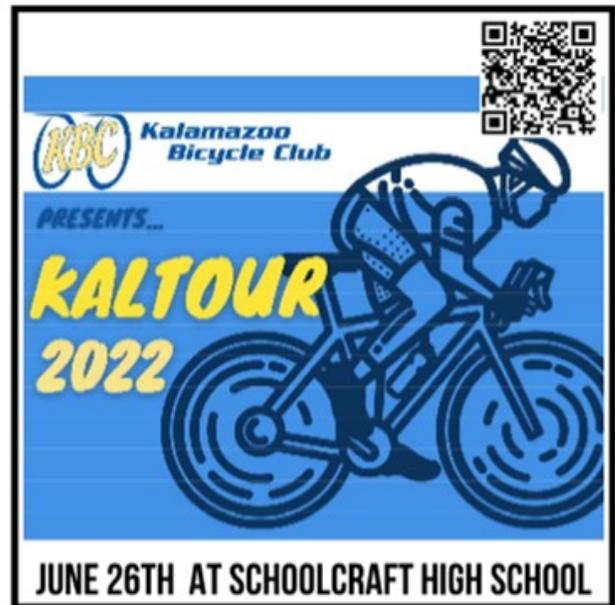
BROUGHT TO THE CYCLING COMMUNITY FOR THE SUMMER OF 2022



FRIENDS OF  
Kalamazoo  
River Valley  
TRAILWAY



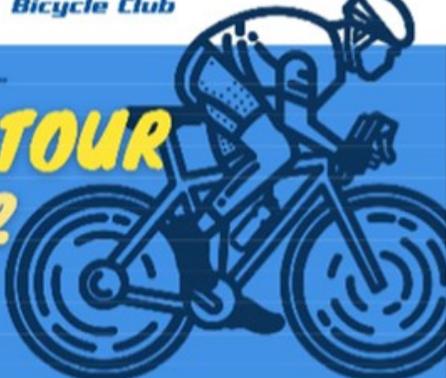
**TRAILBLAZER**  
KALAMAZOO RIVER VALLEY TRAIL  
KAL-HAVEN TRAIL  
MAY 7TH AT THE KALHAVEN TRAIL



KBC Kalamazoo  
Bicycle Club

PRESENTS...

**KALTOUR  
2022**



JUNE 26TH AT SCHOOLCRAFT HIGH SCHOOL

WHETHER YOU START STRONG, OR YOU BUILD YOUR FITNESS UP TO THE DISTANCE...

**KALAMAZOO HAS A RIDE FOR YOU!**

SCAN EACH QR CODE FOR REGISTRATION LINK AND EVENT DETAILS!



Fall Bike Celebration Ride - Vicksburg  
Century to Shipshewana - Covered Bridge -  
Barn Quilt Trail & More!



Sunday Sept. 18



SEPTEMBER 18TH IN VICKSBURG, MI



*Vineyard Classic Bicycle Tour*



The Sunday of  
Paw Paw Wine & Harvest Festival

SEPTEMBER 11TH IN PAW PAW, MI

Editors Note: Many great cycling events on the calendar this year here in Kalamazoo spanning summer to fall. Hats off our very talented Communication Director, **Jillian Howland**, for her outstanding design work pulling this all together.



## 2022 DIRTY DONUT RACE

The Dirty Donut is the first event of its kind on dirt roads. It offers three different distances of races, 22, 41, and 61 miles, and welcomes a wide variety of cyclists. Everyone from the very serious racer to those that just want a fun riding experience have a place at this event. Serious racers will opt for the “Sprint” race, which is conducted much like any other gravel race and the winners are the first to finish. “Donut” racers will opt for a bit more strategy in a race where the winner is often times not the fastest rider, but the rider who can combine speed with how many donuts they can eat. In the Donut races, each race distance has “donut stops” positioned along the race route. Participants deduct five minutes from their final finish time for each donut they consume at one of our “donut stops” in the race.

The 2022 Dirty Donut Race is **June 4, 2022** at the Martin High School, in Martin, Michigan. For those of you who have not yet entered, we want to offer our awesome fellow KBC members a discount for the race. When you register, use the following **15% OFF** promo code at registration – **kbc22**

We are already half way to a race sell out, so please don't delay if you want to race this year. We are fairly sure we will be sold out before race day.

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.

Dan Frazier, KBC Member & Dirty Donut Race Coordinator





**Solidarity Ride - June 4, 10:30am - Mt. Zion Baptist Church Kalamazoo**

A short ride and blessing for safety of bicyclists and motorcyclists. A chance to show our connection/solidarity with the community. KBC riders will be welcomed with open arms!

More info: <https://www.mtzionkalamazoo.org/bikers-blessing.html>

# 2022 Cycling Events.

Riding season is close at hand and time to look rides & races that keep us all going in this sport. Not an all inclusive list of all rides in the area but certainly the major ones in driving proximity to Kalamazoo. KBC Events, in **RED**, are the only club sponsored events.



the tour de france 1920

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Link</u>
<b>Time Trial</b>	3&17 May, 7 &21 June, 5&19 July, 2&16 August	<a href="#">Kalamazoo Bicycle Club - Life is better on a bike!</a>
<b>KalTour</b>	26 June 2022	<a href="#">Kalamazoo Bicycle Club - Life is better on a bike!</a>
Dirty Donut	4 June 2022	<a href="#">Dirty Donut</a>
Blessing of the Bikes	4 June 2022	<a href="https://www.mitzionkalamazoo.org/bikers-blessing.html">https://www.mitzionkalamazoo.org/bikers-blessing.html</a>
Holland 100	16 July 2022	<a href="#">Holland 100</a>
Vineyard Classic (Paw Paw)	11 September 2022	
BFK's Fall Bike Celebration	18 September 2022	<a href="https://fallbikecelebration.org/registration/">https://fallbikecelebration.org/registration/</a>
Gilmore Gravel	08 October 2022	<a href="#">Gilmore Gravel Grand Prix</a>