

KBC PedalPress

The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club for November, 2017

www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org

**THE NEXT KBC MONTHLY MEETING IS November 14th, 2017 at 7:00 P.M.
at the Kalamazoo YMCA, 1001 W. Maple St. All KBC members are welcome to attend.**

KBC's Annual Executive Board Elections Are November 14th

Your annual opportunity to vote for KBC's President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer is at the November 14th KBC general membership meeting (time & place above). As set forth on the KBC Constitution, nominations were held at the October general membership meeting (See notes below). The Constitution also requires the election take place at the November meeting.

As far back as anyone can remember, the election has been a formality because only one person accepted a nomination for each position. This year is different. Both the President and Vice-President positions have two candidates. President **Renee Mitchell** is being challenged by **Scott Barron** and Vice President **John Olbrot** is opposed by **Thom Brennan**. (Secretary **Val Litznerski** and Treasurer **Mike Boersma** are unopposed.)

As *PedalPress* Editor, I offered the four nominees the opportunity to submit a written statement setting forth whatever he or she wanted the membership to know by October 25th, to be included in this issue. Only Renee Mitchell and John Olbrot responded in a timely manner. Their statements follow.

--**Doug Kirk**, Editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

President Renee Mitchell: I joined the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club (KBC) over 15 years ago to meet others passionate about riding their bikes. Since then I've met many inspiring bicyclists, ridden thousands of miles, learned a ton about bikes and riding safely, and have enjoyed encouraging others to ride. I've served as Social Director co-chair, Bike Camp Committee Chair, Education Committee Chair and President for the past couple of years. Each position has brought its rewards and challenges but also provided many unique experiences that helped me appreciate the 'heart' of KBC.

I get it, we all want to ride our bikes and being a member of KBC helps us meet others who also enjoy riding their bikes, but KBC is much more than that. KBC members advocate for bicyclists' rights and safety, educate and encourage others new to cycling, support community events, and build lifelong friendships with others who share their passion. Serving as KBC's President has shown me that much can be accomplished when KBC members team up and work together for a common goal. Examples of this include adoption of 5-foot passing ordinances, a new KBC website, enhancements to KBC group rides and the 'Give 5 Feet' campaign.

I'm excited to serve another year as KBC President to continue the work begun two years ago improving KBC communications, refining community perception and membership experience, streamlining club processes and boosting group rides. I will work with Board Members to define club goals for 2018, support KBC committees as they navigate their activities, and encourage KBC members to bring new ideas to the table to help fulfill our

mission. Understanding we are all volunteers, I will endeavor to simplify KBC administrative processes to minimize time spent managing these areas. I welcome the opportunity to serve KBC members and the bicycling community another year!

Renee Mitchell, President@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

Vice-President John Olbrot: Hi — my name is John Olbrot (vicepresident@kalamazoobicycleclub.org) and here's hoping you support me as Vice President of KBC. I've volunteered with KBC in many capacities over the years and have served as VP since 2015. Before that, I was club treasurer for four years. I've helped out with KalTour and Bike Camp annually and have led many Club rides and try to help out wherever I'm needed.

As the changes we began two years ago continue to make the Club more responsive to the membership and new initiatives begin, the Vice President's role continues to expand.

Here are a few of the projects I became involved with on behalf of KBC:

- Recruited Ride Leaders to cover more paces on the Monday Night Ride.
- Helped get the 5 Foot Passing Ordinance passed in both Kalamazoo and Portage by speaking at Board meetings, attending other meetings, and writing letters to stakeholders.
- Currently head a Committee of Texas Township residents whose aim is to get that same 5 Foot passing protection in that community.
- After the June 7, 2016 tragedy I spent many hours coordinating and strategizing with various sport and community organizations to ensure that the "Finish the Ride" event and the re-purposed KalTour were successful.
- To further enhance the value of KBC membership, I am currently setting up a RidewithGPS system that will be available to all Club members in the near future.

I've always been known as a team player and being a part of KBC is no different. I love working (and riding!) with other cyclists of all stripes and I am always ready to listen to all of you.

I am excited to continue in the role of Vice President in 2018 and I hope that my efforts on your behalf have earned your support.

Submit Your Nomination for KBC's Annual Friend of Bicycling Award

The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club's [Friend of Bicycling Award](#) is presented annually to an individual or other entity who "significantly advanced the interests of bicycling." Nominations for the upcoming FOB award close at **8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 14, 2017**, at the end of the monthly KBC general membership meeting. The Awards Committee will review the nominations. Then the names/descriptions of the nominees will appear in the December Pedal Press. Voting for the award will take place at the December meeting of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

Past Recipients of the Friend of Bicycling Award include:

2017 - City of Kalamazoo, 2016 - Kalamazoo Charter Township, 2015 - Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study
2014 - Open Roads Bike Program, 2013 - Breakaway Bicycle and Fitness of Portage, 2012 - Department of Streets and Equipment, City of Portage, 2011 - Friends of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail

--Pam Sotherland, awardscommittee@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KBC Monthly Meeting Notes for October 10th, 2017

In Attendance: Andrea Mechiori, Carolyn Wyllie, Dave Hauschild, David B. Jones, David Riggs, David Warwick, Doug Kirk, Erika Foujtik, John Olbrot, Kris Campbell, Marc A. Irwin, Mark Lemon, Meg Pollard, Michael Krischer, Mike Boersma, Pam and Paul Sotherland, Paul Selden, Phil Timko, Rick Whaley, Scott Baron, Scott F. Powers, Terry Butcher, Thom Brennan, Tory Cane, Val Litznerski, Renee Mitchell

President, Renee Mitchell: Welcomed many new members and guests that came to the meeting. Renee reminded us that comments on Facebook about club operations and decisions are welcomed, but discussions during the club meetings are what guide the club in its decisions. Please attend a meeting if there is a topic that you want to address.

Vice President, John Olbrot: Said that club rides are still well organized and well attended. Club rides will start to wind down soon and end when daylight savings time ends. Wednesday, November 1st will be the last ride.

Mike Boersma, Treasurer: checking account: \$6,551.08; CD: \$6,169.45, PayPal: \$5,466.21. About \$3,000 of the funds in the checking account are earmarked for the 5-foot promotional campaign.

Valerie Litznerski, Secretary: Appreciates the diversity expressed on Facebook and, like Renee, wants to encourage participation in club meetings where we can have face-to-face conversations and implement new initiatives in the club moving forward.

Paul Selden, Director of Road Safety: 1) Suggested an election guide for local election candidates setting forth their position on bicycling-related topics. This could take the form of candidates' responses to a questionnaire. (**Ed. Note:** Per Paul S., this idea came up too late to be completed this election cycle, but might be worth pursuing in the future.) 2) Per Paul, **Patricia Randall**, KBC member and current candidate for Portage Mayor, fields many comments from the community that are in opposition to the 5' ordinance in Portage. 3) **State Senator Margaret O'Brien** is hosting a meeting at Portage City Hall on November 5th in the early meeting to discuss cycling in the community and safety concerns. 4) There is now a buffered bike lane on Portage Road near Gourneck Lake. 5) The League of Michigan Bicyclists is promoting a "Bike May Use Full Lane" sign campaign statewide particularly for use in roundabouts like at S 12th St & Milham.

Pam Sotherland, Awards Committee Chair: Nominations for Friend of Bicycling should be submitted to Pam by the next club meeting to be considered in the December KBC meeting. (**Ed. Note:** See article above.)

Terry Butcher, Ride Leader Captain: The Anniversary Ride went well and the family trail ride was well received. The Gull Lake Ride was well attended after the rain cleared. The longest route goes through Delton and Doster Lake, the shorter rides don't make it that far. Terry reported he was at Family Story Time at the library last month and found that very few younger people know about the 5' ordinance, proving the importance of educating the public about the new ordinances.

Paul Wells, Education Chair: The club was the beneficiary of the Young Professionals Annual Outing. **Thom Brennan** and **Robin Sides** were especially helpful with their golf knowledge and **Terry Florian** volunteered as well. Paul thanked Val for making the connection and Thom reported that he had a lot of fun volunteering.

Kalamazoo Bicycle Club Annual Executive Committee Nominations:

The floor was opened for nominations. **Scott Baron** nominated **Thom Brennan** for VP, and Paul Selden seconded it. **Valerie** nominated **Renee** for President, Doug Kirk seconded. **Thom Brennan** nominated **Scott Baron** for President, and Paul Selden seconded that. **Terry Butcher** nominated **Val** for Secretary and Scott Powers seconded. **Marc Irwin** nominated **Mike Boersma** for Treasurer. **Doug Kirk** nominated **John Olbrot**

for Vice President, and someone seconded it but I was too busy to get the name! Paul Selden moved that the nominations were closed and Scott Powers seconded that.

Mike Krischer, KalTour 2018: There was a discussion about changing the start, and possible inclusion of paved trails. Vicksburg was suggested. Schoolcraft was mentioned as a compromise between Kalamazoo and Vicksburg. Mike likes the idea and appreciates that this would be easier for some of the shorter routes. Schoolcraft High School is available for the last Sunday in June. Mike welcomes input for routes and would like routes to be posted on Ride with GPS. He welcomes input on route design. (**Ed Note:** See article below).

Advocacy for 5' Passing Ordinances in Michigan: Texas Township declined to pass the ordinance. **John Olbrot** suggested that we present it to them again and we do a few things differently. John suggested that we involve more Texas Township residents. There will be a meeting in a few weeks to discuss strategy. Valerie shared that she felt that a number of drivers apparently felt that it was possible to give her adequate room when passing her on Texas Drive at 5:45 pm on a Monday night, and noted the unbiased feedback from her Varia bike computer that she was only warned about a vehicle passing too closely once. **Val** mentioned her experience supported the necessity for this ordinance and that her experience supports that this should be formally adopted as an ordinance for the township. **Scott and Mark Lemons** mentioned reaching out to running groups, KAR, Tri Kats and Team Taylor. Paul mentioned that state representatives are looking at Texas Township and Paul mentioned the importance of including other groups in the language for the law. Doug mentioned the Commission voted against this in absence of input from anyone from KBC, and that Texas Township declined to pass the ordinance because their attorney felt that the ordinance was in conflict with state law (due to inclusion of language that allows for crossing a double yellow line).

At the State level, **David Jones** learned **Senator Margaret O'Brien's** assistant there are some details that are being worked out in the bills, including exact penalties for distracted driving and the exact actions covered by the laws. She hopes to introduce this to the house in early winter of 2018. The state representative from Vicksburg is on the House transportation committee. Our local representatives support this legislation. Enforcement was brought up and Paul mentioned that this is a concern by some legislators. Doug mentioned that he was able to report a bus driver, and the driver received education. **Phil Timko** mentioned that he now rides with a camera and **Marc Irwin** mentioned that a company in Texas makes a product that measures the distance to passing vehicles and can be used to enforce laws.

Scott Powers reported working closely with **Paul Wells** and **John Lindemayer** with LMB to create a graphic for the 5' passing law with a widely recognizable logo for 5' Passing that could be used to spread this message. Scott and Paul plan to create bumper stickers or magnetic signs. The club would purchase these stickers for distribution in exchange for voluntary donations. This could be statewide and Scott is networking with other groups to develop a consistent message and logo. Please contact Scott or Paul with suggestions.

John Olbrot reported that since KBC now has a club-wide Ride with GPS membership, routes in the online KBC library can be downloaded and utilized by club members on their GPS devices. We will communicate more details to the club membership over the next few months.

Erika Foujtik, local cyclist and self-identified Millennial, produced a magnetized 5-foot graphic which she displayed and offered for sale for \$5/each. She accepts PayPal, Veme or cash. Val offered to help with distribution, and she sold several to those in attendance. We are very thankful for her initiative.

Doug Kirk motioned and **Thom Brennan** seconded a motion to give **Treasurer Mike Boersma** executive authority to make a decision about the club's subscription to Bicycling Magazine. **Paul Selden** will be delivering checks to Silent Observer to more than double the funds devoted to investigating cycling crashes. The donors were anonymous. **Doug Kirk** motioned to adjourn. **John Olbrot** seconded.

–Val Litznerski, Secretary@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KalTour 2018 Set for June 24th; Will Start in Schoolcraft!!!

KalTour 2018 will be Sunday, June 24, the last Sunday in June. The starting location will be Schoolcraft High School, at the intersection of Lyons Street (VW Avenue) and 14th Street, one-half mile east of US 131. (There is a traffic signal at the intersection of Lyons and 131, marked by the McDonalds restaurant.)

There are several advantages to the new location. Parking and bathroom facilities are good. Although our new starting point is further from I-94 than the previous location, directions from I-94 are simple and easy to follow. Because the start is located at an intersection, we will be able to start riders in a direction that is different from the approach of auto traffic. We will be able to provide the shorter routes with relatively flat terrain and low traffic roads. For the longer routes, we still have the availability of hillier routes in western Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren and even northern St. Joseph Counties.

Our next step is to determine routes along with sag stops and the lunch location. Terry Butcher, Thom Brennan, John Olbrot, and Rick Whaley will lead this effort. Please feel free to direct any ideas or suggestions to them. Any KBC member who wishes to participate in the route development process is welcome to join them. Using the "Ride with GPS" program we anticipate making route cues available to GPS-enabled devices prior to the ride, something which we have not previously done.

Mark your calendars for KalTour 2018 on Sunday June 24! Online registration will be available early in 2018 with an early signup rate as well as a discount for KBC members.

--Mike Krischer, Kaltour Kahuna, kaltour@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

About Those Yard Signs

Education Director **Paul Wells** reminds us that we should take in our "5-foot" yard signs by the time the snow flies and keep them inside until spring because winter weather is likely to beat them up pretty badly. Paul also hopes he will have new 5-foot passing stickers and magnets available at the November KBC meeting, so you can get some for your use and also provide to friends.

Kudos

Kudos to City of Kalamazoo Planning Director Rebekah Kik and her staff for creating the City's 2025 Master Plan and also to the City Commission for adopting it. The Plan contains many hoped-for improvements to make Kalamazoo friendlier to bicyclists. See <https://www.imaginekalamazoo.com/stories/2017/9/30/master-plan-is-now-available/> For specific information on planned non-motorized infrastructure improvements, look at Chapter 2, Section 4.2.

Kudos to the Portage District Library for piloting the (possibly first) BookBike program in our area. So far the BookBike is used primarily to publicize the library. You might see it in a parade, at a fair, on a trail or at story time in a park. It may also see use as a mobile lending library, and sure is a far cry from the Bookmobiles I knew as a kid. Pictures are at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ny0o13mbcpcbr5s/AAB20lsUKXqRi8oBetdInIVLa?dl=0>

Submit Your Own Kudos

KBC members are encouraged to give a shout out to an individual or organization that has promoted bicycling within the community. Kudos submissions should be sent to the Newsletter Editor for possible inclusion in the

PedalPress AND to the Awards Committee as a possible nominee for KBC's Friend of Bicycling Award. Include the name of the individual/organization, what they did, and how it promotes bicycling. Indicate in your submission if you would like to be acknowledged for the submission. Because KBC has its own awards for members, the Friend of Bicycling award is intended for organizations and individuals who do not belong to KBC. Submissions can also be submitted via the KBC website. Go to ABOUT KBC – Community, then go to the Kudos Section. Here's the link: <http://www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/about/community/>

--Pam Sotherland, awardscommittee@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

A Trip to One of Bicycling's Most Iconic Climbs

I just returned from a three week France vacation, where I visited Mont Ventoux. No I did not ride to the top of the 6,273 ft mountain but I did talk with three cyclists about their experiences. Here's my take on the Giant of Provence:

1. Mont Ventoux is a mountain in southern France and is a featured stage in the Tour de France because of its grueling nature, taking "hammer heads" like in KBC 2 hours or more to reach the top. Cyclists have died trying this climb. Come prepared!
2. There are three routes to the summit starting from Malaucene, Bedoin, and Sault. Each route has their particular challenges. For example, I traveled by car (which labored all the way up) from Malaucene (the west side), which is difficult but it has switchbacks that allow cyclists to "rest". In addition the road is wider with a good surface and well-marked lanes making it the safest approach. Bedoin (the south side) is the least suitable for us mortal cyclists because it's narrow, twisty and really steep (5 mph speed low gearing is essential). In addition, you battle with traffic from both directions, bicyclists descending at 50 mph! The long route from Sault (the east side) is said to be the easiest at 26 km and "only" 1200 meters of climbing.
3. The sommet (as they say over there) of Mont Ventoux is well above the tree line and has a crater-like landscape that looks other-worldly. The surface is bare limestone without vegetation or trees, which make the mountain appear snow-capped all year round from a distance.
4. Did I mention it is cold at the sommet? The cyclists I talked with—including a very fit-looking German cyclist who rode Mont Ventoux from Malaucene in an hour and fifty minutes—put on windbreakers for the decent. He also recommended disc brakes, not regular rim brakes (which require alternating handbrake squeezing to prevent over heating). Some people actually try to ride all three climbs in one day! At the peak is a limited eating area and of course the mandatory profit-generating souvenir shop with plenty of jerseys and t-shirts. No I did not make any purchases.
5. So in Kalamazoo terms how steep is Mont Ventoux? Imagine if 6th Street hill (the steep part near the top) went on for mile after mile—at least a couple hours, and toss in the DALMAC "wall" for fun! Oh, and make sure it's really windy the last hour with no shade at all!

--Terry O'Connor, KBC Insurance Coordinator

Editor's Letter: Miscellaneous Ramblings

If you're a dirt donk like Kathy and I are, you might be a bit intimidated by new the Markin Glen mountain bike trail. Do gnarly downhills, jumps, tabletops, and steep, loose climbs make you nervous? Want to try something a little less technical first? Do what we did—go up to Bellaire, just east of Torch Lake, and ride the Glacial Hills trails—all 31 miles of them—just outside town!

The trails start literally a mile or two out of town and are nearly all in beautiful northern Michigan woods. It's it's gorgeous, especially in the fall. The trails have hundreds of twists and turns and a fair amount of ups and downs, but nothing particularly challenging. Believe me, if Kathy and I can ride them and stay upright, most anyone can. If you're totally new to dirt, take a fat tire bike (or rent one right in town). If you're even semi-competent off-road, any mountain bike will do. If you and dirt are made for each other, you'll be fine on a cyclocross bike with tires

that are okay in a little sand. You can ride any distance from half a mile on up to the 3 or more hours it'll take to ride the whole thing. There are four trailheads, the course is incredibly well marked at every intersection, and features literally dozens of route choices.

Afterwards, you get to coast most of the way back to town, where Short's Brewpub, restaurants, coffee shops, motels, B & Bs, kayaking and even a movie theatre await. And if you need more riding, we saw of plenty of dirt roads that needed exploring, or you could just follow the pavement arrows for Michigan Mountain Mayhem. All in all a great way to spend a long weekend up north.

On another note entirely, a piece of better-late-than-never advice: Watch out for those %*#@ walnuts! Not only is that black stuff they leave on the pavement slippery, they can make you crash—hard. A good friend, one with years and years of road and mountain biking experience hit one just wrong recently and went flying over the handlebar a microsecond later—a very painful way to end a ride.

In a vaguely related vein, many of you know I always ride with a rear-view mirror. It fell off my helmet the other day on a ride and disappeared somehow. I felt like a sitting duck wandering around on Oakland Drive on my cleats looking for it, but things got worse when I got back on the bike. How much room were people giving me? How much room did I have to dodge the potholes or pull into the lane a bit to avoid the leaf piles? I had no idea.

I was scared every time I heard a vehicle back there. Honestly, I have no idea how those of you without mirrors do it. I had heart palpitations from all the fretting about what's going on behind me. It's illegal to drive a car without a mirror. A car has bumpers, seat belts and air bags for protection. It's crazy to ride a bike without a mirror unless you're in a race or on a closed course.

Okay, enough proselytizing. As I write this it's been raining for two days straight and it's 46 degrees. The forecast ain't much better. November's always a gamble weather wise. Last year was great but this year it looks like it's coming up craps. Cross-training season is lurking just around the corner.

We all have a lot of well-earned fitness right now, and it's a bad idea to risk lose it. Regaining fitness becomes harder as we get older. Sure, it's fine to take some time off entirely—just not too long. Figure out a plan and stick to it. I'm sticking with Pilates and adding weight work for strength, and swimming for aerobic fitness. And I swear this year I'm really going to try yoga.

And this is the best time of year to deal with any health issues. Whether it's an aching tooth, that colonoscopy you've been putting off, a skin check (we get a lot of sun out there), a thorough physical, or just getting your EPO and HGH prescriptions renewed (just kidding!), this is the time to get it done. You don't want to be dealing with this stuff when the weather breaks, so do it now when the days are short and gray and cold.

Finally, a sad note. We just learned of the very untimely passing of Brian Gonda, a great guy, longtime KBC member and life-long bike nut. Here's a link to the obituary:

http://www.mi-cremation.com/memsol.cgi?user_id=1941422

NOVEMBER KBC STATISTICS

Active subscriptions: 371 Active Members: (Includes family members):615

New members:

Lisa Brink-Hansen • Matt Burtis • Harold Gleaves • Adam Rafels • Jacinda Riedel • Jason Sparks • Emily Terhofter
• Becky Visser • Caleb Visser

November Expiring memberships:

Kevin Abbott • Ethan Alexander • Carrel Family • Carol Champion • Dan & Mary Duncan • Daniel Kannegieter • Larry Kissinger • Shawn Kloha • Joe Kucharski Family • Tim & Liz Popp • Bradley Powell • David & Diane Riggs • John & Maureen Shubnell Family • Scott Steurer Family • John & Abby Talanca • Joseph Williams

Renewed memberships:

Cyndee Clemann • Scott Baron • Thomas Brennan • Michael Megyesi Family • Pam Stinchcomb • Gordon Vader • Dawn Zomer

CLASSIFIED AD

For sale: Adjustable Thule roof rack system, similar to the new Crossroad System, but older. \$200. (New Crossroad System racks sell for between \$350 and \$420.) The racks clamp securely to existing roof rails, then accessories (bike or kayak or cargo holders) clamp to the cross rails. Four locks are included. The bar length is 48 inches. Zolton Cohen, [\(269 873-1472\)](tel:2698731472), text or call.



YOUR LOCAL BIKE SHOPS:

They support us so please support them

Billy's Bike Shop, 63 East Battle Creek Street, Galesburg, (269) 665-5202. Sadly, Billy's no longer has a website

Custer Cyclery, 104 North Augusta, Augusta, (269) 731-3492, www.custercyclery.com.

Gazelle Sports, 214 South Kalamazoo Mall, Kalamazoo, (269) 342-5996, www.Gazellesports.com.

Gazelle Sports' super special Sock Sale is going on NOW through November 26... buy three pairs, get a fourth pair FREE!

Kzoo Swift, 445 Forest St, Kalamazoo, (269) 929-8053, www.kzooswift.com.

Pedal Downtown, 611 W Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, (269) 567-3325,

**Pedal South, 185 Romence Road, Portage (269) 324-5555,
info@pedalbicycle.com and www.pedalbicycle.com.**

**Trek Bicycle Store, Battle Creek 22 West Michigan, Battle Creek, 1-800-841-9494,
www.trekstorebattlecreek.com (Team Active has changed names but not owners).**

Village Cyclery, US 131 in Schoolcraft, (269) 679-4242, www.villagecyclery.com.

Zoo City Cycle, 4328 South Westnedge, Kalamazoo, (269) 552-3000, www.zoocitycycle.com.