

KBC PedalPress

The Newsletter of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club for November, 2018

www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org

The next KBC monthly meeting is Tuesday November 13th, 2018 at 7:00 P.M.
at the Kalamazoo YMCA, 1001 Maple St. All KBC members are welcome to attend.

President's Letter:

Hi KBC!

It is sad to see the riding season slowly winding down and the scheduled club rides come to an end for the year. Even though cooler temperatures appear to be here to stay, I hope you take the opportunity to bundle up and head out for a ride. November can be a beautiful time to ride to enjoy the changing colors and fall smells.

2019 Executive Committee Nominations

At the October Membership meeting we accepted nominations for KBC's 2019 Executive Committee made up of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. On the ballot are:

- President – Doug Kirk
- Vice President – Paul Sotherland
- Secretary – Valerie Litznerski
- Treasurer – Mike Boersma

Doug Kirk has been KBC's Newsletter Editor for the past two and a half years and has held many other club leadership positions over the years. Paul Sotherland has been KBC's Webmaster for the past few years and was instrumental in rolling out the new website a couple of years ago. Both men are passionate about cycling, KBC and the Kalamazoo area. Valerie and Mike are renewing their commitments as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, positions they have held the past three years. A huge THANK YOU to each of these committed KBC members for devoting their time, talents and energies into leading KBC next year!

The above nominees will be voted in at the November Membership Meeting on Tuesday, November 13th. Plan to join us to welcome in KBC's new leadership for 2019.

It's Been a Great Ride!

November will be a bittersweet month for me. On one hand, I'll say goodbye as KBC's President, a position I've appreciated and felt honored to hold the past three years. On the other hand, I get to welcome new leadership to KBC, change is good. I'm excited for the new leadership and know they will do a great job continuing KBC's activities promoting and improving bicycling in our community. Congratulations Doug, Paul, Val and Mike!

When I took on the role of President, I didn't quite know what to expect or fully comprehend my new undertaking. I had ideas of things to tackle that would 'hopefully' help KBC fulfill its mission more effectively and efficiently. Over the three years, with the help of John [Olbrot], Val and Mike - KBC's Executive Committee, Board Members and meeting attendees, we set goals each year to help us focus on areas to improve and explore. Many passionate KBC members have stepped up to volunteer their time and talents helping KBC achieve our goals and make a

difference for bicyclists in our community. A huge THANK YOU to each **KBC Member** who volunteered your time on club activities, it is greatly appreciated!

Thank you KBC Board Members! You work tirelessly at your positions, bring new ideas to the meetings, are willing to take the lead on your ideas, and represent KBC with integrity. You plan and coordinate Bike Camp, KalTour and social events, organize club rides, manage membership, insurance and grant requests, create and distribute the PedalPress, update the website and other media outlets, and so much more. You are the nuts and bolts of KBC and I congratulate you on all you've achieved for bicycling in our community!

I would not have endured the past three years without the help of KBC's remarkable Executive Committee. John, Val and Mike each brought unique skills, different perspectives and honest communications. We didn't always see eye to eye on things, but we respected each other's viewpoint and found compromise in our solutions. We worked very well together as a team and I'll be forever grateful to have shared this experience with them.

Thank you Mike! Your years of experience in KBC leadership and background as a lawyer kept us grounded and helped us stay the course. You were the driving force in KBC obtaining the 501(c)(3) non-profit status, did a great job handling KBC's treasury and made sure all the 'i's were dotted and 't's crossed. Congratulations on being KBC's Treasurer for another year!

Thank you Valerie! Your passion for bicycling and diversity and unique perspectives kept our eyes open to different ways of thinking. You keep membership well informed with your detailed meeting notes, bring fresh ideas to the table, and represent the younger membership with grace and confidence. Congratulations on being KBC's Secretary for another year!

Thank you John! Your wisdom, insight and support over the past three years have been invaluable to me. I appreciated you stepping in at times I was not able, your honesty and openness, and your willingness to 'share the load' when items needed to be addressed. You did a great job overseeing the Ride Committee, helping to roll out RideWithGPS, making sure KBC had a place to meet and managing the onslaught of emails I cc'd you on. Congratulations on all you've achieved with KBC!

So, what's next for me with KBC? Today, I'm not sure. But I do know I will stay involved with KBC activities and help KBC make a difference with bicycling in our community. It's been an amazing ride KBC, **THANK YOU!**

Safe Cycling!

Renee Mitchell ☺

--Renee Mitchell, President@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

A Look Back at 2018

At the beginning of the year, KBC's leadership identified goals that helped us stay focused on our efforts for the coming year. More details on these goals can be found in the [February 2018 PedalPress](#) on KBC's website. Listed below are the goals along with member accomplishments.

- ✓ **COMMUNICATIONS** – Enhance and unify club communications across platforms
 - KBC filled a new Communications Director position – Thank you **Dale Abbott**
 - KBC increased its use of social media to inform the community of KBC activities and events, and to increase community engagement – Thank you **Valerie Litznerski & Dale Abbott**
 - KBC participated in the Kalamazoo Public Schools Bus Driver Education Workshops to educate drivers on bicycle safety – Thank you **Paul Wells & Thom Brennan**
 - The PedalPress included more diverse articles that better exposed KBC's mission – Thank you **Doug Kirk**

- ✓ **EVENTS** – Grow support for and attendance at KBC events
 - Bike Camp participation reached a max and with successful graduate retention – Thank you **Paul Wells & Bike Camp Committee**
 - KalTour was held at a new location, Schoolcraft High School, with a boost in participation and volunteer support. Riders were treated to the scenic roads of Kalamazoo County. Thank you **Mike Krischer & KalTour Committee**
 - The first ever TNTT Championships were held in August with around 30 members participating – **Thank you Doug & Kathy Kirk**
 - KBC held its May Meeting at Boatyard Brewery and invited six local bicycling related organizations to speak – Thank you **KBC Board**

- ✓ **RIDES** – Enhance KBC ride experience
 - RideWithGPS was rolled out to KBC membership – Thank you **Dale Abbott & John Olbrot**
 - KBC broadened it's offering of group rides by adding lower speed rides, a Sunday family ride and gravel road rides – Thank you **KBC Ride Leaders [especially John & Julie Knowlton]**
 - Increased ride offerings and ride leaders for special events like KalTour and Anniversary Picnic – Thank you **Terry Butcher & Ride Committee**

- ✓ **ADMINISTRATIVE**
 - A new membership management system on KBC's website was rolled out. Thank you **Paul Sotherland & David Jones**
 - A 'Donate' button was added to the website for receiving donations online – Thank you **Paul Sotherland**
 - KBC obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit status – Thank you **Executive Committee & Board Members**
 - Most importantly – Ride and have fun! - Thank you **KBC Members** for making it a great year of riding!

This is just a small sampling of all that KBC accomplished in 2018 with so many more members volunteering their time. As you can see, it's when a team of amazing, hardworking, inspired, and devoted KBC members contribute their time and talents that can really make an impact within KBC and our community. Thank you for supporting KBC and sharing your passion for bicycling with us!

Renee Mitchell, KBC President ☺

Guest Editor Letter: On the Flats

Julie and I like to ride bikes on vacation. Maybe you do, too. (If so, I would love you to share your bike travel stories with other Pedal Press readers – give us a couple paragraphs about your favorite or worst bike travel trip!) In the past we have rented bikes when we fly to far off destinations. Some benefits of renting are that you don't have to schlep bikes through airports or worry about them being damaged. On the other hand, we have never been able to get rented bikes to fit right and we always seem to be sore or uncomfortable. As I shared in last month's PP we bought a tandem this year with S&S couplers. In October we took our first airplane trip with the tandem. The couplers allow the frame to be taken apart into three sections and packed into two suitcases. We realized a few things after this first trip about packing a tandem:

1. Remove the chain and put it in a plastic bag to keep grease off other stuff in the suitcase
2. Bring rubber gloves to keep hands clean while reinstalling the chain

3. Include a plastic shower curtain to keep chain grease off the carpet in the condo you rented with a large security deposit
4. Move the couch and reassemble the bike where the couch goes so you can cover up any grease that gets on the carpet because you forgot your shower curtain
5. Put the stoker handlebars in the suitcase

Yep. I forgot to put Julie's bars in the bag.

But that isn't the point of this column. We have ridden bikes in several parts of Florida: East coast, North of Orlando, Pan Handle, Tampa/Clearwater area. And we have found two things to be true: 1) Traffic is terrible everywhere. 2) And the flat roads are boring. Much as I complain about hills when I am riding on them, it turns out that they make bike riding much more interesting. Every hill is a mystery. It reveals its true grade, character, and challenge only as you push yourself up it. When I look at a hill from the top of the previous hill, it seems so tall and steep. But at the bottom, and then the middle, I get more familiar – closer (spatially, of course, but also relationally) and it doesn't look so stark. Proximity evokes admiration, and understanding. Once in a while I like hills that have so much grade I almost fall over sideways. Mind you, I don't go for a ride like that every day. But once a year or so I will head over to Dowagiac to climb the wall. Or face the 6th St. or 8th St. hills on the north side of Kalamazoo County. The effort required demands such focus that I stop thinking about anything else. It is almost like meditation. The only things that get attention are breathing and turning the cranks over one more time. Then once more. Then again. There is no room for worry, or doubt, or planning or . . . anything. Just the breathing and the turning. Then relief when the road planes horizontal again. And victory – I didn't fall over, and I didn't walk.



Photo Caption: Dig the Florida flatness

In Florida, the only hills are bridges over waterways. There isn't much mystery. Bridges are perfect parabolas, upside down. You can see them coming, you can see them from the side. And they're full of cars. Highway bridges don't evoke my admiration and engagement like natural hills.

All this warbling about hills is really a way to say that we love where we live. Traveling and riding bikes in different parts of the country is awesome. We plan to continue finding new places to explore by bike. And we have a really cool trip planned for our 50th birthdays next year! One of the benefits of riding in Florida is that we experience new appreciation for SW Michigan. Seriously, we ride about a mile from our garage to the beautiful hills on R Avenue. Along the way we see vineyards and fruit trees, which emit amazing smells from flowers in the spring and fruit in the fall. I have taken pictures on the Monday night Lawton ride and I swear they look straight out of Napa! One meaning of appreciate is to add value to something. Riding the crowded flat roads of Florida add value to my choice to live in Kalamazoo. Thanks for joining the ride.

--John Knowlton, guest editor johnrom719@gmail.com

Who Did *You* meet at a KBC Function this year?

The PedalPress will begin to include a feature of a member in each issue starting January 2019. Who should we feature? Not everyone is a mega mileage hero or a record setting racer (though we love to feature them!). Who are some regular earthlings you met this year? We would love to learn their cycling biography, favorite rides, goals,

and maybe even some maintenance tips or snack recipes! Send your recommendations to guest editor John Knowlton at johnrom719@gmail.com.

Minutes of the October 9, 2018 Meeting of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

Present: Marc Irwin, Paul Wells, Paul Sotherland, Doug Kirk, Rick Whaley, Paul Seldon, Paul Runnels, Michael Krischer, Thom Brennan, Pam Sotherland, Kathy Kirk, Teri Olbrot, Timothy Stewart, Dale Abbot, John Olbrot, David Jones, Mike Boersma

- 1) Welcome and Introductions
- 2) Officer reports
 - a. Vice President: John Olbrot reported that the Anniversary Ride was well attended. John reported that the race reports from Team Clark Logic were excellent. He also reported that the Tweed Ride was this Saturday.
 - b. Treasurer: Mike Boersma reported that KBC had \$8,866.95 in PNC checking, \$6,175.63 in PNC CD, and \$3,592.25 in PayPal. KBC has funds totaling \$560 for the Jeremy Smith memorial and \$3,765.75 for the Education Committee.
- 3) Education Committee: Thom Brennan reported that KBC would be represented at the KVCC health event on October 10, 2018. Thom also reported that KBC would be represented at the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County's Put the Brakes on Fatalities event on October 10, 2018 as well. Paul Wells reported that more 5 foot passing magnets would be ordered. Paul also reported that KBC had an inventory of 200 yard signs that are seeking good homes. Paul discussed public service advertising options with Adams Outdoors. Mike Boersma suggested exploring underwriting opportunities with WMUK or other public radio/ public TV stations.
- 4) Awards Committee: Pam Sotherland reported that the Awards Committee would be accepting nominations for the Friend of Bicycling award through the November meeting on November 13, 2018.
- 5) Race Team: Timothy Stewart reported that he would be submitting results separately for Team Clark Logic. Tim also reported that TCL was gearing up for the Iceman Cometh race in Traverse City on November 3, 2018, and that many KBC members would be participating.
- 6) KalTour Committee: Michael Krischer reported that the KalTour Committee had decided to set the date for KalTour 2019 on Saturday, June 29, 2019. This will be the first time that FlowerFest/ KalTour has been on a Saturday and it is expected that this will encourage more riders to sign up. Mike and Dale Abbot discussed options for advertising in the League of Michigan Bicyclists Ride Calendar. Doug Kirk suggested a gravel ride route option of 50-100 kilometers.
- 7) Bikeway Report: Paul Seldon reported on the status of the Southwest Michigan Bikeway project, a mapped and signed bikeway system in Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties. Paul reported that there is a political disagreement between the elected entities in Kalamazoo County and the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County over which sign to use. [Editor's note: The Road Commission of Kalamazoo County is not elected; the members are appointed by the elected County Commissioners. See questions and answers from some of the candidates for County Commission later in this issue.] Paul requested that the KBC Executive Committee support the elected entities by passing a resolution.
- 8) Executive Committee Nominations: John Olbrot described the duties of each Executive Committee officer – President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. John then opened the floor to nominations.

- a. Mike Boersma nominated Doug Kirk to be President. Thom Brennan seconded. There were no further nominations.
- b. Doug Kirk nominated Paul Sotherland to be Vice President. Paul Seldon seconded. There were no further nominations.
- c. Marc Irwin nominated Valerie Litznerski to be Secretary. Mike Krischer seconded. There were no further nominations.
- d. Paul Seldon nominated Mike Boersma to be Treasurer. Marc Irwin seconded. There were no further nominations.
- e. Mike Boersma moved to close nominations. Paul Seldon seconded.

9) Old Business: Paul Seldon discussed highlights for Kalamazoo Bike Week.

10) New Business: Marc Irwin announced that the Fall Color Tour will be on October 21, 2018. Doug Kirk recommended that there was no need for autobiographical statements from the candidates for the Executive Committee. Doug also recommended that the incoming President provide a State of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club article in the December Pedal Press.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

--Mike Boersma Acting Secretary

Final Monday Night Ride of 2018 – Great Turnout!

More than 30 people showed up for the last Monday Night Ride of 2018 October 29. Following a lovely evening ride, more than 15 joined together for a meal at Texas Corners Brewing. A great way to cap off the year! The picture on the left is from 2018; a chilly contrasting photo from 2017 is on the right! Photo credit John Olbrot.



County Commission Candidates Answer Road Commission Questions for Pedal Press

The Mid Term election November 6 allows voters to elect members of the Senate, US House of Representatives. At the state level we will elect Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, and a number of university regents and board members. Perhaps more closely connected to the KBC is the election of Kalamazoo County Commissioners. Kalamazoo County has 11 districts and you can find a map of the districts at the [county's website](#). Commissioners are important to bicyclists because the commission appoints the five members of the Road Commission of Kalamazoo County. The Road Commission sets priorities for design, use and maintenance of 1,267

miles of county roads and oversees a budget of nearly \$27,000,000. You can find the list and biographies of the Road Commission members [here](#). Two of the members of the Road Commission have terms expiring December 31, 2018: Daniel Moyle and David Worthams.

The Pedal Press sent the following note to all candidates (except Shequita Lewis in district 4 as there is no contact information on the clerk's list of candidates) for County Commission on October 23, 2018 and the answers we received by 5:00 p.m. October 31 are printed below.

“The Kalamazoo Bicycle club has 582 members. We invite your answers to the following questions for publication in our monthly newsletter, the Pedal Press. Deadline is 5 p.m. October 31:

- 1. How do you feel about the use of bicycles for transportation, recreation and fitness on public roads?*
- 2. How should the Kalamazoo County Road Commission prioritize users and uses of the public roads under its control?*
- 3. When it is time to appoint new road commissioners, how will you ensure the candidates' commitment to managing public roadways for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians?”*

Christine Morse, District 9

1. The acceptability of the use of bicycles in every day life on public roads is without question. I believe the use of bicycles for transportation, etc. should be encouraged by our government by improving safety and access.
2. This is a challenging question, for sure. Michigan as a state does not value the use of transportation other than motor vehicles. The system of roads is not set up for truly effective sharing usage. Bicyclists are often at risk. However, bicyclists' right to use the roads is important. We all know that the roads in Michigan require maintenance and infrastructure repairs. I would advocate for taking into account bicycle access and safety when the Road Commission is planning on upgrades and changes.
3. In interviewing candidates for the position, we can ask those questions and advocate for those who support the use of the roads by all users. Perhaps it might be useful as well to place an avid bicyclist on the Commission who can weigh in on decision making. It all depends on who applies to serve on the Commission.

Cody Dekker, District 8

- 1) I think bicycles are a healthy transportation method for both the rider and environment. I think people who prioritize bike riding are making a positive and intentional choice for their lives. I think bike riding is also fun and relaxing.
- 2) I think safety has to be the number one priority. I know that bicycle riders have specific needs and requests and I look forward to engaging and being educated by them. I promise to listen and craft the best plan possible for prioritization and use of our public roads with constituents, bike riders, the road commission, etc. I do believe because bicycle riders are the most vulnerable on the road way that there does need to be a special care and attention taken to making sure that they are safe as they use our roads the same way everyone is entitled to.
- 3) I will listen to the stake holders in the conversation as I decide. I would use input from bicycle riders, other road users, and constituents to create the road commission that I think can most effectively tackle the job of improving our roads and making sure that they are safe for everyone. I do not have a problem removing committee members if they are not fulfilling the job that they implied they would.

Ron Olson, District 1

1. I own a recumbent bicycle and have ridden it on public roads plus I've had a motorcycle endorsement since 1976 so I'm aware of how it is riding on public streets and how as a rider how you have to be aware of motorized traffic. I'm all for it but unfortunately I've seen cyclists who disobey normal traffic laws.
2. Prioritizing can be a problem on many city streets as I've seen as the roads can't be widened any more in some locations as they're already at their maximum width.
3. Running for County Commissioner in the First District I won't have much if any control on what the Road Commission does as they're a separate entity. We have bike lanes now where we've lost normal traffic lanes yet

those dedicated lanes are under-used. I'm afraid if you don't use them, you'll lose them. This is how road money gets used as they can't justify the money spent on roads that get little use.

Julie Rogers, District 5

1. As a cyclist and runner, I am passionate about all forms of transportation on public roads. In addition to serving in my third term as a Kalamazoo County Commissioner, I also practice physical therapy and recommend cycling, walking and running to my patients to maintain their fitness levels. I have also treated some cyclists with extensive injuries after being hit by motor vehicles on our roads. More can be done to raise awareness and improve safety of our roads for all users.
2. I understand funding is limited for our roads. The KCRC should look for creative, cost effective solutions to maximize safety for all road users. They could partner with groups like Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) and KBC who have done extensive work on identifying key routes for bicycles in our community. KCRC could focus on widening shoulders and creating non-motorized paths on roads that connect neighborhoods to schools, businesses and community venues.
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--Compiled by Guest Editor John Knowlton

Friend of Bicycling Award Nominations Deadline

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." There has been a lot of good work done this year to support bicycling. Please consider submitting a nomination!

Nominations for the upcoming FOB award close at **8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November, 13, 2018**. The Awards Committee will review the nominations and include the names/descriptions of the nominees 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:

- 2018 - Pedal
- 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

--Thanks very much! Pam Sotherland

NOVEMBER KBC STATISTICS

Active subscriptions: 360 Active Members: (Includes family members): 461

New and/or Renewed Memberships:

Robert McDougall • Elliott Parcels • Edward Aurand

November Expiring Memberships

Matt Burtis • Michael Megyesi & Becky Klien Family • Matt Burtis

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.
Visit Gazelle Sports November 1-30 for our Big Sock Sale! 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.