

PRESIDENT'S LETTER—DOUG KIRK

As I write this, Kalamazoo is getting pummeled—yet again—by more wind/ice/rain/snow/sleet/hurricanes/cyclones. Gotta be a helluva of a lot tougher than me to ride outdoors in this stuff (I'm looking at YOU, Paul Guimond). So what's a reasonably sane cyclist to do in this crapy weather besides (hopefully) grow muscles cross-training at the gym, get bored going nowhere fast in spinning class, or dream of the newest/latest Zwift gadget to make your laps around Central Park a little less repetitive?

Plan your riding season, that's what! If you're a racer, plan your racing schedule. Not just which races you want to target, but also when to start building your base, when to phase in your intervals and speed work, and when to begin your tapering, all to have your best shot at your key events. Thinking about hiring a coach? Now's the time!

That sort of planning works just as well if you're not a racer but just want to target some other event. How about something more challenging than anything you've done before, like Dalmac or maybe one of the gravel routes on Kaltour. Pick an event that's a little bit out of your comfort zone, grab the calendar and plan how you'll build the fitness and skills to take yourself to that next level.

Got some touring in mind for 2019? Arrange your time off and get your travel plans lined up. If it's an organized tour, things tend to fall into place pretty easily as long as you remember shorts, shoe, helmet... and your bike. We love to plan our own tours with just a few friends, which means either winging it (which is one hell of a lot of fun right up until it stops being fun at all), or putting in some time figuring out good routes for each day's ride and having a pretty good idea where we'll spend each night. A little time spent now on these cold, dark nights can actually be fun, and pays big dividends later.

Think about your plain old ordinary rides too. How many hours a week would you like to ride this year? Or how many miles? How can you work your training into your life? Can you really get yourself up and out the door for an hour before breakfast or at lunch? What would it take to actually commute to work once or twice a week? Which group rides work the best for you, your family, and your goals?

And finally, do yourself—and your sport—a favor. Be a ride leader, or maybe help the neighbor kid learn to ride—or get him a bike. Maybe “adopt” someone new to (or returning to) bicycling and help her get comfortable. Maybe give your time—or your money to Open Roads. Join the League of Michigan Bicyclists or the national League of American Bicyclists. So plan something you can do to grow bicycling this year. —Doug Kirk President@kalamazooBicycleClub.org



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

KBC Meeting Notes.....	2, 3, 4
Kal Tour	5
Recovery Party!.....	7
Bike Camp	8
Dirty Donut	9
Blind Camp.....	10-11
Bonnie Conway Profile.....	12
Editor's very well reasoned and articulate letter.....	13

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Do you take pictures? Send some cycling pics for inclusion in future PedalPress issues! editor@kalamazooBicycleClub.org
- Member Mileage Almanac p. 7

KBC MEETING NOTES—FEBRUARY 12, 2019

Finance report, Mike Boersema:

\$4,699.72 in PayPal.

As of February 11, the club had the following balances:

The club's annual insurance premium was just paid. A bike camp registration has already been received for 2019. The club protects riders and the club from lawsuits.

\$3,774.78 in the checking account

\$6,177.69 in the CD

NEW LOCATION WAS A HIT!

Pedal Press Editor observed a large number of attendees at the February meeting! In fact, this was the largest number of attendees in memory! Editor's only complaint about the venue was that there are too many beer on tap to choose from, making beverage selection agonizing.

The Kalamazoo Bicycle Club is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are tax deductible. You may donate by holding Ctrl and clicking [here](#).

You may also designate how you wish your donation be used: general KBC activities, 5 foot passing education, or the Tuesday Night Time Trial series. You may also donate by check by sending your donation to Kalamazoo Bicycle Club, P.O. Box 50527, Kalamazoo, MI 49005. Please write "Donation" in the memo line. Thank you, Mike Boersma
KBC Treasurer

KBC COMMITTEE REPORTS

President: extended a special thanks to Dave Jarl for coming after his surgery and Dave & Mary Jo Warwick for their service to the community. Mentioned that the Recovery was fun with a good turnout. Thanked Paul Sotherland for finding a new location for meetings at Shakespeare's.

Secretary: Announced the establishment of a Google Drive folder for the club to store information. Invitations will be sent to chairpersons soon.

Presentation by Kate Brien of the Irish American Club asking for cyclists to participate in the St. Patrick's Day parade. The Club will host the St. Patrick's Day parade March 16th at 11 am. This year, they would like to honor the bicyclists in Kalamazoo and feature us in the parade. They would like us to ride or walk our bikes at the beginning of the parade to honor us. There is a gathering after the parade at Bells as well it also a fundraiser to benefit individuals who are struggling with their medical bills in the community. *There was an offer for free beer to cyclists in lycra after the parade.*

John Knowlton: the deadline for submission to the Pedal Press is the 23rd of the month. Please submit content by that date if you would like it to be included.

Paul Wells: (Education director) Bike Camp is progressing. There was a planning meeting and the committee is on target for its goals. Paul has been focusing more on Bike Camp but will have an education committee meeting soon. John Olbrot mentioned the WMUK underwriting announcements during early May. John suggested that we could get about 2 spots a day for ~\$700, but there are some opportunities to reduce this depending on the time of the day for the announcements. There could be a special break for the club since it is a non-profit. Paul asked to follow up with John later to make a plan for the underwriting spots on WMUK.

Paul Guimond (Clark Logic Liaison) mentioned that he needed Paul to remind the Clark Logic team what's needed from the team

KBC MEETING NOTES CONTINUED —FEBRUARY 12, 2019

for

the club. Paul also asked if we could give free registrations to Bike Camp for some students from Open Roads. There is also a need for transportation and possible parent accompaniment for Bike Camp attendees. Paul wondered if there could be an additional event for the Open Roads students instead.

John Idema (social director): Thanks Dave Jarl for the years that he hosted the party. Thought that the new venue was great with plenty of space and parking. Tim Krone complimented John on the party. Everyone loved the margaritas. There were 65 people that participated in the raffle, which was typical for attendance.

Gordy Vader (ride captain): Wants to have another Ride Leader Summit before club rides start. Gordy checked with meeting attendees on the ride leader committee to affirm their continued willingness to serve in the capacity. Gordy will work on planning this soon. Paul Sotherland will share the current list of sanctioned ride leaders with Gordy for his records.

Thom Brennan (insurance coordinator): We renewed our coverage and explained the coverage to our membership through the pedal press. The rate increase this year was a smaller percentage than what we've seen recently. Thom reminded everyone about the additional rider on our policy for MTB rides. The waiver is available on the website. Thom clarified that gravel roads are public and therefore not MTB rides. Gordy and Thom will make sure that waivers are signed by club members. Electronic signatures will likely be accepted by the club. Mike Krischer clarified that we will still collect wet signatures day-of for KalTour attendees. The waiver is needed at that ride primarily for non-members. Doug also clarified that club Time Trials are covered by other races are not covered.

Mike Krischer (Kal Tour): Flyers and brochures are being designed. The new gravel route is being promoted. There will be SAG stops on the Gravel Route.

Renee Mitchell (webmaster): KalTour registration is open online. If you have any website updates, please contact her through her club email address to ask that the content is posted.

First Reading of a small amendment to the KBC Constitution relating to additional duties for the Secretary. The amendment is to add keeping archives of KBC records to the secretary's duties. The following statement would be added: "Serves as archivist of KBC documents."

Doug mentioned that there are two openings on the Kalamazoo County Road Commission. There are three bike-friendly candidates for these two positions. Please reach out to your elected officials to let them know whom you would like to fill these positions as road commissioners. Thom Brennan and Mike Boersma have applied to be interviewed by the road commission for appointed positions. They would influence the budget and policy. Historically, the road commission has not considered cyclists in their planning and policies. There is little coordination between the county road commissions and the cities. The KBC is one of the largest transportation advocacy groups in the community. Most of our rides take place on roads maintained by the county. There are five appointed positions of which the club is hoping two will be filled by bike-friendly candidates. John Knowlton mentioned the response to cyclist complaints about the rumble strips on 12th street.

ATTENDEES:

Valerie Litznerski
Doug Kirk
John Idema
Mary Jo Warwick
David Warwick
Paul Wells
Julie Knowlton
John Knowlton
Kate Brien (Irish Club)
Peg Hopkins (Irish Club)
Mike Vandevere
Mike Krischer
Ed Maring
Dale Abbott
Paul Selden
Tom Keizer
Paul Guimond
Mike Boersma
Rick Whaley
Pam Sotherland
John Olbrot
Teri Olbrot
Timothy Stewart Jr
David Jarl
Terry Butcher
Terry Florian
Gordy Vader
Thom Brennan
Chris Dahl
Jerry Dahl

KBC MEETING NOTES CONTINUED

Discussion of plans for KBC's May 14th Bike Week club meeting. Doug reminded everyone of the 2018 May meeting that was open to the various organizations. Thom will organize this for 2019. He is suggesting that the club offer some appetizers. Paul Guimond mentioned Wind & James. If anyone knows any good venues, please reach out to Thom. We want to invite more organizations that were invited. Please reach out to Thom if you are willing to help.

Old Business

Paul Guimond asked about the letter in the Newsletter that we recently published. Paul asked about addressing the points in the letter. Paul mentioned that there were 4 points brought up in the letter. Doug didn't want to start a heated debate in writing. Doug asked if anyone would like to discuss the points.

New Business

Paul Selden asked that everyone submit their annual mileage. Please send that your annual mileage to Paul Selden if you would like to be included in the club almanac. Paul personally thanked the Warwicks for their service to Bike Week and also thanked Paul Wells and Thom Brennan for their service to Bike Week. He also thanked John and Julie for leading a gravel ride. Paul asked what TCL could contribute to Bike Week. Perhaps a training ride could be opened to the public.

Terry Butcher: Blind Camp is coming up May 8-10. Anyone can help. There are 6 tandems available for use. Please reach out to Terry if you can help and also please bring a tandem or loan one for use if you have one available. The first few nights are training rides. The Time Trial is on Friday night. Doug promised that if you do this, it will be the most heart-warming ride you will have all year. Paul offered to publicize this on BFK and also will promote this to Bike Week.

Mike Boersma reminded everyone purchasing items for club events on behalf of the club to take advantage of the club's ability to make purchases without paying sales tax.

Dave Warwick thanked the club for recognizing their efforts in the community. He also mentioned that they couldn't have done what they did without others, especially Paul Selden. They are humbled by the recognition.

Someone heard a rumor that there was a rumor that Kalamazoo might adopt the statewide 3' ordinance. Doug thinks that this is unlikely. But will notify members of this if it comes up.

The evening ended with storytelling, reconnecting with bike buddies.

NEXT KBC CLUB MEETING MARCH 12, 7:00 P.M. AT SHAKESPEARES PUB; TOP FLOOR, BACK LEFT. FREE POPCORN AT THE BAR.

KAL-TOUR REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

Regardless of the temperature or what it looks like outside, bicycling season is not far away. KalTour registration on the KBC web site is now open! The lowest prices of the season will apply to all KalTour registrations now through the end of April. KBC members should sign into their club account before registering to receive an additional \$5 discount.

KalTour, now in its 28th year, is the KBC's largest annual organized ride. It takes place this year on Saturday June 29. KalTour 2019 will start from Schoolcraft High School in the village of Schoolcraft. The start location, just a half mile east of US 131 in the village of Schoolcraft, offers immediate access to the low-traffic rural roads that offer the kind of cycling that Kalamazoo County is known for.

KalTour is not a race, but a ride with multiple route options from 10 to 100 miles. Riders on all routes will visit at least one scenic Kalamazoo County Park and riders on all routes will enjoy lunch. There will be additional snack stops for riders on the longer routes. The 100 mile route will again this year make a complete circle around Kalamazoo County, while the 62, 31, 15, and 10 mile routes will visit the mostly flat and lightly populated southern and eastern parts of the county.



New this year is the "Gravel Fondo." Starting on pavement, but quickly switching to gravel and reaching some substantial hills before the turnaround point, the 60 mile gravel route is certainly challenging! Riders less experienced in gravel riding may prefer the flatter 30 mile gravel route.

In order to estimate the popularity of the gravel routes, we are asking riders to declare their preference for a road or gravel route during registration. However, distances may be decided on the day of the ride. We would like all gravel riders to start join in a mass start. We anticipate the formation of numerous ride groups based on distance and pace for the road ride.

More ride information including exact routes will be available in the coming months; however, it's time to start making plans now for Saturday June 29 and KalTour 2019!

Mike Krischer

KalTour Director

Follow this link for more information and to register:

www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/events/kaltour/

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Spring will soon be on us, and we'll all be on the bike again, not just the toughies who never stopped riding. We need to get on our soapboxes and spread the word again about biking on the roads, and about cyclists' rights on the road. I ask all of you to think of yourself as an educator to the general public, who have little idea of what is in the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code regarding bicycles on the road. Hey, **nobody else is going to educate drivers and cyclists if we don't**. We owe it to ourselves and our fellow cyclists to work to make roads safer. There is nearly nothing being done about this, not in schools, not in driver education, not in driver written or driving tests, not in the brochures at the Secretary of States offices. Some quick simple statements might be something like "All the same rights and laws apply to cyclists that apply to motor vehicles," or "The law says that bicycles are traffic and cyclists are required to ride like they drive a car, while staying to the right if practicable," or something similar that gives a clear and concise image of how to legally and safely ride, and how to drive around cyclists. Mentioning that **we can legally ride two abreast** is important too, as most folks don't know that. In many instances that's safer too, so that drivers don't squeeze by a single cyclist into oncoming traffic.

I'm also asking you to **get the yard signs out again**, once the snow melts. We have a good supply of these, as well as the bumper magnets. You can get them at the local bike shops, and at some of the city and township offices. Call ahead to check availability. And please donate any amount you can spare to the education fund. I know they are ugly and a pain to mow around, but they send a great message to remind folks that cyclists are out there, and that Kalamazoo, Portage, Oshtemo and Kalamazoo Township require 5' passing by law. The wording "Share Our Roads" makes the signs usable anywhere. We are asking for 5' even where it isn't a law. If you live where there isn't 5' passing and the 3' State of MI law applies, it still is good to ask for 5'. Three feet is not enough. Thanks KBC members for teaming up on this!



Paul Wells – Education Chair educationchair@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KBC STATISTICS

Total Memberships: 340

Total Individuals: 552

February/March Expiring Members:

David & Mary Jo Warwick & Family; Jacob Grevenstuk; Terry & Kathy Hutchins; Nathan Sotherland & Alayna Smith; Scott & Mary Aldrich; Janet & Herman Evenboer; Hendrik Holm; Kevin Kimbrough; Cheryl Koopman; Colby Novar; Jim Patton; Donald Payerle & Family; Steven Penix; Roger Poorman; Paul Raynes & Family; Evan St. Peter; Molly Cartwright; Ryan Minier; Jaqueline Killmer; Bill Steiden; Kerri Langdon & Shaun Fischer; James Murry; Riley Norman; Jason & Erin Young & Family; Dave DeBack & Michele Cudahy; Ryan Corbin

New or Renewed Members:

Kathy & Doug Kirk; Artis Freye & Kevin Ulrich; Paul Selden; Nichole Bradshaw; Larry Kissinger; Rebecca Martinez; Steve Cox; Monica Tory & Jonathan Evans; Scott & Laura Oliver; Jeff Walburn; Jerry & Chris Dahl; Gary Hammock; Dennis Sinke; Kathy & Ben Zimont; Thomas Noverr; Doug Grimm; Daniel Witham; Terry Florian

2018 MEMBER MILEAGE ALMANAC

The idea behind KBC's Annual Mileage Almanac is to share the fun of bicycling that these numbers represent with others, regardless of the number of miles you ride. Thanks to all who submitted reports, and thanks for inspiring everyone to get out there and ride, no matter how much! (listed in alphabetical order by last name. - Ed)

<u>Miles</u>	<u>Member</u>		
407	Marie Billen	3,200	John Knowlton
1,000	Mike Boersema	1,500	Julie Knowlton
3,576	Bob Brennan	10,500	Valerie Litznerski
3,710	Sue Brennan	1,679	Tommy Maile
1,755	Thom Brennan	8,331	Ed Micalizzi
4,999	Tory Cane	1,880	Renee Mitchell
1,286	Chris Dahl	14,204	Tom Noverr
580	Jerry Dahl	3,900	Terry O'Connor
4,039	Terry Florian	4,093	John Olbrot
1,075	Daniel Goldenberger	10,101	Kevin Oostema
10,708	Paul Guthrie	2,650	Bill Price
10,305	Barb Hart	1,106	Paul Selden
10,757	John Hart	800	John Shubnell
3,836	Kevin High	3,650	Pam Sotherland
1,200	Jeanette Hohm	6,850	Timothy A. Stewart, Jr.
7,604	Jim Kindle	6,346	Tim "Eddie" Stewart, Sr.
8,200	Doug Kirk	3,411	Greg Strader
600	Shawn Kloha	4,028	Gordon Vader
5,001	Marty Knop	4,264	Paul Wells
		5,115	Rick Whaley

Based on member reports received in time for submission to the March Pedal Press; may be approximate or based on an estimate. Not responsible for errors/omissions, etc. Please send any corrections/updates to the Pedal Press Editor at editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org.

Keep track of your mileage for next year's KBC Member Mileage Almanac!

Throughout 2019 please submit reports of rides that may be of interest to others to editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org. Trips, adventures, long rides, race results, an experience on a trail, a pleasant outing with the family...in short, share anything you think may help our members get a feeling for the many bicycling experiences out there.

Bike Camp 2019 Coming in May

Registration opens on January 1st for KBC's Bike Camp. If you or someone you know, a family member or friend who isn't comfortable with riding on the road, tell them they can benefit by enrolling in Bike Camp for 2019, a multi-session information and training program for cyclists getting more serious about the sport, or wishing to hone their skills.

KBC has successfully trained new cyclists for 14 years with this program. The instructors are seasoned, experienced cyclists who are passionate about bringing interested folks into this great sport. Attendees complete the program knowing how to safely, comfortably, and efficiently ride their bike.

Topics covered include a review of laws applying to bicycles, safe biking skills, bike fit adjustments to improve comfort and efficiency, fitness goals, nutrition, and bike maintenance. Families, adults new to road cycling, and those renewing their interest in the sport can all benefit from Bike Camp.

Bike Camp Dates:

Session 1: Thursday, May 9th, at 6:30 PM. This is an orientation and informational session, without your bike, held at the Greater Kalamazoo Association of Realtors (GKSR) Auditorium located at 5830 Venture Park Drive, Kalamazoo.

Sessions 2 and 3: Saturdays, May 11 and 18. These are educational and riding sessions held at the Portage YMCA, 2900 West Centre Ave in Portage. We will be getting into the details of safe riding and keeping your bike operating properly, so bring your bike and all your riding gear (helmet, mirror, bike clothing, protective eyewear, and bike gloves).

Sessions 4 and 5: Saturdays, May 25 and June 1. These are also educational and riding sessions, but held at the Texas Township Park Pavilion on Texas Drive. Bring your bike and all your riding gear.

On Saturday, June 29, Bike Camp concludes with participation in KBC's KalTour, the Kalamazoo Scenic Bicycle Tour, which starts at Schoolcraft High School. Schoolcraft, MI 49087.

Cost, includes Bike Camp, one-year KBC membership, and entry into KalTour:

\$60.00 for individuals signed up on or before May 1

\$75.00 for families signed up on or before May 1

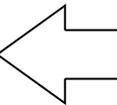
For additional information and to register, hold the Ctrl key and click [here](#).

If you would like to volunteer to help at Bike Camp, or have questions, please email:

bikecamp@kalamazooicycleclub.org

Please come and join us!

-KBC Bike Camp Committee



Dirty Donut Race – Free Registration!

It pays to register early! We are happy to offer everyone a chance at a Free Race Entry Raffle! If we reach 125 registrations by midnight on March 31, 2019 all those names go in a hat. We will then draw 5 names from the hat and will return their full registration costs to them. This gives you a great chance of racing this year's race for FREE!!!!!!

Even if we have not reached 125 registrations by the deadline, we will still draw 1 name of all those that have registered for 1 free registration for this year's race. This offer is limited to the first 125 registrations. The offer closes once we reach 125 registrations even if that occurs prior to midnight on March 31, 2019. The only exclusion is our previous raffle winner Victoria Cane. Sign up by going to BikeReg.com and searching for the "Dirty Donut".



2019 Bike Camp

In 2005, KBC member Zolton Cohen got Bike Camp rolling, to bring the joys of cycling to more people. We are getting things ready for our 15th year. Bike Camp has been expanded and refined over the years, but is focused on the same goals of educating cyclists new to the sport to ride safer, farther, and more comfortably. KBC has successfully recruited some fine friends and new volunteers through Bike Camp over the years. We hear that the price is a good deal, and some people have signed up for a second year for that and because they had a great time. We always have a few volunteers from previous years who come out to camp to lend a hand with the rides.

Those who claim that KBC is elitist ought to join us at Bike Camp to see how helpful and friendly we are to new cyclists! We have made a strong commitment to offering rides for our Bike Campers at the Monday and Wednesday night rides too. In 2018 we had about 40 enrollees who told us how helpful and friendly Bike Camp is. So, if you KBC members would help get the work out, we can again fill Bike Camp to the maximum of 60.

Thanks for your support.

Paul Wells — Bike Camp Chair

(This month's profiled member, Bonnie Conway, attended bike camp 2018. –Ed.)

2019 Blind Camp!

When: Wednesday May 8th, Thursday, May 9th and Friday; May 10th

Time: 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

Where: WMU BTR Park / Western Michigan University College of Engineering

4601 Campus Drive, Kalamazoo, MI

The BTR park is at the south end of Drake Road at Parkview near US-131

KBC members are invited to volunteer for blind camp. We meet rain or shine. If it rains or snows we ride in the parking garage next to the Engineering College. Campers will ride on the back of a tandem piloted by volunteers.



The Blind Association owns seven tandem bicycles so you do not need to own a tandem bicycle to participate.

If you own a tandem and would like to use it, you may.

If you would like to allow your tandem to be used during the event we would greatly appreciate your generosity.

Ride captains will have the option to guide their camper(s) on a 1, 2, or 3 mile closed course on Wednesday and Thursday nights. Friday will be a one-mile time-trail.

Volunteers are needed to:

- Be ride Captains

[Continued on next page]

Bring your bike to St. Patrick's Day Parade!

It was so nice to talk to your members this evening about our parade. We are very excited to have Kalamazoo Bicyclists as the Grand Marshall of the parade.

The 19th annual St. Patrick's Day parade is on Saturday March 16th, 2019. The parade steps off at 11:00 a.m. on the Burdick Street Mall, at Michigan Ave. marching south down Burdick Street, turning right on to Cedar Street and ending in front of the Knights of Columbus hall. The parade goes on, rain, snow or sun.

People can walk or ride in the parade and can wear bike gear or regular clothes. The cyclists will start the parade. We ask that the cyclists gather at the Farmer's Alley/Burdick entrance by 10:45 am.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me.

Kate Brien, Irish American Club, kateinkzoo@att.net

- Fit helmets
- Secure pant legs
- Watch service animals and hold canes, jackets etc.
- Place riders on and off the bicycles
- Help encourage students to ride. (some may be very nervous and need assurance all will go well). *My daughter who is now three-years-old loves to cheer on the kids; showing anyone can help.*
- possibly make last minute or unforeseen supply requests. (such as on cold evening we needed to purchase gloves and hot chocolate for the kids.
- timers especially on Friday night. (this role is very important to the kids)

The more volunteers will allow the campers to more riding experiences. We hope to utilize their 90 minutes of time with us to give them as much riding experience as the desire each day. This is a great way to share our sport and pass on the love of cycling while putting a positive note on Kalamazoo. People can volunteer on one or all three nights.



Wednesday and Thursday night campers will be riding with ride campers at a conversational pace to help gain more cycling experiences. Friday night campers will be doing a one mile time-trail with their captains. Students can make as many attempts with as many ride captain as possible to ride the time they desire. Note some campers are strong and can ride very well others may treat it as a leisurely ride and just enjoy the time on the bike.

Campers are kids from all parts of the US as well as several countries throughout the world. They are Middle school and High School students that will be showing up to ride. The campers have a wide variety of cycling experience. Some have never ridden a bike in their life while others ride often on a regular bases.

I hope you can join us one or all of the evening. If you have questions you can email me at BikerTerry@mail.com or text me at 269-929-7595 or send me a message on the KBC Facebook page.

Thanks, Terry Butcher

KBC MEMBER PROFILE: BONNIE CONWAY

Interviewed 2/23/19 by John Knowlton

Did you ride bikes when you were a kid?

Yes. When I was 10 I was riding a basic girls bike and looked back for my friend and I fell and smacked my face on a concrete curb. I cracked two teeth which later abscessed in high school. Ultimately I lost 6 teeth.

Biking was how I got all over the city. To school, to Dairy Queen, to the park. It was my transportation until I could drive. I grew up in Detroit and we used to ride with a passenger sitting on the handlebars of our ten speeds!

When did you start riding with the club?

Once I got my drivers' license I did not ride for pleasure. In 2018 I attended Bike Camp and then I got the bug. I started riding on Monday nights with the club. The first night I did 18 miles, which was quite a bit! I have now ridden up to 22 miles.

You received the 2018 Most improved rider award at the Recovery party in January. What contributed to your gains?

I had a lot of support and encouragement from a lot of people in the club. Julie Knowlton just told me to keep riding, even though I felt inadequate and couldn't keep up on Monday nights. Thom Brennan was my ride leader every Monday and he would stay with me even though I was the slowest rider and he would encourage me. Chris Dahl is the first person I rode with and did the 18 miles. She stayed with me the whole time. And three people from bike camp always encouraged me, too: Karen Appleby, Stacy and Shaun Ballard.

What do you have planned next in cycling?

I started riding on a 25 year old hybrid bike, which made it difficult to keep up. But I told myself if I could make it through the season I would buy myself a nice road bike. So I bought a new Cannondale and it's named Green Lightning. I haven't ridden it yet! I am looking forward to riding her and being able to keep up with the group on Monday nights. I am hoping to do a century this year and am planning to do PALM, Pedal Across Lower Michigan. I also became a sanctioned ride leader in January and am excited to leading a ride in the spring. I would like to mentor another new cyclist as other people mentored me.



Bonnie and Green Lightning!

ABOUT KBC

Recognizing that Southwestern Michigan offers a rare combination of good bicycling roads and great scenery, several cycling enthusiasts got together in 1971 to form the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

They wanted to support and encourage other riders in the area, to promote the sport of bicycling, and to have fun. As shown in the Club Mission, that tradition continues today in the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club.

Club Mission

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. Hold Ctrl and click [here](#) to view the constitution.

Editor's Letter: Thinking about the Calendar

As I write, I anticipate getting out on my road bike for the first time in weeks. We have experienced the Polar Vortex, ice storms, and more school snow days than anyone can remember in years. Kinda makes me yearn for spring. And then summer and fall! I have mentioned that Julie and I face milestone birthdays in 2019 (it was the summer of '69. . .) and I have decided to respond by climbing a bunch of elevation this year and next. To do so I have laid out a number of events in 2019 and 2020 – about one major event per month. As a way to spur your thinking, I will share my calendar here. What's on your riding calendar for the season? Send me a note to share your plans.

March – Melting Mann, a gravel ride starting in Vandalia, MI. I have a buddy, Doug from Indiana, who recently starting riding and this will be his first gravel event. 22 miles, about 1,000 feet of climbing.

April – Barry Roubaix, the largest gravel event in the country is right on our backyard (Hastings, MI). Doug will join this ride as well. He signed up for the 62 mile version, so I did too. 3,700 feet of climbing.

May – Assault on Mount Marion, which is a short version of the Assault on Mount Mitchell. The ride starts in Spartanburg, SC and ends 72 miles later in North Carolina. About 5,000 feet of climbing on paved roads.

June – Road and mountain biking around Salida, Colorado. It's good to have friends! My buddy Roger has rented a home in Salida for the month of June and invited my family to come out for road and mountain riding, as well as rock climbing. Lots of climbing and gasping for oxygen. Salida sits at 7,000 feet and all the roads and trails go up from there.

July has lots of cool events; I just haven't picked one yet. Maybe ride around Torch again. I welcome your suggestions at the e-mail address below.



Nasty February gravel roads!

August – Midwest Tandem Rally in Columbus, IN. Various routes and elevations. This is not far from Brown County, home of some awesome mountain biking!

September – Julie and I will ride the Katy trial on our tandem. This is one of the first rail trails. It stretches about 230 miles along the Missouri River in Missouri. Not much elevation on a rail trail.

October – Hilly Hundred in Ellettsville, IN. This is a party on wheels! 107 miles over two days with about 5,500 feet to climb.

Well, that's what I have planned. Thinking about the season helps keep hope alive in the winter!

John Knowlton, editor editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org