

## PRESIDENT’S LETTER — JOHN KNOWLTON

### Pleasure to serve, great team!

Remember way back to 2021? The pandemic was winding down, some folks were still skittish about meeting in person, and life felt weird. And you elected me to preside over KBC. It’s been a pleasure to serve. There were planned meetings, unplanned meetings, minor issues, parties, rides—and more rides! The best part of being president has been talking, working, and riding with club members and the community. We focused on reconnecting the bike community post-pandemic by inviting bicycle influencers to our meetings. We kept up with Kal Tour and shifted our winter party to early March, a great kick-off to the cycling season. I’ve enjoyed it all!

Julie and I have a LOT going on in 2026:

- A milestone wedding anniversary
- One of our kids is getting married for sure and probably a second
- Two graduations
- Delivering our youngest child to Bible college in Colorado
- And a months-long parenting sabbatical. We intend to keep going west from Colorado throughout the fall and early winter.

Three of your officers are staying in their roles: Jacinda Roedel as Secretary and webmaster, Pam Sotherland as Treasurer, Paul Guimond as Vice President. And Joanne Beverage will take over as President. Please welcome her and even offer to help!

### New communication tools coming

One of the first big projects you’ll see in 2026 is a brand new website. This will make it easier to get the information you need about the club as well as help us communicate more clearly to the public. This is a big job and I thank the executive committee along with Charlie Grdina and everyone else who lends a hand!

### Other cool stuff in 2026

Our Spring Kick off party will be March 7 at Wind + James. This is a great time to eat and drink with friends, hear about new rides, and volunteer to build the community. It’s already in my calendar!



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**Please send stories**

# KBC Business

The next KBC meeting will be **Saturday, 07 March 2026** at **Wind+James (555 E Eliza St, Schoolcraft)** after the KBC Party.

**Kalamazoo Bicycle Club  
Oshtemo Community Center**

## **2026 Meeting Schedule** (no longer monthly )

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 (KBC Party)

May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – Nominations

November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – Elections

## **Current KBC Open Positions:**

Social Director

Communications Director

KalTour Co-Director

## **KBC Meeting Notes - November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (Veterans Day)**

**Attendees** – John Knowlton - outgoing President, Mike Krischer – KalTour, Paul Wells – Education, Mike Boersma – Member, Doug Kirk – President Emeritus and Insurance Coordina-

tor, Bill Surna – Member, Rick Whaley – database manager, Kathy Kirk – member, Pam Sotherland – Treasurer, Paul Selden – member, Joanne Beverage – President Elect, Jacinda Roedel – Secretary and webmaster, Paul Guimond – Vice President, Charlie Grdina – Pedal Press Editor

**Officer Elections** – Joanne Beverage – President, Paul Guimond – Vice President, Pam Sotherland – Treasurer, Jacinda Roedel - Secretary

**Finance Report** – Reviewed by Pam Sotherland. See page 5 for details

**Education Committee** – Paul Selden - the community is feeling a gap and I see it in their behavior. Support what the Kalamazoo Bike club wants to do, what the bike shops and other bike organizations want and promote how to ride safely. There is a lack of awareness and there has not been a Ride of Silence in years.

Paul Wells - With the arrival of e-bikes, kids and teenagers are riding with camouflage colors, no helmets or lights, riding on sidewalks, going the wrong way in a bike lane while cruising along at 20mph and no real knowledge of how to handle an e-bike. It is a very dangerous situation. How do we educate that demographic?

John Knowlton – attempting to educate new cyclists, and advocate for safe infrastructure and legislation. Allen B – Vulnerable Road User bill that has new life and has another year to pass.

Finding ways to get lights in the hands of the cyclists, pamphlets, safety information section on the KBC Website...

John Knowlton asked does someone want to take on the role of Education Chair and Mike Boresma has volunteered. Hats off to Mike for his continued contributions to KBC !

**Website** – Are we going to bandage the current or start over? The motion for a new website was approved with unanimous consensus!

**KalTour 2026** – Mike Kirshner said Kal Tour has become harder physically for him. Gathering supplies is easy. Volunteers needed both Saturday and Sunday. At Kick Off party, recruit volunteers. Mike has been running KalTour for approximately 25+ years! He will head KalTour again for 2026. Mike also thanked everyone that volunteered and participated with KalTour 2025, and mentioned the Fall Bike Celebration Bike Tour will be on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**LMB Ride Calendar** – Paul Guimond received a League of Michigan Bicyclist (LMB) email newsletter and saw they were calling for adding rides to their calendar. From the letter - “If you’re an LMB member, the registration and login for the Ride Calendar is separate from your LMB membership account on our website. You’ll need to register here (click “Register” under the “Log In” button to the right of this message) to add or access your event(s), as the systems are independent from each other.”

**New rides in the Portage area** – Bill Surna said the City of Portage is in the process of hosting a **Portage Poker Palooza - Family Poker Ride**. Date to be determined – September 2026. There are 7 different parks the poker ride will visit. There will be prizes for kids and adults along with Food Trucks and live music. They are hoping the bike club can man one of the stops and have a table with safety information and advocacy. On Labor Day weekend, Portage is hosting the Midwest Tandem Rally. It is starting on Friday at Ramona Park and will end on Sunday. The Host Hotel is Delta Marriott. The Saturday the ride is out of Mattawan or Schoolcraft. Sunday is a donut ride – location not yet designated.- Michigan United Tandem Society has hired Deb Droppers to be the overall coordinator of the event

**Photo Contest** – The Photo contest submissions are being extended until Feb 09 2026. The winner will be announced at the March Launch Party.

**\*\*Thank you to John Knowlton for everything you have done for the KBC!\*\***

**Jacinda Roedel, Secretary & Webmaster**

## **KBC Member Meeting October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Attendees** – John Knowlton, Jacinda Roedel, Thom Brennan, Paul Wells, Rick Whaley, Mike Borsma, Doug Kirk, Gordy Vader, Peter Cole

Condolences to Mike Krishner and family. Janet, Mike's wife died Sunday, October 12th. They were married for 43 years!

**Team Clark Logic** – They provide volunteers for ride leaders, time trials and KalTour etc. Vote was unanimous vote to continue a \$1000 a year donation ton to TCL through 2027.

**EC Nominations** – John nominates Joanne Beverage – President, Paul Guimond willing to stay for one more year – VP, Self nominated Pam Sotherland – Treasurer, Self nominated Jacinda Roedel – Secretary. Paul would like someone to take the VP position if possible.

**Ride Captain** – Thank you Gordy Vader for stepping back into the Ride Captain role. Welcome back Gordy! Zoom meeting for the ride leaders to be sanctioned.

**Monday night ride e-mail** - sent to John regarding Monday night ride safety. Make sure groups are not too big. Decision made that there should be no more than 12-14 in a group. 20 – 25 and there should be an immediate split into two groups. Share the road. Give room to cars. Early start, nice weather, not enough ride leaders. Alienating drivers. Ride leaders should guide riders that do not follow the rules or recognize hazards. Unruly riders should not be allowed to ride with the club.

**Education Chair** - Paul Wells – He would like to resign from the Education chair role. \$2400 in the education fund where the bulk of money goes to Dominic fund, \$200 each time. Donation jars in bike shops. Jars generate a lot of money. Pedal North jar was taken when the shop was robbed. Remaining money is from the chain gang Memorial Fund which Paul Runnels has given to KBC. Mike Boersma who is an LCI, Renee, Bill Surna, Clark Bennet. John asked, does the club need an education director and committee? Discussion about funding for it. Can the club do this? Executive committee could have ideas. Get incoming President, Joanne Beverage's opinion. John thanked Paul Wells for his time and commitment as the Education Chair.

**Bike Camp** - Gordy asked, since we quit doing bike camp, what are we doing for education? Signs are plentiful. Bumper magnets are popular. Do we need to give those away again? What else can be done for Education?

**Website renovation update** – Jacinda reached Core PHP for website renovation. The current site is no longer supported as Boiling Pot Media (current website developer) is defunct. Prices would be between \$5000 to update or \$15000 to recreate. A meeting on Thursday, November 11, 2025, with Ashley Blakemore with CorePHP, before the club meeting will be held to discuss options.

**Financial Update** - John will be asking Pam for a financial update so we know what kind of funds may be needed for updates or complete renovations. Table the website renovations and Education Chair positions until the new president can review everything. Paul Guimond weighed in with an alternative website update.

Tom Brennen asked if we should reach out to Bike Friendly Kalamazoo or the Chain Gang for donations? Ask the Tri County Bike Association in Lansing, DALMAC? We can ask for funds as non-profit. Opportunities. Small club.

**John Knowlton** – John will be stepping down from the position of President after leading the KBC for 4 years. Best wishes to John and Julie on their future endeavors and adventures!

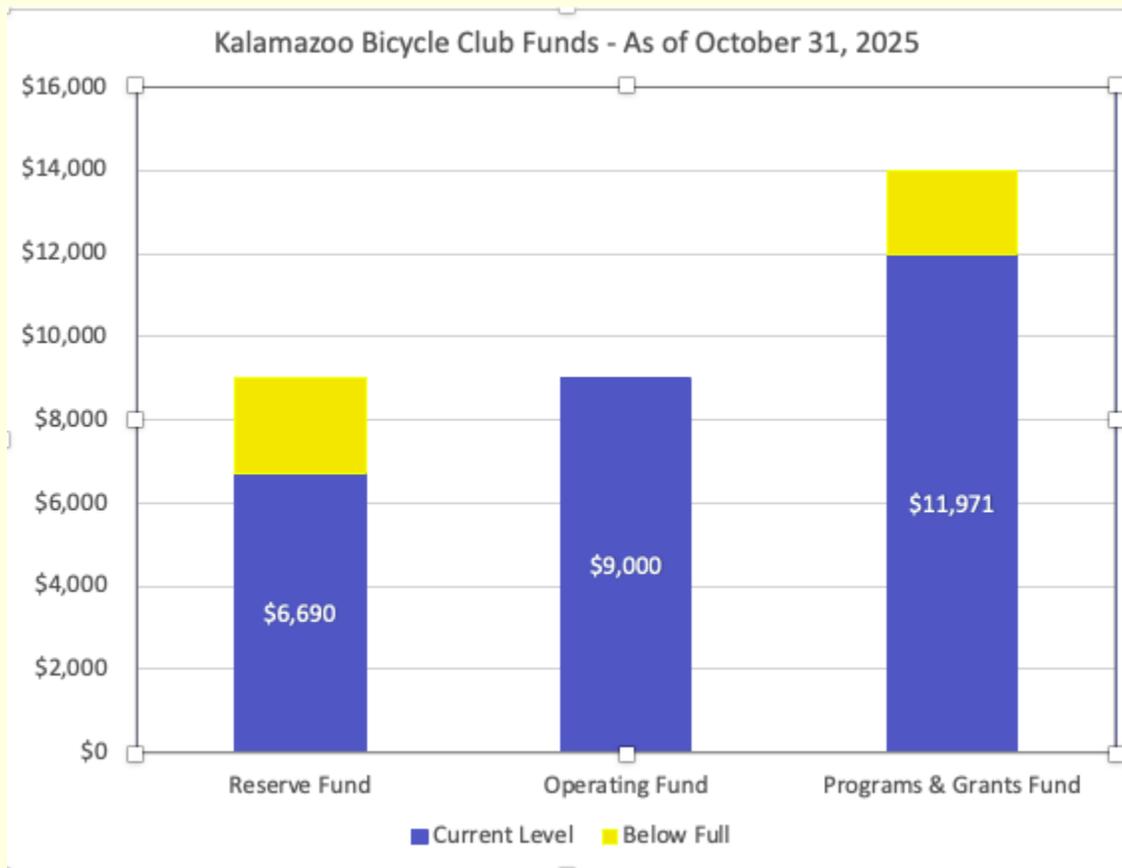
**KalTour** – Portage will not be hosting KalTour in 2027. It will be held at Wind and James again in June of 2027

# Q4 2025 KBC Finances

*Operating Fund (membership dues minus operating costs) = Initial balance set in January and fluctuates throughout the year.*

*Reserve Fund (calculated each December for the next year) = Avg. operating costs for previous 4 yrs.*

*Programs and Grants Fund = Current Assets – (Operating Fund + Reserve Fund).*



Notes:

- Programs and Grants Fund includes Bike Camp, KalTour, Cycling Shorts, and grants.
- Operating Fund supports all other club activities, including ride insurance.
- KBC is open to receiving unrestricted donations and the full amount of those donations will go into the Programs and Grants Fund.

**Pam Sotherland, KBC Treasurer**

## November 2025 KBC Membership

Total Memberships: 240

Total Individuals: 373

New or Renewed Members: Kathy Braginton; Jay Campbell; Andrew Florian; Nick Garrison; Nick & Kelley Hampton; Dawn Hinz; Terry & Kathy Hutchins; Rick & Faith Huyser; Jason Kae-Smith; Mike Krischer; Leah Peterson; Bill Price; Lindsay South & Jim McKim; Walter Smolenski & Family; Jason Sparks; Scott Spray; Pam Stinchcomb; Gregory Warsnop

October Expired Members: Ray Jennings; Samuel Lewis

November Expired Members: Jenna Kovach; Lisa LaForge

December Expired Members: David Anderson; Gordy Vader

**Rick Whaley, Membership Director**

## KBC Photo Contest (Extended to Feb 2026)

It has been another beautiful year of riding here in S/W Michigan. With everyone now traveling with a camera, folks have certainly captured some shots that will rival the front covers of National Geographic. I know there are many great photos sitting in your pockets just waiting to get out. I will do a running slide show with pictures at the KBC Anniversary Party in March to select the winners by popular vote.

Contest Rules: The photos, 2 per person, should be cycling related and have at least a bike or riders in the frame somewhere. You must have taken the photo yourself and not used any editing software to enhance the shot.

We will vote on the winner at the KBC meeting in March with the first, second and third place winners will taking home prizes (TBD, but you know they will be big and you may be able to retire early)

Please send photos to: [editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org](mailto:editor@kalamazoobicycleclub.org) along with a description of the photo (who, what and where) by **Friday 09 February 2026**. Subject line of <KBC Photo Contest >

**Charlie Grdina, KBC Editor**

## The BEST KBC Time Trial of 2025

I counted over 50 people attending the Fall Time Trial. This event was held in conjunction with Team Clark Logic. It was an excellent evening with low winds and clear skies. The course was flat and fast and some of the best riders around competed for bragging rights and opportunity to win an apple pie.

In speaking with several riders who competed they indicated they would be up for more time trials in 2026. By the smiles everyone's face you can tell good times were had by all. Scott Spray and Sam Schnepp provided the timing system which worked out very well. The impetus and planning for this event came from the KBC Vice President, Paul Guimond. Thank you to all the volunteers, supporters and riders who made this event a success.



## **WANTED: KALTOUR 2026 CO-DIRECTOR**

The club is seeking someone to join Mike Krischer as the Co-director of KalTour 2026. There are three essential qualifications for this position: You must be a member of the Kalamazoo Bicycle Club (or be willing to join); you must be available to help load supplies on the day before KalTour (Saturday June 27); and the next day (Sunday June 28) you must help unload supplies in the morning and help load leftover supplies at the conclusion of the ride. Note that it will be possible to ride KalTour after the completion of the initial setup. No prior experience is necessary.

The primary responsibility of the co director will be managing supplies needed for KalTour, primarily non-food items which can be purchased and stored in advance of KalTour. It would be desirable for the co-director to have space to store the plastic bins in which the supplies are packed, but this is not essential.

KalTour serves as the major fund raiser for the club, and the proceeds support grants to many organizations including the adaptive bicycles provided by Kazoo Valley AMBUCS, our longtime partners. As with all other KBC positions, this is a volunteer opportunity. However, there are a few benefits: the co-director will not need to pay to ride KalTour, and helping with cleanup means access to the leftover food.

**Mike Krischer, KalTour Director**

## **Bike Fall Celebration — Thank You To KBC Members**

Thank you from Bike Friendly Kalamazoo to the many KBC members who helped make our Fall Bike Celebration a success this past September. There are too many KBC riders and volunteers to mention every one by name in this space, but we think you may recognize Steve Cox, Rick Whaley, John and Barb Hart, Paul Guthrie, Terry Hutchins, John Ballema and Paul Runnels in these photos.

We hope to see everyone again on Sunday September 20 for the 2026 Fall Bike Celebration Bike Tour!

**Paul Selden, KBC Member & 2025 FBC Chair**



## AMBUCS Letter of Gratitude of KALTOUR Donation

KBC Leadership,

I just wanted to share with you that the Kal-Tour funds were used to gift a little cutie an Amtryke on Saturday at the Mendon River Fest. Her name is Gracie and her parents are Erica and Jason Kuras. She resides in Kalamazoo and attends KPS. She got right on the bike and rode around the festival site!! So cute.

Donna Whitcomb

President, Kazoo Valley Ambucs  
Board Member, Bike Friendly Kalamazoo

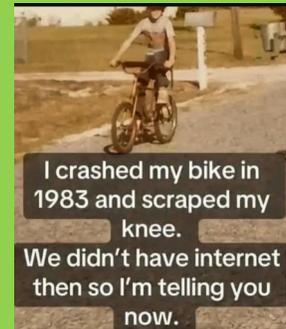


## Kalamazoo plans bike lanes for Cork Street and Portage Street



Good progress being made on new cycling infrastructure being implemented in the city of Kalamazoo and Portage. Click on the above picture to hear the entire story on MILIVE.

Paul Sotherland, KBC Grants & Awards (+ crash recovery victim)



## Looking for an Adventure ? Look no further !



It is great to see new dedicated non-motorized routes established. The Iron Belle Trail is Michigan's showcase trail that touches hundreds of municipalities and crosses through 48 different Michigan counties. Using existing trails, networks, and new connections, the trail extends more than 2,000 miles from the far western tip of the Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit, with a route of bicycling and a route of hiking. Click on the above map for more information and start planning your adventure for 2026.

## Sisterhood in Biking

(A beautiful piece from Leah Peterson that many readers & riders will relate to)

I moved to Michigan from Las Vegas 4 years ago. I loved to ride my bike but had never ridden with other people; I had always ridden alone or with my young sons. But now I would move across the country and I wanted my bike life to be different when I got there. Now friendless and wishing for bike culture, I decided I would look up the bike club.

This was not as easy as you're imagining. Having zero group rides, I knew nothing about etiquette, terminology, or even speed groups. I rode a nontraditional bike. And furthermore, I did not know a single person in town. Good news: there was nothing to lose and everything to gain. John Knowlton and Teri Olbrot plugged me into the KBC, and I quickly and found the groups I liked. I settled into 3 different groups, but I found I especially looked forward to the Friday Women's Ride.

The Friday women had been riding together for many years and it was clear that I was walking into something that was already well-established. These women had been not just riding bikes on Fridays but also doing LIFE together. One does not just join such a group; one earns a place in it. I had a lot to learn. That group had chemistry. Falling into their rhythm I found it became intuitive. Their communication is excellent; it is the best of any group I've found. I tried never to miss and became a regular at that ride. We have ridden thousands of miles together by now; I am fairly sure I can now recognize a Friday rider by her pedal stroke. But we know each other off the bike, too, because we have made it about more than just a ride on Fridays. We have walked through joyous occasions like marriages and births and graduations together. But we have also shouldered diagnoses, surgeries, and deaths. We have taken bike trips out of town and shared meals at each other's homes.

When you churn out enough miles together, you build something more than just a bike group; you build a sisterhood. I am no longer an interloper in that established Friday women's group.

And when I talk about the Friday Women's Group I no longer say "they." I say "we."

### **Leah Peterson, KBC member**

The link below is to another outstanding article relating to biking in community.

<https://www.bicycling.com/culture/a69205126/women-bike-group-fundraising-one-million-for-cancer/>



# Loaves & Fishes Gratitude Ride

Please join us for a Ride & Potluck to collect donations for Loaves and Fishes.

A special thanks to Ron's Beans for hosting us.

We will meet at [Ron's Beans](#) (830 W Centre Ave, Portage, MI 49024) at 11:00 on 28 November .

You can drop off your potluck items and donations in the parking lot, then please proceed to park across the street.



The ride:

The ride rolls out at 11am. This should allow enough time for morning shopping sprees and hopefully the temperatures will rise above "I can't feel my face".

There will be two routes to choose from:

The Long Route will be 30 miles

Pace 17-18mph.

Group may be split into multiple paces and groups if needed.

The short route will be party pace.

Pace will be above 14mph and may be quicker.

Please bring a bike that you can average this pace on flat pavement please.

The route: <https://www.strava.com/routes/3417267391940455666>

\*\*\*If the weather is bad but we still want to ride, we will all do the short route.

The Potluck:

Please bring a dish to pass. You can make it. You can buy it. You can bring a thanksgiving leftover. Just please bring something. There will be plenty of outlets to plug in crockpot and equipment.

We will be eating outside. There will be heaters and a fire to keep you warm. You may want to bring a chair to sit on....

The Food drive:

With food prices higher than ever, a lot of people are in need.

Please help us do our part to help Loaves and Fishes feed more people.

Please bring one or many of the following:

CEREAL

CANNED SOUPS AND STEWS

MEALS IN A BOX (LIKE HAMBURGER HELPER)

SHELF-STABLE ALMOND OR RICE MILK

BAKING MIXES

PROTEIN DRINKS

CANNED MEAT

SHELF-STABLE TORTILLAS

GRANOLA OR CEREAL BARS

MICROWAVABLE FOODS

KID-FRIENDLY SNACKS

Cash donations accepted as well!

I hope to see you there!

Here is a link to the ride: <https://strava.app.link/ExjWT6PW6Xb>

*Cheers,*

Nick Hampton—KBC Member /TCL Race Team President

**BLACK FRIDAY**  
**BIKE RIDE, POTLUCK AND FOOD DRIVE**

**NOV 28TH**

FOOD DRIVE TO BENEFIT  
KALAMAZOO LOAVES &  
FISHES

BRING A DISH TO PASS & SHELF  
STABLE FOOD TO DONATE.

**THE RIDE:**  
**20 OR 30 MILES**  
MINIMUM AVERAGE SPEED - 14MPH  
RIDE ROLLS OUT AT 11AM POTLUCK TO FOLLOW

SCAN THE QR  
CODE TO  
LEARN MORE

PRESENTED BY:  
**VELOVAN** MOBILE BICYCLE SERVICE  
**RON'S BEANS**



## 2026 Cycling Events.

Not all inclusive but looking to capture the main cycling events in the immediate (50 mile or so) area. Opportunities to volunteer for the club abound.

[League of Michigan Cyclist](#)—Link to most major bicycle events in Michigan

[RACE SCHEDULE – MGRS \(michigangravelraceseries.com\)](#) - Link to MI gravel races

[Michigan Bike Events | Bicycle Races in Michigan - Michigan Bicycle Law](#) - Link to MI Road & Gravel

[Events – Bike Friendly Kalamazoo](#) - Link to many local cycling events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Link</u>
Melting Mann	28 March	<a href="#">Melting Mann</a>
Barry Roubaix	18 April	<a href="#">Barry Roubaix</a>
Dirty Donut	20 June	<a href="#">Dirty Donut</a>
KalTour	27 June	<a href="#">Kalamazoo Bicycle Club</a>