



December 2021

PRESIDENT’S LETTER – JOHN KNOWLTON

Thanksgiving and Anticipation

Thanksgiving is less than a week away as I write this. And the first thing I want to do is to thank the officers of the club. Doug Kirk served as President for the past three years. But over the past decades he has been a consistent presence in the bicycle community, serving many formal and informal roles. Thank you, Doug, for leading the club through the pandemic period. Stacie Ballard has been Secretary for two years, stepping down after the October meeting as she and Shaun moved to Bloomington, IN. Both Ballards came through Bike camp a few years ago, quickly increasing their cycling skill and dedication to the KBC. I appreciate them both and expect to see them next fall at the Hilly Hundred! Thank you, Stacie for your great notetaking and leadership.

Pam Sotherland has brought excellence to the Club’s financial management and reporting, and I am happy to say that she will continue to serve as Treasurer. Paul Guimond also provides continuity as he remains Vice President. Some of the appointed positions have changed hands, too. The photos and names have been updated on the KBC website: <https://www.kalamazoobicycleclub.org/about/club-officers/>. It takes a great team to make the KBC great, and I am thankful for each of these people willing to volunteer:

- Jillian Howland – Communications Director
 - Rick Whaley – Membership Director
 - Paul Wells – Education Chair
 - Charlie Grdina – Pedal Press Editor
 - Mike Boersema – Fundraising Director
 - Tim Stewart, Jr. – Race Team Delegate
 - Valerie Litznerski – Grants and Awards Committee Chair
 - Gordy Vader – Ride Captain
 - Doug Kirk – Insurance Coordinator
 - Paul Sotherland – Social Director
 - Michael Krischer and Terry Butcher – Kal Tour Co-Directors
 - Kathy Kirk – Webmaster
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HIGHLIGHTS

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Please send photos of your rides to:

editor@kalamazooBicycle Club.org

KBC Business

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

Finance report— Pam Sotherland

KBC MONTHLY FINANCES as of 11/8/2021

PREVIOUS BALANCE CASH (PNC Checking + PayPal) ACCOUNTS: \$15,109

Monthly RECEIPTS (Cash In): \$190

Monthly EXPENSES: \$16

CURRENT BALANCE CASH ACCOUNTS: \$15,283

TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS: \$4,048

Discretionary Expenses: \$500

Education Fund: \$2.503

ROR21: \$1,045

ENCUMBERED EXPENSES: \$0

Minutes of KBC Meeting - November 09, 2021

ATTENDANCE

Teri Olbrot
Paul Guimond
Pam Sotherland
Rick Whaley
John Olbrot
Marc Irwin

Bill Surna
Paul Sotherland
Paul Wells
John Knowlton
Paul Selden
Clark Bennett
Charlie Grdina

Terry O'Connor
Mike Boersma
Thom Brennan
Doug Kirk

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) REPORTS:

President: Doug Kirk

Doug called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM and presented the unchallenged nominees for the incoming Executive Committee for a vote. They were elected by unanimous proclamation as follows: President: John Knowlton; Vice President: Paul Guimond; Treasurer: Pam Sotherland; Secretary: Teri Olbrot.

Vice President: Paul Guimond

Nothing to report at this time

Treasurer: Pam Sotherland

See Finance Report above

DIRECTORS REPORTS:

Education Chair: Paul Wells

Yard Signs: Pedal North has agreed to be a pick-up location for “Give Them Five” yard signs. Individuals and groups can pick up one or more signs from Pedal as needed.

Bike Camp: The Education Committee continues to collect information and opinions about next year’s Bike Camp. New venues, formats, and a streamlined curriculum are all being considered. A question was raised about vaccine requirements. This hasn’t been addressed yet but will likely be influenced by the venue used.

NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mike Boersma reported that the Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) approved a county-wide non-motorized master plan today. The plan is based on the PBR map that Paul Sotherland and other KBC members have been working on for the past several years and includes publishing KBC and KalTour routes on the KCRC website in a separate non-motorized section. Additionally, road improvements, i.e., 4’ shoulders, will be prioritized on major roads as they are rebuilt.

Proposed legislation to do away with the 1% minimum funding requirement for non-motorized traffic road improvements has been rejected by KCRC, which typically budgets 5-8%. There are specific non-motorized projects coming up, i.e., a path on KL Ave. under US 131; continuation of the KVRT east to Augusta and Battle Creek; and a path from Grand River to the KVRT. The KCRC is doing a remarkable job on behalf of non-motorized traffic here in Kalamazoo.

Paul Seldon thanked KCRC and KBC for their hard work. He added special thanks to Doug Kirk and Paul Sotherland and the rest of KBC leadership for their work on behalf of non-motorized traffic infrastructure.

Bill Surma passed on information about the Portage Parks and Receptions Department looking for funds to put up bike repair spots along Portage trails. It was noted that the Club may have already contributed funds for this. Pam Sotherland will follow up and contact Portage Parks and Recreation.

Meeting adjourned 7:45PM

(President's letter, continued from page #1)

And to whet your appetite for the future of the Club, here are some things I look forward to (more details to come):

Recovery Party will be back in 2022 ! Tentatively set for Sat 21 May when we can be outdoors and the current COVID surge has passed. This is a great chance to visit with cycling friends and meet other people in the club.

KBC was founded in 1971 which makes 2021 our **Fiftieth Anniversary!** Due to the pandemic, we sort of missed out on club riding in 2020 and had a halting start to the season this year, so expect us to celebrate 50 years of cycling in 2022. There may be something special related to this at the recovery party, so please do your best to attend!

And speaking of the pandemic, there has been a lot of disruption in everyone's life. This has prompted many people to become new or renewed cyclists. I anticipate the club finding ways to engage and serve these future friends on the bike. And this will be coupled with additional avenues for Club members to re-connect. In times of chaos and change, real relationships become even more important and 2022 will be a great year for us to **intentionally focus on connection**. Expect the club to seek your input on ways to make this happen.

As the only candidate for President, I was unanimously elected at the November member meeting. I thank you for your support! And I look forward to working, riding, and connecting with you. Please drop me a note with anything on your mind to president@kalamazoobicycleclub.org.

Email: president@kalamazoobicycleclub.org

KBC Statistics (Thanks to Rick Whaley for managing these details!)

Please check for your name here!

Total Memberships: 518

Total Individuals: 300

New or Renewed Members: Gautier Debyser & Family; Richard Meyer; Adam Rafels

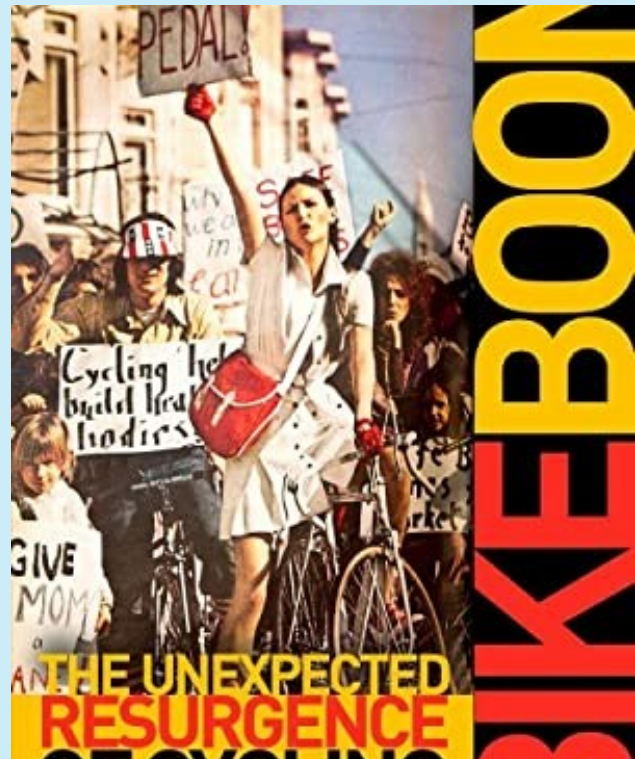
December Expired Members: David Anderson; Nicole Bradshaw & Family; Pat Gipper & Family; Janice Utter; Matt Wells

Born in a Bike Boom - KBC Golden Anniversary

Editor's Letter, Charlie Grdina

The bike club, founded in 1971, celebrates its 50 year anniversary this year. This is an occasion worthy of some reflection.

With the riots of the 60's still fresh in the review mirror 1971 was a year of many changes for the country. The Vietnam war was coming to an end, energy prices were high, the clean air and water act recently signed and Earth Day was a thing. I was 11 years old when KBC was founded and bicycling in my home town in Northwest Indiana. My bike was my ticket to freedom to explore the town and I have many a good memory traveling by bike with my brothers to summer watering holes with fishing pole in hand. I can attest to the severe air pollution I would see settling over the southern end of Lake Michigan caused by automobile exhaust and the heavy industry of steel mills and oil refineries. Highway congestion was prevalent in many of the major cities across the U.S. with the stock answer to the problem being to add another 2 lanes of highway which only further exacerbated the problem.



Bike Boom, The Unexpected Resurgence of Cycling by Carlton Reid reveals surprising parallels between the cycling community of 1971 and 2021. In 1971, *Time* magazine notes that the U.S. was riding “the biggest wave of popularity in its 154 year cycling history” with 64 million Americans regularly using bikes. Cannondale, Trek and Specialized came into existence during this period (as did the Kryptonite lock in attempt to keep society more honest). The boom was both rural and urban, recreational and practical. Bike shops would order 100 bikes and were lucky if they received 25.

There was a civic awareness and action for improving the infrastructure for cycling across the country. By 1973 influential politicians, John Volpe and Stuart Udall to name a few, helped pass many bikeway bills and the Department of the Interior was planning 100,000 miles of bicycle paths to be constructed over the next decade. Why did the 1970's bike boom go bust? Although some parts of Europe as Oregon and California were able to gain substantial ground in building better bike infrastructure, the economic downturn of the late 70's led to funds being reappropriated for other needs.

We are confronting similar concerns in 2021. The U.S. has just ended a 20-year war in Afghanistan, energy prices are on the rise, and the impact of global warming confronts us all. We are also experiencing another bike boom in response to the pandemic. The bike being inexpensive and efficient transportation it was quickly adopted as an alternative to confined public transportation in many urban areas. With fewer people coming into the city the streets became more appealing to bike traffic. With gyms and indoor activity shut or restricted the bike became the ultimate social distanced activity – need more ventilation, why just pedal faster.

As a bellwether, bike sales grew 55% between December 2020 and February 2021 as compared to previous year's sales. With current shortages and supply chain issues bike shops could not obtain enough new bikes to meet the demand. Bike shop repairs are up over 200% in many shops and the used and consignment market is bumping. I took in a Schwinn Continental of my brothers for repair that had not seen pavement since Jimmy Carter was President and disco rocked the charts. Everyone who has visited a bike shop in the past year has seen sparse bike selection on the floor and a busy crew of mechanics in the back of the house.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill that was recently been passed into law holds promise to building safer and more accessible communities across the country in the coming years. Mike Boersema reported at the last KBC meeting that the Kalamazoo Road Commission (KRC) approved the non-motorized master plan that he, Paul Sotherland and other KBC members had been working on for several years. This is a MAJOR accomplishment and underscores the importance of this organizations willingness to take the priority concern, human safety, forward. Having solid plans in the works and good working relationships already established with the KRC will put us ahead of the curve once this funding is available. Learning from 1971 and 2021, our most important take away is consistency of effort and sustained engagement by the KBC that makes the changes permanent. Congratulations, all.

Excited to be the new KBC editor and look forward to seeing you out cycling the roads around Kalamazoo.

editor@kalamazoobikeclub.org