

spoke'n word

official newsletter of the Rapid Wheelmen Bicycle Club



12.2023

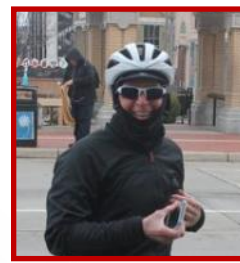
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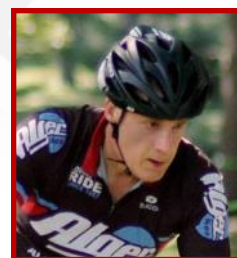
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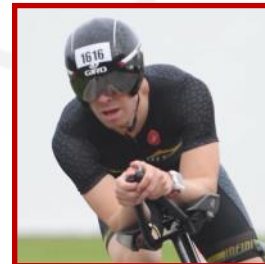
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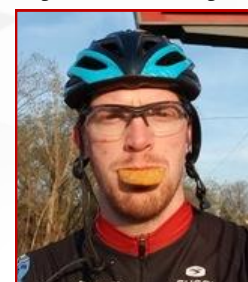
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Dessert Potluck and Bicycle Swap

Thursday, December 7th, 2023

6:30—9:00 PM

Where: The Durkee Abode

2212 N Bristol St, Holland, MI

What: Bring a homemade dessert to share (optional)

BYOB on the Adult Beverages

Trade, buy, or sell those bikes or parts!!

Colorburst 2023—The 40th Anniversary



Our intrepid threesome start the 40th Anniversary Colorburst Tour during a constant rain, 45 degrees, and 15 mph winds. One would want to check their mental status for even trying, but as experienced riders, they know how to prepare for the worst! The initial delusional plan was to ride the entire 100K road route, but some sensibility along with the allure of fresh donuts, grilled dogs and coffee brought them back early and in good spirits. Finishing the 50K route are, left to right, Michael Burden, Vincent Nienhuis, and Jeff Petersen.

Editor

Dave Durkee



Did you miss the newsletter last month? You're not dreaming if you did. The November edition went on hiatus while I caught up on many other things.

Which brings us to this December issue. Here you'll find a report of the 40th Anniversary Colorburst ride ridden by a total of 4 riders. The weather was just awful, with one member renaming the event "Cloudburst". In years past I heard this moniker more than once, so it's not unusual to have cold rainy weather as much as Indian Summer type of weather. Kudos to the 4 brave souls that "took the plunge".

You'll also find my solo ride report of the 100K Adventure route I took 2 weeks later in beautifully dry sunny conditions.

Please note we have a club meeting/event on December 7th in Holland: our annual Desert potluck and bike stuff swap meet. Bring your favorite dessert to share if you like. Come anyway if you don't have one. Since this event is at our house, we'll have various forms of additional entertainment. You may choose from watching roller racing or cyclocross videos, play pool, or even learn to ride rollers!

Looking over the past year, we have accomplished much. The time trials continue to grow, our tours are getting more organized, and the 50th Club Anniversary finally realized its event. Much thanks to Evan Wilson, the board, and all the members. Without you, it would not be possible.

Ride On!

Dave

The Year of the Consumer

Back in 2019 I was talking to Jack Crawford at Loose Spokes Bike Shop in Grand Haven about ordering a custom made bike from Colnago. At that time, he mentioned to me how bike sales are cyclical - some years are good, others can be not so good. Having many decades of experience running his shop, he cited many boom and bust cycles he endured. Social dynamics have a lot to do with the desire to ride, such as a new fad, a new exercise, explore, the economy—you name it. Little did Jack know how accurate he was about the immediate future.

Like any industry, prognosticating about the future prospects of business is more akin a shot in the dark than actual calculation. More often than not, the pundits get it wrong.

Enter the typical small bike shop, working on thin margins, variable payroll demands, and stock that must be ordered almost 6 to 8 months ahead of time. The shop owner takes a risk every year on what to order and what services to provide. Most times they get it about right, but not always.

With the pandemic in 2020, they were caught completely off guard with the huge demand and sold out everything in the store by early Summer. Repairs went through the roof, as at least a repaired older bike was better than no bike.

However, banking on 2021, 2022, and 2023, most shops overstocked inventory and brought on new e-bikes. By all reports, many 2022 and 2023 models are still in the shops with reduced demand.

WELL, consumer, this is your chance!! Look at any shop now and you'll find many excellent rides in stock at greater discounts than last year.

If you're in the market, consumer, NOW is your time!!

Cover image: Jeff Petersen shows off his long time history with the Colorburst Tour after finishing the 50K route.

Photo credit— Dave Durkee

ride calendar

December 2023

Day	Date	Ride Name	Ride Start	Ride Details	Contacts
MON	See you next May!	Ada Time Trials	On site Registration 5:30 to 6:15 First rider off at 6:30:30	Start at Ada Park, Buttrick and Grand River. Registration in East parking lot off of Grand River. 15 mile time trial. Registration available online till 3:00pm at Webscorer.com . “Day of” registrations still available on-site from 5:30 to 6:15 pm	Dave Durkee davedurkeeod@gmail.com
WED	Every Wed	Zwift	~ 7:00 pm	Join FB Messenger group Rapid-Wheelmen Channel or Zwift Rapid Wheelmen Club	Mike Burden 616-915-2048 mwb@mwburden.com
WED	Every Wed	Club Ride or coffee	One group 10:00 am	Email ride leader or check IO group. Pace is easy to moderate	Bob Ayars rsayars@sbcglobal.net
SAT	Every Sat	Club Ride or coffee	One group 10:00 am	Email ride leader/check IO group. Pace is easy to moderate 13 to 17 mph average	Bob Ayars rsayars@sbcglobal.net
SAT	Every Sat	Zwift	Morning	Join FB Messenger group Rapid-Wheelmen Channel or Zwift Rapid Wheelmen Club	Mike Burden 616-915-2048 mwb@mwburden.com

Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

Full Report

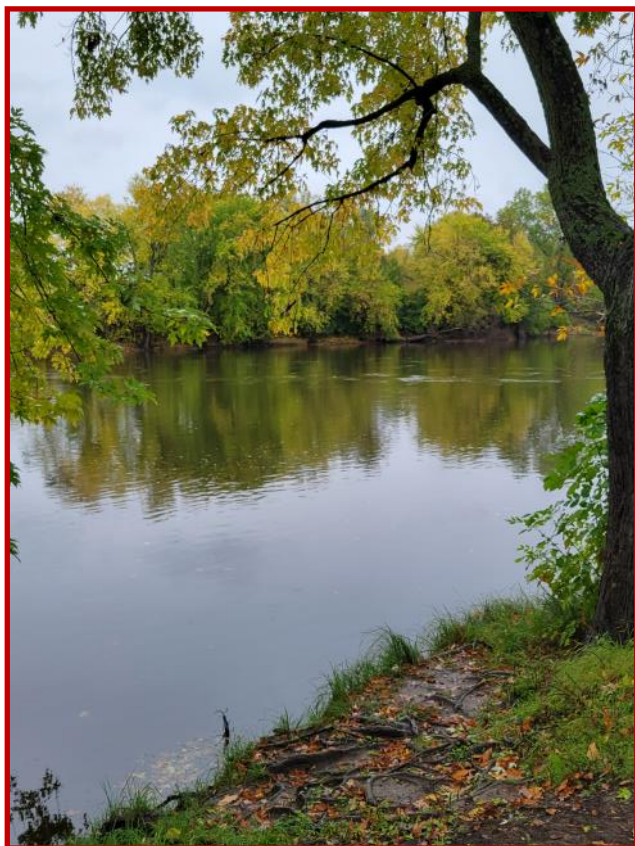


LEFT—The riders and tour volunteer crew take refuge in the ubiquitous RW tent. The volunteers stayed dry and enjoyed the inclement weather with many a story and profuse pontifications.

With the word out in advance, there was no changing the Oct. 14th date, rain or shine! Cool rainy weather greeted the 4 riders. Fueled by fresh donuts and coffee at the start and fruit and hot dogs upon their return, all survived.

Left to right, Jack Wright, Vincent Nienhuis, Evan Wilson, Pat Florian, Jeff Petersen, and Michael Burden.

BELOW—A Fall scene at the Chief Hazy Cloud start, site of the original 1983 start. Colors were good, but about a week early.



BELOW—While 3 riders left early in the rain, Jack Wright ate a boatload of donuts, looked at the radar, and rode in dry weather later. He enjoyed his ride!



Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

Full Report

RIGHT— Queen Cathy Pratt and King Evan Wilson hold royal court in the RW tent while our riders are out battling the elements. I had never used the side covers on the tent before, but they sure came in handy for dryness and warmth. Many discussions were entertained about the club's activities and future plans, as well as the current state of the cycling community in the greater Grand Rapids area. With plenty of coffee and donuts, there was never a shortage of beverage or good conversation.



RIGHT— Ride captain Mark Schlutt (middle) had a friend stop by brandishing some very desirable beverages (left). At right, Vincent Nienhuis awaits his grilled hotdog reward for surviving 50K of cold rainy weather.

Carolyn and Scotty Chapman stopped by to visit for awhile too.

All in all, a good test of our routes and start finish area. Next year we plan to try this location and routes again. We raised about \$200 for charity. If we keep growing, maybe we'll have to go somewhere like Fallasburg Park with more room and have a pancake breakfast— hmmm....

Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

Addendum Ride



ABOVE— So 2 weeks after Colorburst, I had some time to actually ride one of the three routes I had created. The weather was very nice, dry and almost 55 degrees. The peak colors are now about 1 week past, but still better than 2 weeks prior. The three routes are a 50K recreational road route to Fallasburg Park and back to Chief Hazy Cloud Park, a 100K Road route to Greenville, and a 100K mixed surface “Adventure” route. I’m on the Adventure route here on the Fred Meijer trail north of Belding. By using the trail and gravel roads the car traffic was sparse and scenery just beautiful. My 33mm gravel tires did a great job.



RIGHT— The night before my ride, I realized that the [Lowell Classic gravel race](#) was the same day I was riding. In checking the routes, sure enough there was a chance I’d run into them. As I approached Montcalm Avenue south of Fallasburg, I saw riders coming south on Montcalm. My route went north on the same gravel road. This road is quite steep, so I found a great place to watch riders as they struggled to survive the climb.

I ran into several groups on that road (54, 38, and 15 mile), myself riding in the wrong direction! I got out of the way in the nearest ditch I could find.

Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

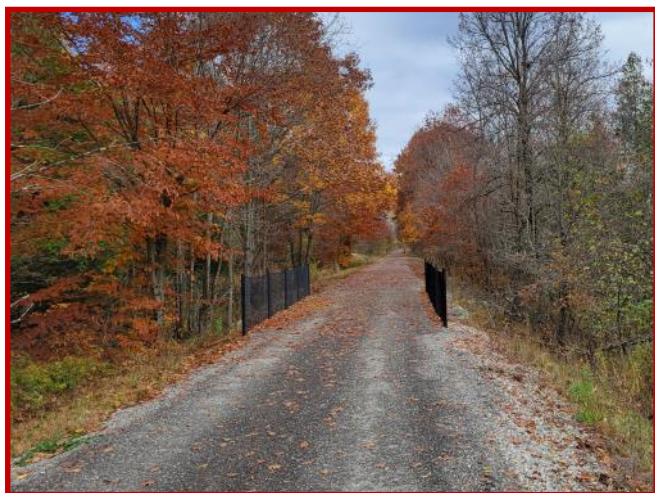
Addendum Ride



ABOVE— Some riders had the experience and gearing to just spin their way up the hill, like our rider at the front. Others though are not experienced and struggled, especially more as the waves of riders went by me. Our rider on the far right just remounted the bike after some period of walking.



ABOVE — Getting near the tail end of the riders, this particular rider on platform pedals kept getting on and off the bike. As he goes by me, he looks at me and I say “You need toe clips”, to which he replies “Toe clips?”, like he doesn’t know what they are. Another rider, somewhat elderly, then says “I never got used to them, so I don’t use them”. Using half a leg is OK??



On 33mm gravel tires, the Fred Meijer Trail was great. Mostly recycled asphalt, not too loose nor bumpy. This is somewhere between Belding and Greenville.



Although I’m a road rider, I’ve had my share of MTN biking and cyclocross to traverse various obstacles. Bunny hop?? Nah, mount the bike on the shoulder and pretend I’m at a World Cup CX event in Belgium

Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

Addendum Ride



ABOVE— A park in Belding is a good food stop, if you can find any suitable food. Being an unsupported ride, I planned on finding something here. Right off the trail is a liquor store. After purveying rows and rows of whiskey and chips, all I could find was a Starbucks Frappe and a candy bar. Better than nothing!



The variety of land on the trail is quite varied. This is an old marsh filled in with grassland now.



ABOVE — The reward for the candy bar was this beautiful maple tree on the Flat River at the same park.

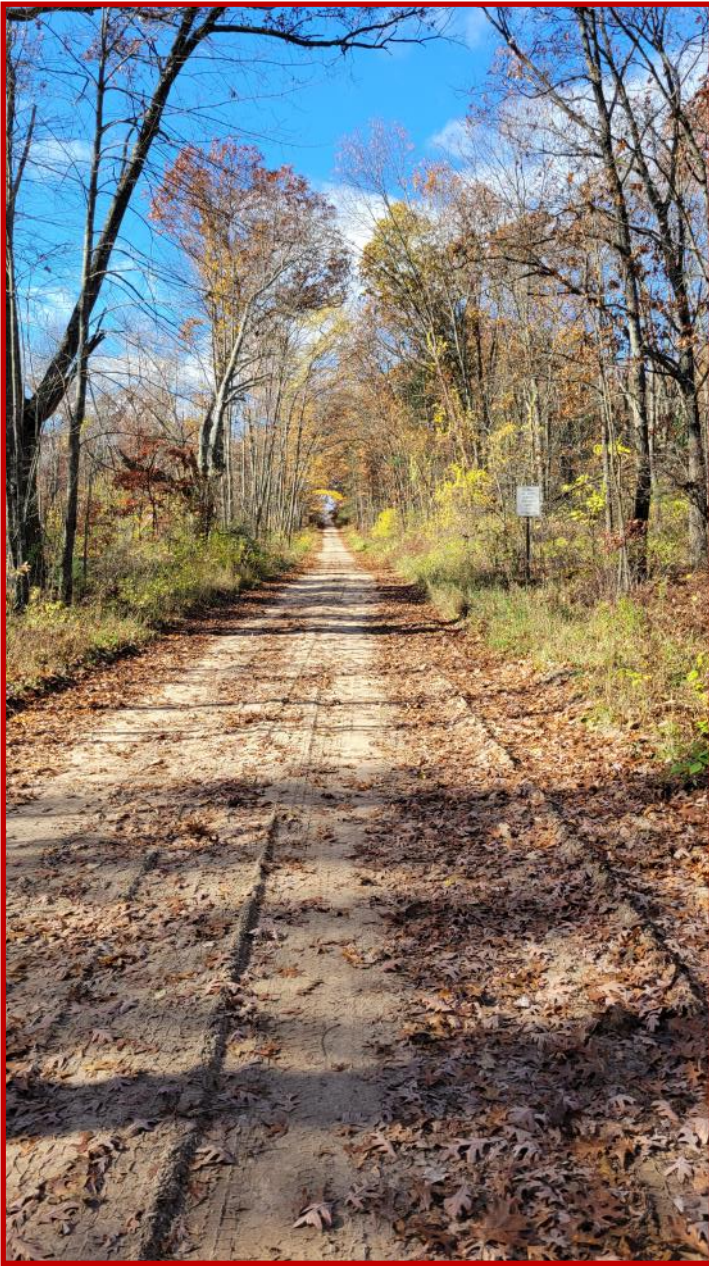


On the way to Greenville on the Fred Meijer Trail was this stand of 12 feet tall reeds. I had never seen such tall reeds. Sasquatch?? I hope not.

Colorburst Tour 2023

The 40th Anniversary

Addendum Ride



ABOVE— The route from Greenville back to Chief Hazy Cloud has a variety of gravel and paved roads. This section on Snows Lake is almost a seasonal road with a very sandy surface. It's challenging, but passable and easier than Sager road at Barry Roubaix. Only Dogwood road is likely worse with a minefield of potholes. Be warned!



ABOVE — Beautiful hidden lakes dot the return trip.



ABOVE—Why does this look familiar?



ABOVE— Feeling like a stew and an ale to wash it down? Stop at the Grattan Irish Bar! Then try to ride the remaining 15 miles and stay upright. ;-)

For Sale

For Sale

Cycling Quote: “Your eye for geography grows sharp. Your legs attend the lost world of contours, the dales and hills that are ironed out by internal combustion.” **Chip Brown**

bike shops

1. Alger Bikes

120 - 28th St. S.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49548
(616) 243-9753
www.algerbikes.com

2. Spinful Bike

1140 Monroe Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 236-2781
<https://www.spinful.bike>

3. Freewheeler Bike Shop

915 Leonard Street NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 451-8011
www.freewheelerbikeshop.com

4. GRBC (Ada Bike Shop)

597 Ada Drive
Ada, MI 49301
(616) 682-2453
www.grandrapidsbicycles.com

5. GRBC

1311 Fulton St E
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 458-2200
www.grandrapidsbicycles.com

6. West Michigan Bike and Fitness

2830 East Paris Ave, SE
Kentwood, MI 49512
(616) 942-1880
www.westmichiganbike.com

7. Rockford Bike Shop

169 Marcell Dr NE
Rockford, MI 49341
(616) 951-7181

8. Village Cycle & Fitness

450-A Baldwin Jenison, MI 49428
(616) 457-1670
www.villagebikeshop.com

9. Village Cycle & Fitness

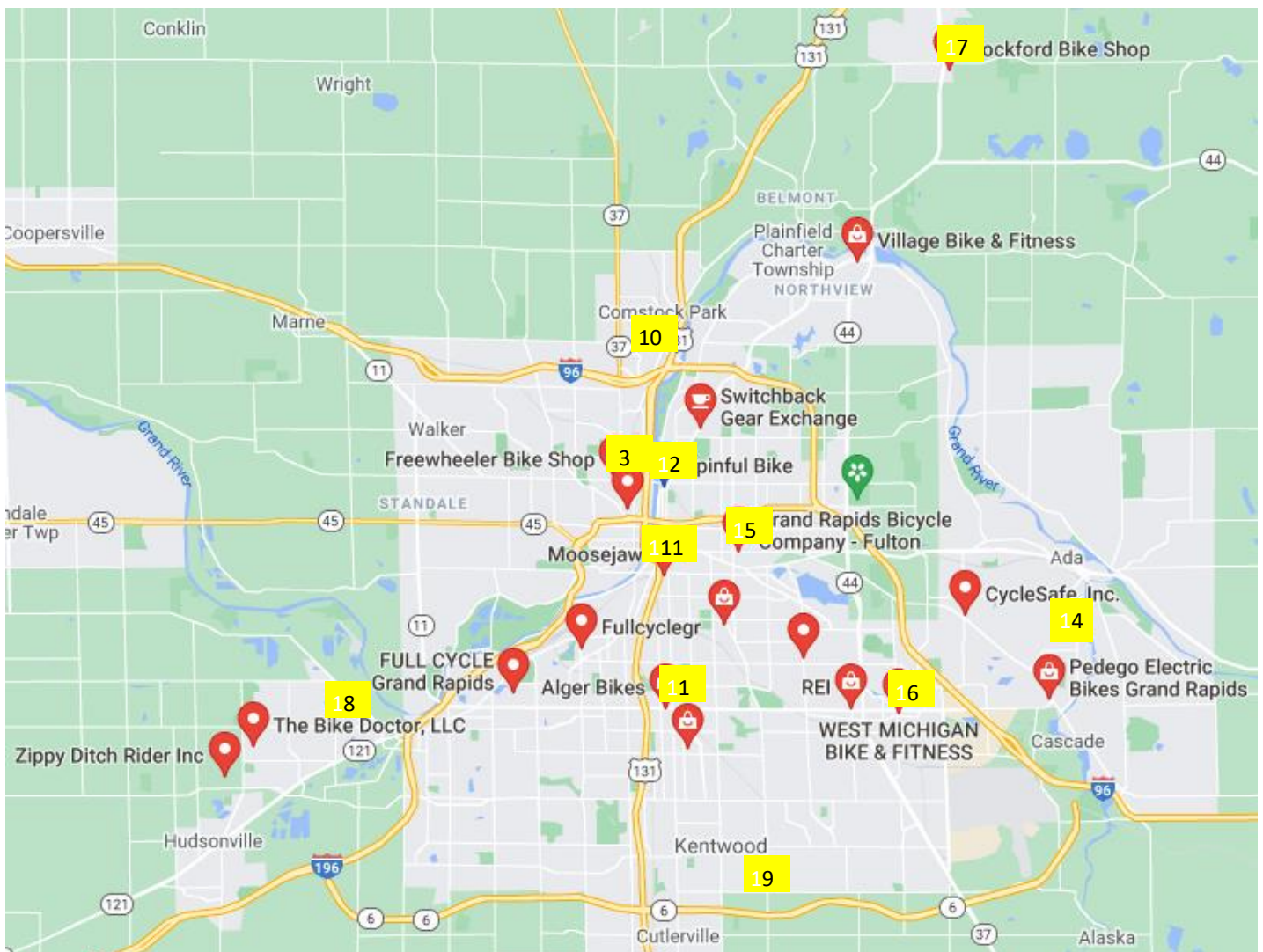
5991 Kalamazoo Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
(616) 455-4870
www.villagebikeshop.com

10. Village Cycle & Fitness

5278 Plainfield Ave NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
(616) 361-3661
www.villagebikeshop.com

11. Moosejaw

410 Ionia Ave SW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
(616) 570-0135
www.moosejaw.com/content/grand-rapids-shop



Rapid Wheelmen
PO Box 1008
Grand Rapids, MI 49501



Support your club, ride in club colors! Items will be available for purchase at club meetings and events.



t-shirts - \$12
shorts - \$65
bib shorts - \$70
jersey - \$60
water bottle - \$10

To arrange a purchase, contact:

Randy Higgins: treasurer@rapidwheelmen.com

IO Groups

Join the Rapid Wheelmen IO Group!

<https://groups.io/g/RapidWheelmen>



Like us on Facebook!

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@RapidWheelmenTimeTrials

