

spoke'n word

official newsletter of the Rapid Wheelmen Bicycle Club



08.2025

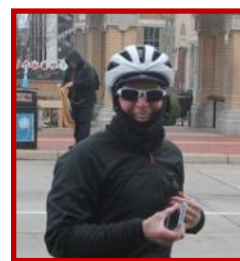
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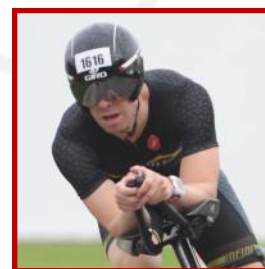
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President's Spin by Evan Wilson

- 2025 Meeting Schedule

- Live meeting at TTs August 4, then also board meetings virtually August 12 (Second Tuesday, recurring Google meeting)
- We've not yet made a decision about location(s) and dates for September, October and November meetings! Any member suggestions are welcome! What dates work? And what locations?
- What events are folks planning to attend this year? Where will we see you? What events are not to be missed?

We're considering a new club jersey design. What do you think? We'd like to collect club member ideas. We're planning to have a more detailed discussion this fall, but let's use the summer to hash out ideas!



club meeting

Club Meeting
Membership Meeting

Meeting: **Member Meeting - Monday August 4th, 7:00 pm**

Where: **Ada Park at the Time Trial course parking lot on Grand River**

What: **Member Meeting and cookin' BRATS**

Subscribe to the IO group chat here: <https://groups.io/g/RapidWheelmen>

Membership: <https://www.bikereg.com/rapid-wheelmen-membership>

Adopt-A-Road THANK YOU

Fourteen volunteers helped pick up trash July 30th on Grand River Avenue in Ada. They did a great job, and we finished up with a nice picnic afterward.

Mike Burden and Brian Ames both accidentally waded in mud in their quest to get all the trash (see right)

Judy Crankshaw and Scott Chapman both did double duty cleaning up more than two miles of Grand River. Our fearless leader, Dave Durkee with David Tomasik, went to the very farthest section of road, and they were the last ones back in.

Thanks everyone for volunteering!

A big thanks to Evan Wilson and Cathy Pratt for grilling the brats!

Carolyn Chapman



Editor

Dave Durkee



In this issue you'll find reports on the Cedar Blitz Gravel Race and the Holland 100. I'll also delve deeper into my trip to the French Alps last June.

Of course all our regular weekly rides are still going full bore. We'll have our last club picnic meeting on Monday, August 4th at Ada Park where we have the time trials.

Speaking of the **Time Trials**, we'll be having a 50th Anniversary Celebration on the last night of the time trials, Monday August 25th. The dinner we'll have is **FREE** to Time Trial Riders, Special Guests, and Volunteers only! While anyone is invited to attend, if you want a free dinner you'll need to ride a time trial some Monday in August!! Sign up [HERE](#).

Cover image: The RW riders at the 2025 Holland 100. From L to R, Kevin Devries, Dave Durkee, Chris Tirone, Julian Rose, Marty Finch, Jeff Petersen, Mike Burden (with old style shorty shorts), Vincent Nienhuis, Wael Berjaoui, and Matt Cederquist. Photo: Kevin Devries

Some recent events have highlighted the need to make sure every rider is riding as safely as possible. We have already discussed various riding techniques (bright clothing, rear lights, etc).

However, with the recent heat and competitive events, riders can be stressed beyond their ability to maintain proper blood circulation and body temperatures.

You may have heat stroke if you have:

Change in sweating, rapid breathing, confusion, or flushed skin.

You may be having a heart attack if you have:

A loss of power, pressure or pain in your chest, nausea, light-headedness, or an irregular heart beat.

If you have any of these symptoms while riding, **PLEASE** seek prompt medical attention! We want you to continue enjoying cycling safely.

Dave

Riding the Paceline Part 3

by Dave Durkee

As we progress through more complicated drafting scenarios, we'll learn the more intricate techniques for maximizing the draft advantage when following someone's wheel. Remember—that riding efficiently requires less energy, saving valuable resources for later when you may need it the most.

So let's study what happens when we have a significant side wind. Now we have not only headwind, but the best downwind place to follow someone has shifted slightly to the side. If you stay directly behind someone's wheel, you'll feel some of that sideways wind too. Wouldn't it be better to find the best spot to maximize your energy savings?

Well, obviously, you'll want to be on the downwind side away from the wind. So if the wind is slightly from your right, you'll want to shift somewhere to the left behind the leading rider. But how much?

So let's imagine that we are riding at 15 mph, and we have a 15 mile wind directly from our right. Now you might say "Well, a sideways wind is not helping nor hurting me, so I just still follow directly behind". If you were riding alone, that would be correct. But you're following someone creating a relative vacuum behind them. We could figure out exactly where the resultant draft space exists with vector analysis, but in our example case it's actually simply 45 degrees to the left and behind of where the leading rider is located. We could draw a 45 degree line from that rider's body backwards and to their left, and somewhere along that line is where you should be riding.

So if we just simply move to our left until the rider ahead of us is 45 degrees ahead and to our right, where are we on the road? Ponder that thought until next month!

ride calendar

August 2025

Day	Date	Ride Name	Ride Start	Ride Details	Contacts
MON	May-August 2025	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 off site at Webscorer.com . "Day of" registrations still available on-site from 5:30 to 6:15 pm	Dave Durkee TimeTrials@rapidwheelmen.com
MON	2025	GRavel Grinderz	6:30 pm	Friendship Christian Reformed Church, 190 100th St SE (corner of 100th & Division)	Tom Westrick tjwestrick@gmail.com Nick Siegel Nicholassiegel@mac.com
WED	2025	Challenger	6:20 pm "C" 6:20 pm "B" 6:30 pm "A"	Challenger Elementary School 2475 52nd St. Slow, Good + Fast paces, 30-50 miles	Tom Westrick tjwestrick@gmail.com
WED	2025	Wednesday AM Casual Ride	Check IO group or email Ride Leader	Usually 20 to 40 miles at a slow to moderate pace. Great for beginners or seasoned riders!	New Ride Leader needed
Various	Any Time	Virtual Zwift Rides	Varies	Group workouts or just rides for fun and fitness	Join Rapid Wheelmen group discussions on Facebook's Instant Messenger, RW Zwift Club, RW Stava Club
SAT	2025	Saturday AM Casual "Mystery" Ride	TBD	Usually 20 to 40 miles at a slow to moderate pace. Great for beginners! See RW IO group email posts or email ride leader	Bob Ayars rsayars@sbcglobal.net
SAT	2025	Dawn Patrol	Time varies	45-65 miles at good to fast pace. Check IO group or Facebook IM "Rapid Wheelmen" for details	Mike Burden 616-915-2048 mwb@mwburden.com
SUN	NEW 2025	Sunday Recovery	8:00 am	Riverside Park in Grand Rapids up the White Pine Trail to Herman's Box for a bakery item and coffee	Matt Cederquist matt@mcederquist.com

Cedar Blitz

From Saturday, July 12th

by Dave Durkee

Photo credits: Kevin Devries and Dave Durkee

I was feeling good enough after last year's cardiac escapades to allow myself the chance at competing in a real competition. I had not had any episodes of supra-ventricular tachycardia (fast heart beats) for many months. I thought it was time to test the system after last year's triple bypass surgery.

What I enjoy about gravel races is the fact that pack riding dynamics is less of an issue than road races. And if I get dropped somewhere, I often find other groups I can ride with for at least awhile. It has been several years since I officially competed in anything though, the Dirty Mitten of 2023 being my last outing. My goal for this race was to ride to my capacity, maybe in 2 hrs.?

The RW club came with many members: Kevin Devries, Julian Rose, Jason Lee, Tom Westrick, Randy McClary, Joe Miles, Mike Chambon, and Carm Michaud. There may be others which I do not know. Most of us were riding the 36 mile version. We're not so crazy to do the 128 or 50 mile versions!



Julian Rose and Jason Lee are smiling at the start



I got the RW tent set up pretty early in the finishing straight and the club members enjoyed the shade and rest area. The race timers had the chip readers ready to go, and downtown Cedar Springs came alive with anticipation of a fast and fun event.

They seeded us at the start by our average speeds, so I found myself about 2/3s of the way to the back in the 18-20 mph group. But the rest of the club members were pretty close.

Julian Rose, Kevin Devries, Tom Westrick, and Dave Durkee. Carm Michaud is in the purple/pink kit up ahead. Any jitters? NAH!! (OK— I lie)

Cedar Blitz

From Saturday, July 12th

Now, anyone who has raced mass start races knows, you need to survive the initial 2 miles so you can finally ride with similar riders for the rest of the race. As we took off, sure enough, it didn't take long for the slinky effect to kick in. Calm and organized for the first 1/4 mile, then the speed slowly increases to about 18 mph and WHAM—we're doing 10 mph. That happened about 3 times, each time worse than the preceding times. On that last big slowdown, I was so concerned about someone running me over that I just slipped into the narrow spot between Kevin Devries and the rider to his left. To their credit, neither one of them flinched or we could have all been eating pavement. Remarkably, there were no crashes in the group to this point. WHEW!!

In the first 4 miles, I had Kevin ahead of me slowly slipping away, Tom passes me in a corner, Julian+Jason+Carm I never see but assume they are also ahead of me. The groups are thinning out and I have space to maneuver, all the while watching my heart rate. I'm feeling pretty good, doing 18-20 mph on gravel, breathing moderately, staying smartly in a group's draft. My heart rate is about 155 bpm for quite awhile, which is higher and longer than I'm typically used to doing, but I feel good. I'm still below my max of 170 bpm. How long will it last?



Kevin Devries with someone he announced literally saved his life. Years ago at a cycling event, his life was saved during a cardiac event.

Just when I'm telling myself that I'm officially back to competition, then my heart rate alarm goes off: "ALARM: Maximum Heart Rate Exceeded: 201 bpm". Oh good grief. I have no idea if it's a good idea to keep that heart rate up for any length of time since it's only my top two heart chambers, not my whole heart. I actually feel fine, but I know this is not normal. I don't back off my effort at first, as I've learned it will go away in a couple of minutes. But it doesn't go away, and I feel compelled to slow down. What a blow to my ego, more than anything. The die hard racer in me wants to keep going, but the body will not cooperate.

Two more times I had other attacks of tachycardia of shorter durations. I ride what I can and still finished about 2:05 hours, about 30 minutes behind my age group leaders. But I still enjoyed the day immensely, loved the fast course, and maybe I'll attempt that 70+ category next year. The big lesson: Listen to your body, do only what you can, and get help if you need it.

For full results, see [Cedar Blitz 2025 Results](#)

Holland 100

From Saturday, July 19, 2025

Photo Credits: Kevin Devries



The Holland 100 was celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year, and what a great ride it was! We had a large contingent of RW members riding together (see cover photo). If we had a club jersey, we were wearing it! At the beginning it was the 10 of us minding our own business, but it didn't take long for the group above of about 60 riders led by the RWAM group to engulf us. Immediately our speed increased to about 20 mph. But the pace was so easy to maintain when you get caught up in a group that large, just like in my old pack racing days. What a feeling!



Later we had a faster group doing 22+ mph and they passed us then sucked Kevin up. When he took this picture, there were comments of amazement that he could take a pic and ride that fast!



Kevin Devries and his doppelganger. Just how often do you find your professional team mate on a casual ride?

Racer Discount News

by Matt Cederquist, Head Race Team Captain

Happy Winter! I hope all is well with you as you read through this month's newsletter. I am pleased to announce that **Tris 4 Health**, the organizer of many fine events in Michigan, most notably for our group, the GR Gran Fondo, is offering team/club discounts. I have worked with their team to provide us with a **7.5%** discount on all of their events. On top of the registration discount, we receive a **10%** discount in their store and an end-of-year swag bag.

We, as a team, will receive additional perks. It is based on how many registrants we have for each event. For a category one event, if we have 10-19 registrants, we receive the following: Team Tent area, Team Racking (if applicable), Team call with the race director, and VIP Packet Pick up the day before. When we have twenty or more registrants, the perks get even better. I will include a link at the end of this article for you to follow to check it out

As you can see from the photo provided below, registering for your event is an easy two-step process. Follow the link at the end of this article for the full instructions.

<u>Triathlons</u>	<u>Cycling</u>	<u>Running</u>
GR Triathlon	Gran Fondo	Armed Services Marathon
Michigan Titanium	Waterloo G+G	Brainy Day Trail Run
Dirty Mitten	Dirty Mitten Gravel Race	<u>Youth Events</u>
Grand haven Triathlon	Road to Hell and Back	GR Youth Duathlon
Bear Lake Triathlon	Luton Park Time Trial	Michigan Titanium Kids
Ugly Dog Triathlon		

Events in red are Category One Events

Rapid Wheelmen discount code: **TC_Rapid25**

Tris 4 Health Team Program Link: tris4health.com/teams

Tris 4 Health How to Register Link: tris4health.com/teams/#howto

Step 1

After entering your registration information, select Yes that you want to join or create a team.

Step 2

Search for your team, and if you don't find it, create one!

Step 3

There is no step 3. You're all set! If you have any questions, here are a few helpful links from our friends at RunSignup.

- [Join an existing group.](#)
- [How to create or join a group.](#)
- [How to manage an existing group](#)
- [How to invite others to your group.](#)

French Alps Adventure

Part 2

by Dave Durkee

If I was going to ride the Alps, I wanted the least amount of worry and planning to complete. After investigating touring companies, [Thomson Bike Tours](#) stood out as having the best experiences, reputation, and support of any I looked at. Only after I got to France did many repeat riders tell me that Thomson was well known for being a “Rider’s Ride”. I found this out the hard way by riding the rides, but you cannot be a casual rider and expect to ride even their standard “Trans” rides.

Below are the climbs I was going to attempt. I figure “I got all day, right?” In reality it was more difficult than I imagined, but I at least completed my main goal: Alpe d-Heuz. Along the way, there were many climbs, each unique and beautiful in their own way. So 482 km (300 miles) distance and 14,430 meters (47,342 ft) of climbing later, I would definitely feel every bit of it. More next month!

DAY	DESCRIPTION	DISTANCE	ELEVATION
01	Bienvenue en France	28 km	865 m
02	The Joux Plane and the Col de la Colombiere	80 km	2,321 m
03	Over Les Aravis and Les Salsies to Brides-les-Bains	100 km	2,394 m
04	Col de la Loze	50 km	1,766 m
05	Col de la Madeleine & Les Lacets de Montvernier	82 km	2,459 m
06	Col de Telegraphe and Col du Galibier	69 km	2,388 m
07	Alpe d'Huez!	73 km	2,237 m
08	Au Revoir!		

For Sale

2022 Cervelo Caledonia 5, 56cm Ultegra 12speed DI2 Dura Ace Crank w power meter Disc Brake

Only 1003 miles — perfect

\$ 4000



Stock image

2010+- Cervelo P3 56cm TT bike 10spd Ultegra

Set of Alloy Clincher training wheels



Similar image

And a Zipp 909disc and Zipp front wheel these are tubular with excellent tires

A great introductory TT bike

\$900.00 obo

Various rim brake wheels

And a bunch of parts/ seats components etc. Call let me know what you need to finish your build

Pictures available on request

Tim Fox: cfoxkennels@gmail.com

PH # 616-520-5151

For Sale

JAMIS Renegade gravel / road bike 56cm used one year. 2X10 gearing, 700x35c wheels. Tires can be changed for road, gravel or hybrid.

Text Terry at 616-581-9687



Stock image

bike shops

1. Alger Bikes

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

2. biked.

2312 28th St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508
(616) 234-0134
https://www.biked.app/

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

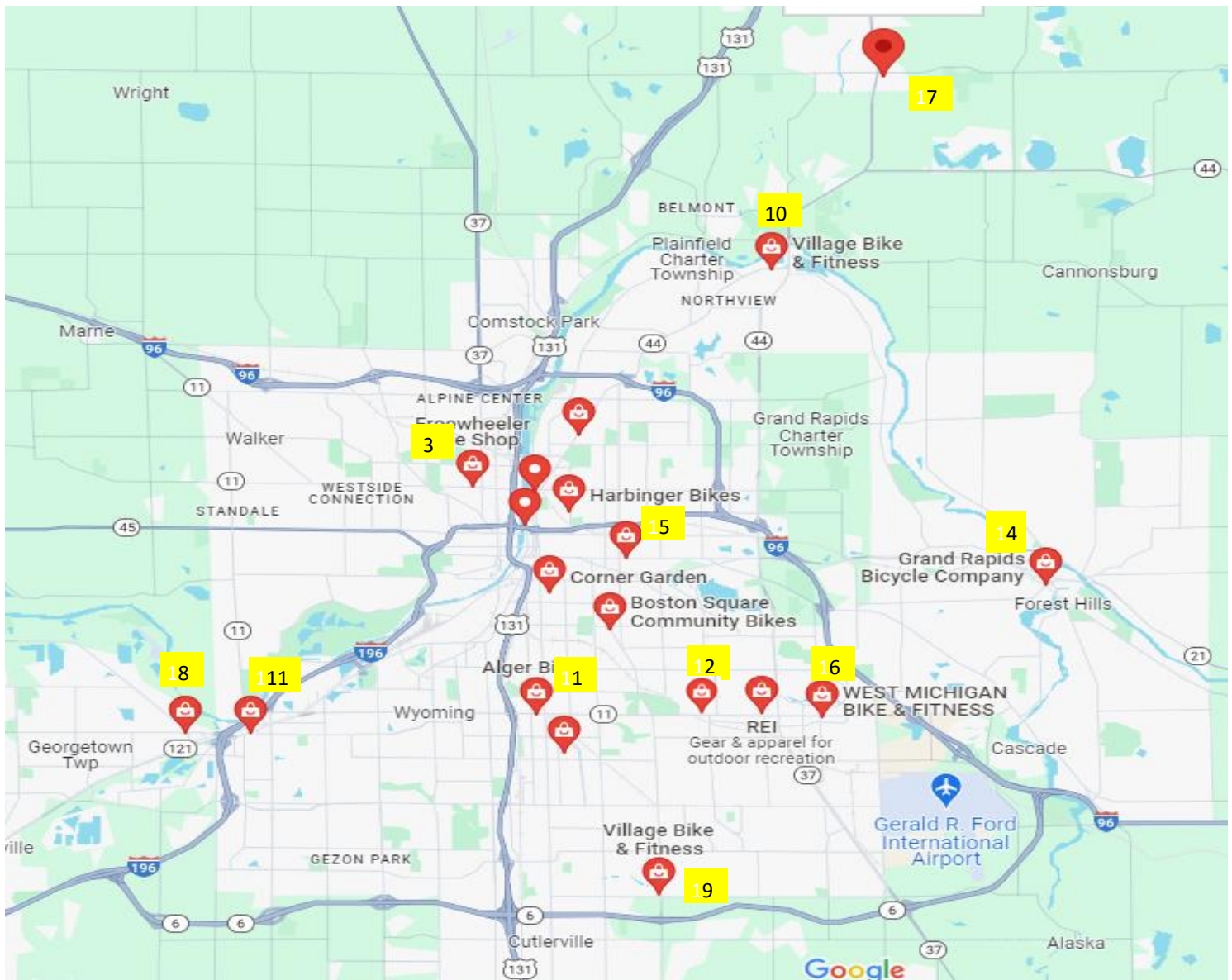
10. Village Cycle & Fitness

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

11. West Michigan Bike and Fitness

4300 Chicago Dr. SW
Grandville, MI 49418
(616) 531-9911
www.westmichiganbike.com

Click [HERE](#) for GGRBC's List



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!

@RapidWheelmen

@RapidWheelmenTimeTrials

