

# KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

July 26, 2010

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## Kalamazoo Bicycle Film Festival wants to 'normalize biking'

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By Mark Wedel | Special to the Kalamazoo Gazette

**KALAMAZOO** — Kalamazoo isn't exactly a bike friendly town.

It's not exactly unfriendly either, biker Brian Moon said. "It's somewhere in between." With new bike lanes added every year, "they're trying."

So Moon, a local triathlete, mountain biker and foot-race director for local running events, has organized his first film fest, the Kalamazoo Bicycle Film Festival from July 29-Aug. 1.

"I wanted to do something in Kalamazoo that would make Kalamazoo better for biking, something that would promote it and legitimize it," he said.

It's not easy being a biker. Moon has been yelled at by drivers to get off the road, and just this year he's been hit by cars, he said.

His goal is to "normalize biking." Drivers, Moon said, "don't see it as a legitimate means of transportation — they think, you know, bikes are toys."

Bikers need to know the rules so they can share the road as well, he said. And not to tar either side as evil, but at the mention of the BP oil-spill disaster, Moon said, "I don't think anyone's ever complained about biking being bad for the environment."

Moon said he hopes the community of drivers and riders can come together for films on the biking culture. The events include:

### “RAD” (PG)

Oakwood Neighborhood Association, 3320 Laird Ave., 9:15 p.m. July 29. Free. The 1986 drama of a young BMX racer rising to challenges with rad stunts will be shown outside by the Kalamazoo Guerilla Drive-In. Bring chairs and blankets. ONA is on Kalamazoo Public School property; smoking and alcohol are prohibited.



Wheelies: "Revolution 1," about an off-road unicyclist, will be one of the movies in the program "Bike Shorts," a collection of short films that is being shown during the Kalamazoo Bicycle Film Festival.

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## **“Bike Shorts”**

Western Michigan University’s Little Theatre, corner of Oakland Drive and Oliver Lane, 8 p.m. July 30. \$10. This event “for me is the most exciting because I’m not sure what I’m going to get,” Moon said. Filmmakers are submitting shorts of seven minutes or less. So far the festival has gotten educational films, art films and action footage; Moon’s favorite so far is of an off-road unicyclist.

## **“Trails and Tribulations”**

Western Michigan University’s Little Theatre, corner of Oakland Drive and Oliver Lane, 8 p.m., July 31. \$10. Two documentaries on off-road biking: “Freedom Riders,” a 2009 film with adult language, shows the struggles of underground mountain bikers who’ve made unauthorized jumps and trails in national parks. “Singletrack Minds,” made in 2006, is on the thrill and danger of high-speed mountain biking on tiny downhill trails and the conflicts with hikers on foot.

## **“The Bicycle Corps: America’s Black Army on Wheels”**

Stryker Theater, Kalamazoo Valley Museum, 230 N. Rose St., 2 p.m. Aug. 1. Free. A 2000 PBS documentary, “The Bicycle Corps,” tells of an 1897 U.S. Army experiment. Twenty African-American soldiers were sent on a 2,000-mile ride from Montana to Missouri to see if the new “safety bicycle,” the first chain-driven bike that wasn’t a highwheeler, could replace the horse in the cavalry.

## **Special event: Big Kids Urban Bike Challenge**

Ace’s Cycle, 346 S. Kalamazoo Mall, 8 a.m. July 31. Bikers will be sent from Ace’s on the Kalamazoo Mall on a scavenger hunt through the city. For ages 16 and up, race fee for two-person teams is \$30. Registration form at [www.candoactive.com/kzooff.html](http://www.candoactive.com/kzooff.html).

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## **If You Go**

### **Kalamazoo Bicycle Film Festival**

**What:** Variety of films to promote a cycling culture – and adult bicycle scavenger hunt.

**When:** July 29-Aug. 1

**Where:** Oakwood Neighborhood Association, Little Theatre, Kalamazoo Valley Museum.

**Cost:** Events are free to \$10; scavenger hunt is \$30 per two-person team.

**Contact:** [candoactive.com/kzooff.html](http://candoactive.com/kzooff.html)