

Welcome ~~Back~~ Bike to School

The school year has begun! As the health care discussion continues at the national level here at the local level we have a great opportunity to make a positive change in the health and wellbeing of our children by making active transportation a viable, safe, and easy choice. Get involved in your local SRTS program by organizing, volunteering, or supporting a Walk + Bike to School Day or other program to get kids active.

Bike Education for Parents & Kids This Weekend!

Safe Routes to Schools and the Greater Eugene Area Riders are offering a League of American Bicyclists Traffic Skills 101 class designed for parents & Kids. Topics covered include how to perform a bicycle safety check, helmet fitting, bike sizing and basic traffic skills to be safe on our city streets. Students will be divided into two groups, Grades K-5 and 6-12. The first class is this Saturday, September 12, 9 a.m. to Noon at the Whiteaker Community Center (Corner of N. Grand & Jackson St.) Register online at: <http://www.eugenegears.org/programs/classes>

There is also one more Street Skills 101 course being offered this year. It's a one-day intensive, Saturday Sept. 26th 8am-5pm. See the [eugenegears.org](http://www.eugenegears.org) site for more information.

National Walk + Bike to School Day

Now that the chaos of the school year has begun and we've seen how congested our schools can be let's start the planning for the biggest Walk + Bike day ever so we can show the community what an Active Transportation system looks like. We'll WOW them with our Walkers and ROCK them with our Rollers! Register now at <http://www.walknbike.com>.

If you'd like to share ideas, brainstorm, or get some pointers come to our **Walk + Bike Day Prep Meeting**: Wednesday, Sept. 16th 5:30-6:30 p.m. Saul Room, Atrium Building (10th & Olive, across from the LTD station).

Or stop by the Breakfast at the Bridges event:

Breakfast at the Bridges- Friday, Sept. 18th 7-9:30 a.m.

Safe Routes to School will join the City of Eugene and the Eye to Eye campaign for the final Breakfast at the Bridges this summer. Breakfast at the Bridges will be going "Back to School" and gearing up for Walk and Bike to School Day and other family friendly events. As always, come enjoy free bagels and coffee, quick bike safety checks, bike bells installed on your bike, bike registration, but be prepared for some extra special treats for our end of the season celebration (bike blended smoothies anyone?!).

Location: Blue Heron Bike Bridge (by **Cesar Chavez elementary school** along the Fern Ridge Path) Time: Sept. 18th, 7:00-9:30 AM
Then, later that day join us for Kidical Mass!

Kidical Mass, Geocaching Edition- Friday, Sept. 18th

This will be the last Friday Kidical Mass of the season and it's going to be a fun one! We'll be doing a little Geocaching- a high-tech treasure hunt using GPS units. There's a special Kidical Mass "geocoin" being created for this month's ride that will hopefully

travel around to different communities doing Kidical Mass rides. Meet us at Monroe park before our 6pm departure, we'll have a few extra units so you can try it out. Everyone helps in the hunt! We'll end near the University and may be out after dark so bring lights for the ride back home.

Rides will be moving to 3pm on the third *Saturday* of the month starting in October.

Bailey Hill Improvements- a model project

This week the City of Eugene held an event to dedicate the changes that have taken place on Bailey Hill Road (from 18th to Warren St). This project was started two years ago when the City of Eugene started talks with the Churchill Area Neighbors, Bailey Hill road safety committee, 4J School District, ODOT, and area businesses. Work was started after the tragic death of 10 year old Vaclav Hajek, a pedestrian attempting to cross the street while walking back from watering his community garden plot. For years concerns were raised about this section of Bailey Hill but it took this tragic event to put the project to the top of the cities list and as Tom Larsen, the city traffic engineer stated the incident "added a sense of urgency."

This weeks event was the culmination of all that work and the area is a major improvement for cyclists, pedestrians, and all road users in the area. Dropping the lanes from four to two (plus turn lanes), wider bike lanes, installing landscaped medians, the installation of marked crosswalks and special stutter flashes for the main crossing make for a much safer, inviting, and pleasant Bailey Hill. Taking this previously chaotic and busy feeling street and turning it into one with better crossings, less conflict points, and a more inviting environment for active transportation was possible while still allowing space and capacity for motorized vehicles. It's a great model of what we can do to make a "complete street" system.

There are still many areas in Eugene that need improvements to make them safe for cyclists, pedestrians, the elderly, families, and other vulnerable roadway users (River Road, 30th Avenue, Coburg, Hwy 99, etc.). Hopefully these improvements can be made before another tragic event occurs. At Safe Routes to School we are working with the City of Eugene and other partners to identify and implement as many of these changes as we can with SRTS and other federal, state, and local funding. Get involved with your neighborhood association or school SRTS committee to help bring about these kind of changes.

BTA Bike Education Program Continues

One of the best long running bicycle education programs in the nation has been happening right here in Eugene for several years. It's been the model for the Bike Education program we are working to implement throughout the district and each year it still educates hundreds of middle school kids in the Eugene/Springfield area. It's the BTA's [Bike Safety Education](#) program and the culmination of each class is a community neighborhood ride. You can volunteer to help out on those rides! The first one is at Monroe Middle School- home of the amazing Shirley Betournay. Contact the program coordinator [Josh Mann](#) if you're interested and you can even join the [event on Facebook](#).

Speaking of Facebook

Get all web 2.0 and join us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

Join the SRTS "Dear Congress" Campaign

Deadline: September 24, 2009

The Safe Routes to School National Partnership has launched a "Dear Congress: Why Safe Routes to School is Important" campaign. Safe Routes to School is helping make it safe for children to get healthy and active through walking and bicycling to school. The Partnership needs your help generating hundreds-if not thousands-of letters from children, parents, program staff and volunteers, and school and city leaders talking about why Safe Routes to School matters to individuals and communities. The Partnership will bundle your letters and share them with members of the House and Senate so that they know how many people in their states and districts value Safe Routes to School. For more information on how you can join the letter-writing campaign, please visit the [SRTS National Partnership website](#).

Safety Tip of the Month

Start the school year off right. Walk or bike *with* your children the first couple times. This way, you can identify dangers, point them out to your children, and direct your children to the safest possible route. When it comes to crossing streets, your children need to be aware of all the different ways cars can cross their path. Explain the rules of the road, and give them real-life examples while you're out walking together. Explain how traffic signals work, and make sure your children know how important it is to cross streets at the appropriate times.

If you're not comfortable with your children walking alone and can't walk or bike with them sign up to share the responsibility with others; LTD will help you start a Walk + Bike group: <http://tinyurl.com/W-BLTD>