International Walk to School Day is a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. It began in 1997 as a one-day event. Over time, this event has become part of a movement for year-round safe routes to school and a celebration – with record breaking participation – each October.

Today, thousands of schools across America – from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico – participate every October. We attended great events across the valley and enjoyed kicking off the Mayors Walking challenge at Pierce Park where they threw a large celebration including the Idaho Dairy Council, St. Lukes, Blue Cross Foundation and Boise City Council representatives. The celebration allowed all students to run a mile around the schools track to keep the activity going for walk to school day. See which schools registered and sign up your school for 2016.

Pictured above is the Safe Routes to School Programs very own Neal and Marcus at the new SNOW(slightly north of Washington) Block Alley where we found chalk and a welcoming environment for students walking or biking to school.
**GOAT HEADS! OUT OF CONTROL!**

**SUPER HEROES NEEDED TO FOIL NOXIOUS WEED**

*Tribulus terrestris* L. also known as Puncture Vine or Goat heads have been menacing the sidewalks, alleys and vacant lots for decades. People who use these pathways know the problems they can cause. These plants are more than a nuisance, they are causing unsafe routes for students, and others who walk and bike.

This noxious weed is prolific around the valley and many people will go out of their way to avoid them. When they grow across the crosswalk, sidewalk or encroach into the roadway, it pushes pedestrians and cyclists further into the street or into yards. When seeds get stuck in the bottom of a shoe, they are carried along, further spreading this awful weed.

**How to remove them?** Please take care to pull these weeds and where possible to pick up their seeds. Use gloves and tarps and throw them in the trash. Be careful not to shake the thorny seeds loose from the plant. Seeds can be fertile for up to 20 years.

**Who to call?** Most cities have crews to help tackle the problem, but they need you to help them locate the villain. Let us know if you need help in your neighborhood. The only good offense is a good defense.

*(photo taken near North Junior High in Boise)*

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**IS YOUR TRUCK BIGGER THAN A 5TH GRADER?**

What is your field of view, and the sight distance around your large vehicle? This photo shows a large truck, which is quite common on our city streets and in the local neighborhoods. Next to the truck is our Safe Routes Coordinator, Neal, who is 6' tall. There were many incidents with students and vehicles over the summer, and many more serious incidents in the short time school has been in session. We cannot stress enough, look **twice**, expect the unexpected and slow down.

Young people don’t understand that drivers often don’t see them, or the fact that many vehicle operators drive while distracted. Can you see down the sidewalk while backing your truck out of the driveway? Do you realize you are driving in a bike lane, or stopping in the middle of a crosswalk? Contact us today! We can talk to your school, work, or community event. Whatever. We have highly trained instructors to teach you.
FREE: BICYCLE EDUCATION OFFERED FOR YOUTH-ADULTS

**Why:** Bicycle education is not mandatory in the state of Idaho. However, anyone can hop on a bicycle and go to any destination. To combat this potentially dangerous situation, there are several groups in town offering free bicycle education for anyone interested.

**Who offers it:** Safe Routes to School Program, Treasure Valley Cycling Alliance, & Boise Bicycle Project.

**When:** Classes can be arranged by popular demand and/or happen routinely. The best option is to contact one of the above programs to inquire about dates, times and availability.

**Where:** Most of the education happens within Boise, however some programs can reach Nampa, Caldwell, Kuna and Eagle depending on interest.

**What to bring:** Many of the classes ask the student's to bring their bicycle, helmet, water, and a lunch if the class is longer.

**Who is this education for:** Anyone interested in bicycle law and safety.

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**GET BEHIND IT: BIKE BOXES!**

**BIKE BOX**

**What is a bike box?**

_Bicyclists get in it! Motorists get behind it!_

There are two types of bike boxes. A traditional bike box is an intersection safety feature to prevent bicycle/car collisions, especially those between drivers turning right and bicyclists going straight. It is a green box on the road with a white bicycle symbol inside. It includes bicycle lanes approaching and leading from the box.

A traditional bike box has been installed at Capitol Boulevard and Myrtle Street. You can find more information by clicking here.

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**TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EDUCATIONAL AND ENCOURAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

What we offer:

- Incentives for walk to school days (including International Walk to School Day, Walk 'n Roll Wednesdays, etc.)
- Safety Booth for events like carnivals and health fairs, including giveaways, educational material and interactive bike wheel game.
- In-Class Safety Presentations specific to certain grade levels.
- Bike Rodeos—hands-on bike clinic with 5 stations. Ideal for 3rd—4th graders.
- Bike Repair Classes—learn basic bike tune-up skills from local bike mechanics. Ideal for 5th—9th graders.