

LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE

On Jan. 20, 2011, Eden Prairie Interim City Manager Jay Lotthammer, School Superintendent Melissa Krull and Chamber of Commerce President Pat MulQueeny presented the annual State of the City address.

Tune in to EPTV Channel 16 to watch a rebroadcast of the presentation, or visit edenprairie.org to view it on CITY TV.



MARCH 2011

Life is Good in Eden Prairie 2010 Quality of Life Survey Results

In 2010, MONEY magazine ranked Eden Prairie as the #1 Best Place to Live in America – an exciting honor that brought national recognition to the City. But for those who live and work in Eden Prairie, this national award only confirmed what they already knew – life is good in Eden Prairie!

“We’re extremely honored by the MONEY magazine ranking we received last year,” said Mayor **Nancy Tyra-Lukens**, “but what’s really important to us is how our residents feel about the quality of life in Eden Prairie.”

To gather residents’ opinions and suggestions about current and future needs, the City of Eden Prairie conducts a biennial **Quality of Life** survey. The survey is administrated by **Decision Resources, Ltd.**, a research firm specializing in residential surveys for nearly 100 communities in the metro area, as well as several school districts, transit agencies and other public entities. The study, conducted via telephone, surveys a statistically random sample of 400 Eden Prairie households and the findings are given a plus or minus 5-percent margin of error.

“The results of our 2010 study reveal that 98 percent of residents rate their overall quality of life as good or excellent,” said Tyra-Lukens. “This is an outstanding rating and, according to Decision Resources, it puts Eden Prairie among the top five most highly ranked cities in the metro area.”

When asked what they liked most about living in Eden Prairie, the majority of residents cited schools, 15 percent; parks and trails, 11 percent; open spaces, 11 percent; and shopping, 10 percent. And when asked about the quality of services provided by the City, the overall responses were stellar, with residents giving Police, Fire and Park Maintenance the highest ratings.

Residents were also asked what, if anything, they like least about living in Eden Prairie. Of the people surveyed, 27 percent were unsure or answered with “nothing,” and 17 percent noted taxes.

When asked to compare the taxes they pay with the quality of City services they receive, 82 percent of Eden Prairie residents felt they were getting a good or excellent value – an increase of more than 10 percent over the 2008 rating.

Findings from the 2010 survey also indicate that the majority of residents are satisfied with the amount of natural open space areas in Eden Prairie, 89 percent; however, 58 percent also feel that the City should take a more active role in protecting and preserving open spaces, parkland and wetland areas.

Facebook Fan Feedback

“I enjoy living in a city that take[s] green space and public safety seriously. Eden Prairie keeps the citizens informed through blogs, Facebook and news papers you can choose to be as involved as you want!! I love this city!!”

-Dawn Hanson

“I’ve lived here since [I] was 2 years old and I couldn’t think of a better city to grow up in. When u think of the American dream... If u ask me this is it.”

-Whitney Humphrey



To join our online community, visit facebook.com/cityofedenprairie.

“The survey confirmed something we’re extremely proud of,” said Tyra-Lukens. “Our City employees are top-notch. From what they have heard or experienced first-hand, a whopping 90 percent of survey respondents rated the job performance of our City staff positively.”

Overall, the 2010 Quality of Life survey indicates that life is good for those who choose to live, work and dream in Eden Prairie!

City Manager Search Complete

At a public meeting on Thursday, Feb. 3, 2011, the Eden Prairie City Council unanimously voted to offer the position of city manager to candidate **Rick Getschow**.

“I was really impressed with Rick’s creativity and energy,” said Council Member **Sherry Butcher Wickstrom**. “I believe he will take this city into the future with enthusiasm and maximize the strengths of our staff in a collaborative fashion.”



Rick Getschow

Getschow has been the city manager in Hopkins, Minn. for the past six years, and previously served as city administrator in Lauderdale, Minn. (1998-2005) and Hector, Minn. (1996-1998). He earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio and a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

The search for a new Eden Prairie city manager began in September 2010, after City Manager **Scott Neal** accepted the City of Edina’s offer to become its next city manager. Parks and Recreation Director **Jay Lotthammer** has been serving as interim city manager since Oct. 29.

“We are thankful to everyone who has participated in the city manager search process, it’s been very helpful to have input from members of the public and city staff,” said Mayor **Nancy Tyra-Lukens**. “I think we have ourselves a great new city manager.”

On behalf of the Council, Mayor Tyra-Lukens and Council Member **Brad Aho** led the efforts to negotiate Getschow’s contract and start date, which were not available at press time.

Take the Plunge!

Each year, law enforcement agencies across the country host **Polar Bear Plunge** events to raise funds in support of **Special Olympics** and their athletes. For the past three years, the Eden Prairie **Police Department** has hosted the Polar Bear Plunge at Round Lake, drawing hundreds of participants and raising more than \$130,000 for Special Olympics Minnesota.

“The Eden Prairie community has truly embraced this event,” said Police Officer **Linda Williams**, coordinator of the event. “And together with other Polar Plunge events throughout the state, we are now raising more than \$1.4-million every year for a very important cause.”

Law Enforcement Presents



This year’s Plunge will take place at Round Lake on **Saturday, March 12**, and everyone in the Eden Prairie community is invited to join in the fun!

“We are proud to host the Polar Plunge event each year,” said Williams. “We look forward to seeing all of the regular plungers, and meeting some new ones!”

To make the icy plunge possible, Eden Prairie’s **Parks and Recreation Department** cuts a 12-foot hole in the ice at Round Lake, creating a frigid pool of water approximately 4-foot deep. Once they jump in, participants wade through about 12 feet of water before climbing back out and racing to the toasty comfort of the Round Lake warming house.

Ready to take the plunge? Find out everything you need to know at specialolympicsminnesota.org! Whether you want to plunge alone, join an existing team or start a team of your own, your participation in the Eden Prairie Polar Bear Plunge ‘11 will help make this a record-setting year, and will benefit a great cause.

Not sure if you’re ready for the frigid frolic? Support a team of plungers by pledging to make a donation and then cheer on this year’s participants from the shores of Round Lake on March 12 at noon.

If you have questions about the Eden Prairie Polar Bear Plunge, or would like to donate a prize to be given away at the event, contact Officer Williams at **952-949-6200** or lwiliams@edenprairie.org.

Spotlight on City Commission Members

The **Eden Prairie City Council** uses the expertise of several citizen advisory commissions for guidance on matters ranging from economic development to environmental protection. Commissions are made up of Eden Prairie residents willing to share their time and knowledge for the benefit of the community.

The mission of the **Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission** is to act in an advisory capacity to the City on matters of development and use of parks and recreation facilities, leisure services, recreation programming, preservation of natural resources and promotion of environmental awareness.

Meet Commission Member Geri Napuck!

Name: Geri Napuck

Commission: Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission

Year you were appointed: 2006

Number of years you have lived in Eden Prairie: 18

Why do you volunteer to serve on a City commission? I grew up in a family where giving back to your community through public service was highly valued. I view my service on a City commission as an opportunity to better understand issues that impact residents and to participate in a public process that carefully considers input and options with recommended outcomes to the city council. It is my great pleasure to work with such dedicated and diverse commission members and an excellent city staff.

What would you like residents to know about the efforts of the commission on which you serve? In survey after survey, Eden Prairie residents place parks, trails and open space among the most highly valued commodities in our community. Our commission consists of members with diverse backgrounds who share this value but must also weigh multiple factors before making recommendations to the City Council. Resident input is always welcome and encouraged at commission meetings. During the time I have served on the commission, I have been continually impressed with the preparation of commission members, the respectful nature of the discussion that occurs regardless of viewpoints and the efforts to reach consensus, if possible, before a motion and recommendation is made to the Council.

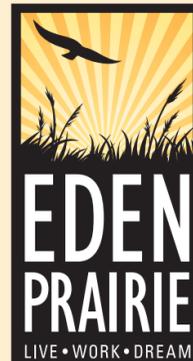
What is your vision for the future in Eden Prairie? I think Eden Prairie is in good hands and has leadership that will seek innovative ways to balance economic realities with residents’ expectations, and willingness to pay for services and commodities most valued. I anticipate that funding for parks, trails and open space will remain a priority for the majority of residents but also realize that we must think “outside the box” now more than ever until the current economic climate improves.

What is something interesting, unique or little-known about you? I guess this is more of an “odd fact” than something interesting or unique about me, but I really enjoy watching televised professional and college sports, and usually read the daily sports section of the Star Tribune first, pretty much from cover to cover. I am also a huge Packers fan (pretty much the norm for someone who grew up in Wisconsin!).

What is your favorite place in Eden Prairie? The Picha Farm/Birch Island Woods Conservation area in northern Eden Prairie because it is a “great escape” only a few miles from the heart of commercial activity in the City.



Geri Napuck



MAYOR

Nancy Tyra-Lukens
ntyra-lukens@edenprairie.org
952-937-1898

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Brad Aho
baho@edenprairie.org
952-303-6884

Sherry Butcher Wickstrom
sbutcherwickstrom@edenprairie.org
612-296-3721

Ron Case
rcase@edenprairie.org
952-949-0915

Kathy Nelson
knelson@edenprairie.org
952-941-6613

Live Well Eden Prairie!

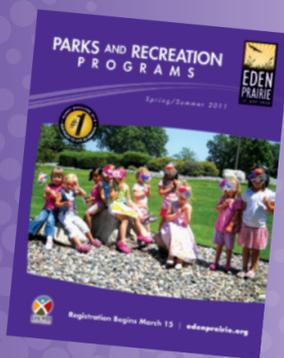
Register for Spring/Summer Parks and Recreation Programs

It's been a long Minnesota winter, but the end is drawing near. The Spring/Summer Parks and Recreation program guide will be available on Friday, March 4, allowing you plenty of time to plan ahead and Live Well this summer!

The top 10 ways to Live Well this spring and summer:

1. Put together a group and volunteer for **Park Clean-Up Day** on April 16.
2. Sign your little ones up for a **Curious George Day Camp**.
3. Experience the **Staring Lake Observatory** with a **Star Watch Astronomy** class.
4. Learn to make your own accessories with a **Metal Jewelry** class at the **Art Center**.
5. Register your future athletes for a **Skyhawks Sports Camp**.
6. Learn to **Line Dance** at the **Senior Center**.
7. Get the kids involved in **Fit Kids Club** at the **Community Center**.
8. Mark your calendar for the 2011 **Starring at Staring** outdoor concert series, every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday night.
9. Plan to attend the **Animal Open House** at the **Outdoor Center**.
10. Join a **Summer Softball** league with a group of friends.

For more information about this and other Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation programs, visit edenprairie.org/parksbrochure.



Our Environment

Take a Green Spring Break

Did you know that the travel industry is the fastest growing industry in the world? As you plan your spring break, here are some green traveling tips to help you have a fun and eco-friendly trip!

Planning Your Trip

- Look for hotel accommodations and tours that carry environmental friendly certifications or memberships in green industry associations such as Green Seal or Green Leaf. These hotels and tours reduce energy consumption through fluorescent lighting, instituting recycling programs, conserving water either through installation of energy star products or by asking patrons to reuse towels, and by purchasing local organic foods.
- Select a hotel close to public transportation or near the places you are going to visit during your stay.

Before You Go

- Pull the plug on any unnecessary appliances such as TVs, VCRs, stereos, toasters and microwaves. These items can still use energy in off mode.
- Set your thermostat and water heater at low settings so that energy isn't wasted while you are gone.
- Stop your newspaper or donate the paper to a school while you are gone.



When You're There

- If the hotel has an environmental program, participate as much as possible.
- Never leave lights on when you are not in the room.
- Lower the thermostat when you leave the room for long periods of time.
- If your destination is a warm climate, then close the drapes. Conversely, let the sun warm up your room during the day if you are in a cooler climate.
- Leave unopened shampoo, soap and other items in the hotel unless you are taking it home to use.
- Walk or use public transportation.
- Grab only the maps and brochures that you will actually use. If you're traveling in a large group, share brochures whenever possible.

For more information about these and other environmental topics, visit epa.gov.

Around Eden Prairie

A Page from the City Staff Blog

Funding the Maintenance of City Infrastructure

Feb. 14, 2011

The City has over \$200 million worth of general assets it uses to provide services to citizens. This includes buildings, streets, trails, and playground equipment. The City needs to maintain, repair, and replace some of its infrastructure each year. How should the City pay for this? Should the City levy a tax, use special assessments, charge other fees? How do other cities pay for their capital needs?

In the past the City has used the tax levy to fund capital expenditures. As budgets have tightened the past few years, the tax levy has been reduced and there is less funding to meet the capital needs of the City.

The City Council has charged the Budget Advisory Commission (BAC) to review the financing options that are available and to inform the Council on what they view as the advantages and disadvantages of each option. This will be an important policy discussion for the City Council during the preparation of the 2012-2013 budget.

Stay tuned...

The BAC should have some feedback available for the City Council sometime during the summer.

Sue Kotchevar

Finance Manager & Staff Liaison to the Budget Advisory Commission

See more CITY BLOGS at edenprairieweblogs.org.



National Flood Safety Awareness Week is **March 14-18, 2011**. Sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service, this week is intended to highlight some of the many ways floods can occur, the hazards associated with floods and what you can do to save life and property.



Know Your Terms

Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a flood hazard:

Flood/Flash Flood Watch – Flooding or flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.

Flood/Flash Flood Warning – Flooding or flash flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, seek higher ground immediately.

Know What to Do

If a flood is likely in your area, you should:

Listen – Tune in to local radio or television stations for information from officials.

Be Aware – Flash flooding typically occurs around streams, drainage channels, river valleys and other areas prone to flooding – and flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.

Know What Not to Do

If a flood is likely in your area:

Do not walk through moving water – Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk through water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

Do not drive into flooded areas – If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle could be swept away.

For more information about flood safety, visit floodsafety.noaa.gov or fema.gov/hazard/flood.

Did You Know?

Did you know that the City of Eden Prairie **Human Rights and Diversity Commission** is currently accepting nominations for the annual **Human Rights Awards**?

These awards, honoring an outstanding individual, a non-profit organization and a business each year, recognize inspiring efforts that work to promote human rights and diversity, and to create an inclusive community spirit.

This year's award recipients will be selected by the Human Rights and Diversity Commission in March, with an award presentation and recognition at a City Council meeting in April.

Individuals who know of a deserving person, non-profit organization or business are encouraged to pick up a nomination packet at the **Eden Prairie City Center** (8080 Mitchell Road) or visit edenprairie.org to download it. The deadline for nominations is 4:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 25, 2011.

Contact **Molly Koivumaki** at **952-949-8439** or visit edenprairie.org for additional information.

Mark Your Calendar

City Council Meeting*

Tuesdays, March 1, 15

*All meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the City Center.

Eden Prairie Parks and Recreation Spring-Summer Program Guide Available

Friday, March 4

Live Well this summer, enjoy all that Eden Prairie parks and recreation programs have to offer! Watch for your copy in the mail, visit edenprairie.org/parksbrochure for an online copy or pick one up at the City Center, Community Center or Senior Center facilities.

Eden Prairie Players Present The Philadelphia Story

March 11, 12, 18 at 7:30 p.m.

March 13, 20 at 2 p.m.

Eden Prairie High School Auditorium

Don't miss this romantic comedy by Philip Barry, as the Eden Prairie Players commemorate 20 years of entertainment. Tickets available at the door: \$10 for adults, students and seniors.

Eden Prairie Polar Bear Plunge

Saturday, March 12

Plunge Time: Noon

Round Lake Park

Cheer on the Eden Prairie Police and Fire Department teams as they take the annual Polar Bear Plunge along with hundreds of Eden Prairie residents, organizations and businesses to support Special Olympics Minnesota.

Home, Landscape and Garden Expo

Saturday, March 24

9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Eden Prairie High School

Don't miss this free Chamber of Commerce event featuring exhibits on home remodeling, landscaping, interior design, windows and more, plus free seminars and door prizes.

Eden Prairie Figure Skating Club Presents The Little Mermaid

Friday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 26 at 5 p.m.

Sunday, March 27 at 2 p.m.

Community Center

Bring the whole family and enjoy this annual showcase of Eden Prairie's figure skaters. Tickets available at the Community Center March 21-27: \$8 for adults (18+), \$5 for youth.

For more information about City of Eden Prairie events, meetings or Parks and Recreation Department programs, visit edenprairie.org or call the City Center at 952-949-8300.