

# LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE

## Enjoying the 2010 International Festival



OCTOBER 2010

## 2010 Citywide Open House Your City Government at Work

The City of Eden Prairie is a "Plan B" city. This means that Eden Prairie has a Council-Manager plan of government where residents are represented by a mayor and four city council members. All administrative duties are delegated to a city manager, who also oversees the day-to-day organizational duties and hires staff in six areas of operations – Administration, Community Development, Fire, Parks and Recreation, Police and Public Works.



### Fire Department

See car fire demonstrations, put out fires in the squirt house, meet Sparky the fire dog, practice fire safety in the escape house, explore the City's fire engines, rescue boats and more.

### Parks and Recreation

Learn about the City's parks and trails, discover recreational fun for the whole family, explore volunteer opportunities, and find out more about the Art Center, Community Center, Outdoor Center and Senior Center.

### Police Department

See K-9 demonstrations, tour the jail, meet McGruff the crime dog, explore the inside of a squad car, and learn about seatbelt safety, crime prevention and more.

### Public Works

Get an up-close look at the City's fleet of snow plows and street maintenance equipment, tour the Water Treatment Plant and learn about Eden Prairie's conservation efforts.

## 2010 Citywide Open House

Saturday, Oct. 9  
11 a.m.–2 p.m.

Eden Prairie City Center  
8080 Mitchell Road

### Highlights of this year's event include:

#### Administration

Explore the City Council Chambers and take a seat in the mayor's chair, see yourself on EPTV Channel 16 and find out more about voting in this year's election.

#### Community Development

Learn about the City planning process and future development projects, as well as housing and community services offered in Eden Prairie.

## Miller Park Barrier-Free Playground Renovations

In the spring of 2009, the City of Eden Prairie completed the first two phases of a barrier-free renovation to the Miller Park playground. Work done in these initial phases included the addition of accessible pathways and surface structures, which allow individuals with mobility impairments access to all levels of the play structure. The new design allows individuals of all abilities the opportunity to play together, giving them the opportunity to thrive.



The idea for a barrier-free playground was first suggested by Eden Prairie residents **Mike and Jenny Garvin**, in hopes to create a place where their daughter, Ashley, who was diagnosed with cerebral palsy, could play alongside other children her age. The Garvin family has raised more than \$200,000 through the Tom & Kathy Miller Foundation for the project.

The first two phases of the park renovation included the addition of a new swing area, a barrier-free play structure, and a sand and water table.

Now, the City has broken ground on the third phase of this project, which will complete the Miller Park playground renovation with some exciting new amenities.

Scheduled for completion in October 2010, the latest renovations to the Miller Park Barrier-Free Playground include:

**An Elevated Picnic Overlook Area** – This plaza will feature shade structures, a wooden deck platform and themed picnic tables.

**Boulder and Net Climbers** – This play structure will allow kids to experience a confident climbing experience and promote the use of motor skills and social interaction.

**Splash Pad** – The water splash pad area will offer a number of directional ground jets as well as overhead water sprays.

**Sensory Play Panels** – This structure will offer an alphamaze, labyrinth, bongo and mirror panels, encouraging interaction and development of fine-motor, cognitive and physical skills.

**Secondary Park Entrance Plaza** – This area will provide the opportunity for shaded seating under a canopy. Nautical-inspired fence panels will surround the space and a ramp will provide an accessible walkway down to the play area.

**Dome** – This structure will provide a quiet space for kids, including various textures on the outer surface for climbing and peek holes, allowing kids and parents to keep an eye on the activity in and out of the dome.

**5-12 Age Play Area** – This multi-level play area will feature themed equipment and independent, fully accessible play pieces. Stairs and ramps will provide access to the play area and promote creative and interactive play.

**Ornamental Fencing** – Ornamental fencing will be added to provide a constant barrier between the play areas and the parking lot.

To learn more about the Garvin family's fundraising efforts, visit [ashleyandfriendsplayground.com](http://ashleyandfriendsplayground.com).

## Spotlight on City Commission Members

The **Eden Prairie City Council** utilizes 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 **Conservation Commission** is to advance and support the health and development of the citizens and natural environment of Eden Prairie through comprehensive environmental protection, conservation efforts and natural resource management.

### Meet Commission Member Prashant Shirkhande!

**Name:** Prashant Shirkhande

**Commission:** Conservation Commission

**Year you were appointed:** 2010

**Number of years you have lived in Eden Prairie:** 3

**Why do you volunteer to serve on a City commission?** I joined the Conservation Commission in April 2010 with the aim of promoting an urban water conservation practice in the City. As a new member on the Commission, I have had the opportunity to understand the City's efforts towards the sustainable development and conservation of our City's natural resources. My experience in working with the City staff and members on the Commission has been truly wonderful and rewarding.

**What would you like residents to know about the efforts of the commission on which you serve?**

The megatrend of increasing populations, urban sprawl, nuclear families, large homes, bigger turfs and inflated consumerism has imposed a definite burden on our environment, degrading the availability and quality of ecological goods and services we need. The Conservation Commission advises City staff on policies and practices to help sustain our natural resources – reduce, recycle, reuse – and consume less energy. Sometimes retrofitting and modifying equipment to be more efficient can require what seems like a higher price tag, but that initial investment pays off in the long run. If you have thoughts, ideas



The Shirkhande family

or questions on any topic related to our City's natural resources or simply want to learn more, I encourage you to get in touch with the Commission.

**What is your vision for the future in Eden Prairie?** Our City government has a SMART goal of energy and fuel use reduction stated as the 20-40-15 Initiative. We have to ask ourselves: "What can I do now? Can I make such a pledge in my homes, schools and businesses work? Can I energize and support my neighbors to do the same? How might such a collective vision alter our habitat and community bond?"

**What is something interesting, unique or little-known about you?**

I tend to think of conservation as a way of reinventing our lives each day. My kids enjoy gathering fallen leaves for the compost pile as much as they love to watch flowers and vegetables grow in the garden. One rainy day, I saw so much water pour down the gutter, I got excited about putting the excess barrel water to use indoors. Not only is conservation an investment unto oneself, it's also a way of connecting with the rhythms of nature. I targeted a three-year or less payback in replacing my 20-year-old refrigerator (an energy hog) with an Energy Star equivalent. While I certainly look forward to savings on energy bills, what excites me more is the reduced energy footprint and the dream of a solar-powered home.

Visit [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org) for more information about how to become involved with a City commission.

## Free Car Seat Safety Inspections

The Eden Prairie **Police Department** is hosting a **free car seat safety inspection clinic** on Sept. 18 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 to 3 p.m. at Fire Station 1 (14800 Scenic Heights Road).

To schedule an appointment during this clinic, contact Officer **Linda Williams** at **952-949-6228** or [lwilliams@edenprairie.org](mailto:lwilliams@edenprairie.org). Walk-ins will be taken as time allows.

Car seat inspections take approximately 30 minutes and require both the owner's manual for your car and the car seat manual. If possible, it is best for the child to be present at the inspection.



## Take Charge LIVE!

Money magazine has selected Eden Prairie as one of three locations to host a new event this fall, called **Take Charge LIVE!** This is an opportunity to talk to the experts from Money magazine at an informative and engaging event designed to help you gain insight into the economy and your own finances. The event will take place on **Thursday, Oct. 14** from **6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** at the **Eden Prairie High School Performing Arts Center**. Registration is required, visit [moneytakecharge.com](http://moneytakecharge.com) for more information and online registration.



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#### LIFE IN THE PRAIRIE IS PUBLISHED BY:

City of Eden Prairie  
Communications Division  
8080 Mitchell Road  
Eden Prairie, MN  
55344-4485

952-949-8434  
[edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org)



# Live Well Eden Prairie!

## Have a Safe and Happy Halloween

Each year, the arrival of the Halloween season brings an opportunity for children young and old to celebrate fall and create fun-filled memories of pumpkin carving, outrageous costumes, ghoulish games and the chance to splurge on tasty treats. Here are some suggestions for Halloween and fall fun.

### Top 10 ways to have a safe and happy Halloween in Eden Prairie:

1. Sign up your children to learn all they've ever wanted to know about the most abundant fruit of fall at the **Outdoor Center's Apple Crisp Days** program.
2. Pick up important safety information from the **Police and Fire Departments** at the **Citywide Open House**.
3. Celebrate the season at the **Fall Festival** luncheon at the **Senior Center**.
4. Register your preschool-age kids for the **Little Tigers** martial arts and basic self defense class at the **Community Center**.
5. Decorate with your own hand-picked pumpkins from **The Great Pumpkin Event** at the **Outdoor Center**.
6. Take a trip to see some of Disney's most famous costumed characters at a performance of **Disney Live! Mickey's Magic Show** at the **Xcel Energy Center**.
7. Try out your costume and have some **Spooky Saturday** fun at the **Community Center**.
8. Explore the fun and magic of **Charlotte's Web** with an afternoon at the **Art Center** before attending a performance of the play at **Stages Theater**.
9. Take a **Chilly Fall Night Hike** to explore nocturnal animals living in the woods near the **Outdoor Center**.
10. Drop by **Halloween on the Mall** and enjoy an afternoon of trick-or-treating at **Eden Prairie Center**.



For more information about these and other Parks and Recreation programs, visit [edenprairie.org/parksbrochure](http://edenprairie.org/parksbrochure).

## Our Environment

Reduce Waste This School Year

Nearly everything we do leaves behind some kind of waste. In fact, the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** estimates that U.S. residents, businesses and institutions produce more than 251-million tons of solid waste each year, which is approximately 4.6 pounds of waste per person per day.

The beginning of a new school year is a great time to consider waste reduction and teach children about the importance of finding ways to reduce, reuse and recycle.

### Tips for reducing school-related waste:

- Choose reusable school supplies and those made from recycled products, such as recycled paper, refillable pens and rechargeable batteries.
- Consider supplies you may already have that can be reused or recycled before buying new.
- To reduce the amount of waste from packaging, use school supplies with minimal packaging materials, use compact or concentrated products, or buy products that come in bulk sizes.
- Choose durable products such as sturdy backpacks and notebooks that can be reused for many years, which helps reduce the number of damaged items tossed away each year.
- When packing school lunches, use reusable containers instead of disposable ones; for example, use a thermos instead of disposable bottles or cartons.
- Work with friends and neighbors to carpool, share resources and find other ways to make waste reduction a part of everyday life.



For more information about waste reduction visit the **Environmental Protection Agency** website at [epa.gov](http://epa.gov).



## Around Eden Prairie

A Page from the Blog of City Manager Scott Neal

Twin Cities Author Kate Havelin is coming back to Eden Prairie on Saturday, October 23 to take what she referred to in a 2009 interview on NPR's "All Things Considered" as the Best Hike in the Twin Cities with the Best Interpretive Signage: The Elizabeth Fry Ellet Interpretive Trail in Richard T. Anderson Conservation Area (RTA).

Kate Havelin has written sixteen books, including two trail guidebooks for adults, both books published by Minnesota-based Adventure Publications. Best Hikes of the Twin Cities was a Midwest Book Award finalist. Minnesota Running Trails: Dirt, Gravel, Rocks, and Roots won the Midwest Independent Publishers Association's best Travel/Sports/Recreation book.

Kate has also written several nonfiction books for middle school and high school students. Her latest projects are books about historic fashions from the colonial and Civil War eras. She's also written biographies of Che Guevara, Queen Elizabeth I, Ulysses Grant and Victoria Woodhull. Before she began freelance writing, Kate worked as a TV producer at WCCO for a decade. Kate is a member of the steering committee of the Twin Cities chapter of the National Writers Union.

Kate is scheduled to be at the RTA from 10 am to Noon. Her books will also be on sale at the Barnes & Noble store at the Eden Prairie Center mall. The event is free. Come out and meet Kate, and take the hike.

See more of **Scott Neal's** blog entries by visiting [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org).



## Staying Safe in Eden Prairie Halloween Safety

Halloween is an exciting opportunity for children of all ages to dress up in costumes, go trick-or-treating, attend parties and eat yummy treats! Before the festivities begin this October, take a moment to review the following safety tips from the **American Academy of Pediatrics**:

### Costumes

- Plan costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure shoes fit well and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes for greater visibility.
- Because masks can limit or block eyesight, consider non-toxic makeup and decorative hats as safer alternatives. Hats should fit properly to prevent them from sliding over eyes.
- When shopping for costumes, wigs and accessories look for those with a label clearly indicating they are flame resistant.



### Trick-or-Treating

- To keep homes safe for visiting trick-or-treaters, remove tripping hazards such as garden hoses, toys, bikes and lawn decorations from the porch and front yard.
- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their neighborhood rounds, and carry a cell phone for emergencies.
- All children and their escorts should carry a flashlight with fresh batteries.
- Remain on well-lit streets and always use the sidewalk; if no sidewalk is available, walk at the far edge of the roadway facing traffic.
- Only go to homes with a porch light on and never enter a home or car for a treat.
- If older children are going out alone, plan and review the route that is acceptable and agree on a specific time when they should return home.
- Teach children how to call 911 if they have an emergency or become lost.
- Notify law enforcement authorities of any suspicious or unlawful activity immediately.

For more information about these and other safety topics from the American Academy of Pediatrics, visit [aap.org](http://aap.org).

## Did You Know?

Did you know the City's government access channel is now airing public safety messages in multiple languages?

A large majority of the public service announcements (PSAs) airing on **EPTV Channel 16** are aimed at generating awareness and informing Eden Prairie residents about important safety issues. Now those messages are not only airing in English, but in the Somali and Spanish languages as well.

Current multilingual programming on EPTV includes PSAs on topics such as fire and carbon monoxide safety, severe weather warnings, emergency preparedness and child safety seats.

EPTV 16 is also streamed live online via **CITY TV** at [edenprairie.org](http://edenprairie.org), providing even more members of the Eden Prairie community access to information about important public safety issues.



## Mark Your Calendar

### City Council Meetings\*

Tuesdays, Oct. 5, 19

\*Meetings begin at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the City Center.

### Apple Cider-ing

Sundays, Oct. 3, 17  
1-3 p.m.  
Outdoor Center

Take a lesson in old-fashioned apple cider making, learn about the history of apples and enjoy a sweet sample of cider. Cost is \$6 per family. Registration is requested.

### Citywide Open House

Saturday, Oct. 9  
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Explore City facilities and see how Eden Prairie's **Community Development, Fire, Police, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation** departments serve you!

### Fall Festival Luncheon

Wednesday, Oct. 27  
11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Senior Center

Gather with friends and enjoy a delightful fall meal including chicken breast, rice, coleslaw, vegetables and apple crisp. Cost is \$10 per person. Registration required.

### The Great Pumpkin Event

Friday, Oct. 29  
7-9 p.m.  
Outdoor Center

Learn the history and origins of Halloween, pick a pumpkin from the patch to carve and take it home. Top the night off with a stroll on the nature trail. Cost is \$9 per child, parents and guardians admitted free. Registration required.

### Spooky Saturday

Saturday, Oct. 30  
3-5 p.m.  
Community Center

Indoor inflatable fun, spooky skating, arts and crafts, ooey-goey treats and more! Cost is \$5 per child. Admission is free for parents and guardians.

### Halloween on the Mall

Sunday, Oct. 31  
3-5 p.m.  
Eden Prairie Center

Bring the kids for an afternoon of trick-or-treating and fun at Eden Prairie Center.

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