Eden Prairie neighbors gather for 2026 Night to Unite block parties

Neighbors collected 9,104 pounds of food and $160 in cash for local food shelf

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(SUN PHOTOS BY NATALIE TRIMBLE)

LEFT: From left: Eden Prairie Fire Department Lt. Carter Schulze, Felix Hernandez, and Jeff and Linda Rotschafer chat together at the Night to Unite neighborhood block party Aug. 4. **RIGHT:** Neighborhood children play in the street as Eden Prairie firefighter Adriaan Bresler sprays a hose.

On Aug. 4, Eden Prairie residents fired up their grills and gathered at neighborhood block parties across the city for an evening of Night to Unite festivities.

The annual tradition, which is held on the first Tuesday of August, is an opportunity for neighbors to come together in celebration of community while also collecting food donations for Eden Prairie PROP (People Reaching Out to People.)

During the 2026 Night to Unite event, 153 neighborhoods hosted block parties, with several incorporating food drives to help increase the amount of donations collected. In total, residents raised over 9,000 pounds of food for the local food shelf, according to an Aug. 5 newsletter by the city of Eden Prairie.

"As part of this annual tradition, we once again invited residents to support PROP (People Reaching Out to People) through a community food drive," the City stated in the newsletter. "As always, Eden Prairie residents stepped up in a big way, donating an incredible 9,104 pounds of food and $160 in cash."

The Ccty of Eden Prairie upped the ante for neighborhood block parties by entering community neighborhoods that raised more than 200 pounds of food into a drawing for a chance to win an ice cream social hosted by the Eden Prairie police and fire departments. This year's winner, the Fairway Drive neighborhood, collected a total of 282 pounds of food.

Eden Prairie residents Seannah Duchscherer and Sarah Hernandez co-hosted one of the many block parties that also donated food items. Nearly 50 residents in the neighborhood were in attendance.

"We love that we raise food for PROP and I think that's a great thing about this night is that we are reaching out to other communities, not just our neighborhood street," Hernandez said. "I would say we did around 25, 30 pounds. It's just a rough estimate. There's other neighborhoods [that] do a lot more than that, but when you put all of Eden

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LEFT: Neighborhood children play in the street as Eden Prairie firefighter Adriaan Bresler sprays a hose. **CENTER:** From left: Jack Duchscherer, Cade Ruberg, William Spencer and Abe Spencer pose with Teddy the dog. **RIGHT:** Ryker Schumacher steers an Eden Prairie firetruck.

Unite/From page 1

Prairie together, it's really awesome."

The neighborhood has participated in Night to Unite celebrations for over 20 years and has been a meaningful way for the community to connect. Those in attendance enjoyed a buffet of food and a night of conversation with fellow neighbors.

But the fun didn't stop there. The neighborhood also received a visit from the Eden Prairie Fire Department, whose firefighters caught up with residents, showed off the fire truck and turned the street into a splash pad for kids looking to cool off and play. Often, the neighborhood also receives a visit from local police, but officers were unable to attend this year due to other Night to Unite celebration commitments.

Duchscherer said her favorite part of the yearly celebration is the visit from city officials because of the excitement it brings to neighborhood kids. When they weren't sprinting through the fire hose and testing out the firetruck, local youth could be found biking around the street and bouncing on the trampoline at Duchscherer's house during the party.

Hernandez credited the annual event for giving neighbors of all ages a reason to get together and have fun. "Our neighborhood's gotten very diverse with little kids, empty nesters, all this different stuff. But we all come together in one night just to say hi and get together," she said.

PROP

Eden Prairie People Reaching Out to People (PROP) is a nonprofit organization founded over 50 years ago, offering community support through various programs to assist people navigating a crisis as they strive to reach their goal of a more secure future. PROP was built on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors and recently expanded its services to meet the basic needs of the 1,200 families it serves and support them on the path to a more secure future.

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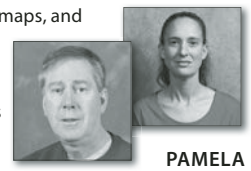
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