

# Customer Surprises at Checkout become an Annual Holiday Tradition for the Meijer Family

Retailer looks forward to *Very Merry Meijer* events each year

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.** – What began in 2014 as a small gesture to make the holidays brighter has become an annual tradition for the Meijer family.

Each holiday season, Meijer executives and store directors look forward to *Very Merry Meijer*, a one-day event to surprise an unsuspecting customer at each Meijer store by paying for their entire shopping cart brimming with goodies. And gifting each Meijer cashier who handled the surprise with a \$100 Meijer gift card.

“After five years, *Very Merry Meijer* is still my favorite day of the year. There’s nothing quite like playing Santa with our Meijer team members and revealing the big surprise for our customers,” Meijer Board Member Doug Meijer said. “We know the holidays can be stressful, but this event truly spreads Christmas cheer.”

The fifth annual event was no exception on Dec. 15 with tears of joy, screams of delight and so much holiday spirit at each of the retailer’s 241 stores and Bridge Street Market. Over the past five *Very Merry Meijer* events, Meijer gifted more than 1,150 customers their shopping carts full of toys, clothes, electronics, food and small appliances. The gifts totaled more than half a million dollars.

For the first time, Jennifer Ferris was co-hosting her family Christmas party, but she was trying hard to not think about the cost and focus on keeping traditions alive. But as she started to fill her second cart, the panic set in until Swartz Creek Meijer Store Director Terri Greenwald came up and surprised her by paying for everything.

“At Christmastime, miracles can happen,” Ferris said. “It’s just a miracle, an absolute miracle. I’m very thankful for it.”

In Illinois, Jennie Gatses lost everything she owned to a fire last month. So, on Saturday, the loyal Homer Glen Meijer shopper was out purchasing items – laundry baskets, utensils, towels, sheets and blankets – to replenish what she’d lost plus do a little Christmas shopping. Gatses said it was a much-appreciated Christmas surprise.

The O’Neil family was the *Very Merry Meijer* recipient in Marysville, Ohio. They spent a lot of time at the Marysville Meijer on Saturday, filling three carts with clothes, toys, electronics and shoes. They were donating everything to the Common Ground Free Store in Delaware, Ohio, which is a place where those in need can get the items they need for free. When they realized Meijer was paying for everything, they decided to donate whatever the total amount was to Common Ground Free Store on top of the items. Turns out it was \$1,595.18.

“Christmas is the time to celebrate hope, joy and kindness, and we were so excited to continue our *Very Merry Meijer* tradition and share the spirit of the season with those we hold dear: Our customers and team members,” Executive Chairman Hank Meijer said. “Our family has always believed that our customers don’t need us, but that we need them. That philosophy still guides us today, which is why we wanted to find a special way to say Merry Christmas.”

Meijer released a video today that showcases how the retailer surprised its customers. In most cases, the store director revealed the gift upon checkout, but Hank Meijer, Doug Meijer, Board Member Mark Meijer, and Meijer President and CEO Rick Keyes also helped spread holiday cheer.

“We strive all year long to put our customers first, and provide them with a great shopping experience through the quality products we sell, the service we provide and the many ways we offer savings,” Keyes said. “The *Very Merry Meijer* event continues to be that extra special way we express our appreciation to them, and our team members. That is what the holidays are all about.”

To view the *Very Merry Meijer* video, please visit <https://youtu.be/P6ISnkHv4v8>.


**Editor’s Note:** To follow the *Very Merry Meijer* conversation in the social space, please look for the hashtag #VeryMerryMeijer.

**About Meijer:** Meijer is a Grand Rapids, Mich.-based retailer that operates more than 240 supercenters and grocery stores throughout Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Wisconsin. A privately-owned and family-operated company since 1934, Meijer pioneered the “one-stop shopping” concept and has evolved

through the years to include expanded fresh produce and meat departments, as well as pharmacies, comprehensive apparel departments, pet departments, garden centers, toys and electronics. For additional information on Meijer, please visit [www.meijer.com](http://www.meijer.com). Follow Meijer on Twitter [@twitter.com/Meijer](https://twitter.com/Meijer) and [@twitter.com/MeijerPR](https://twitter.com/MeijerPR) or become a fan at [www.facebook.com/meijer](http://www.facebook.com/meijer).

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