

## Very Merry Meijer Tradition Surprises Customers and Team Members with More Than \$500,000 in Holiday Shopping Sprees

**Retailer expands event to spread even more joy**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Dec. 8, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Meijer surprised hundreds of customers and team members across the Midwest with more than \$500,000 in holiday shopping spree Saturday, spreading even more cheer this holiday season during its annual *Very Merry Meijer* tradition.

"The holiday season changed so much throughout the ongoing pandemic, but the change we're most excited to see this season is our customers returning to their own family traditions as they prepare to gather again," Executive Chairman Hank Meijer said. "We hope that our *Very Merry Meijer* tradition helps make their reunions even jollier."

In addition to surprising a customer shopping inside each of its stores with a \$1,000 gift card, the retailer expanded its tradition to also gift five Pickup customers at each location with a \$100 coupon for a future order. The retailer also surprised three team members in each of its stores with \$200 gift cards to thank them for their efforts this holiday season.

"So much has changed in the last year and a half, including the ways our customers shop with us, which is why we wanted to expand our favorite holiday tradition to include customers shopping via Meijer Pickup," Meijer President & CEO Rick Keyes said. "One of the most meaningful parts of holiday traditions is watching them grow with your family, and that's exactly how we feel about our *Very Merry Meijer* tradition."

In its eighth year, the *Very Merry Meijer* event continues to be a beloved tradition for the Meijer family and Meijer Store Directors who relish the chance to brighten the holidays for unsuspecting customers.

"This is one of my favorite parts of the holiday season," Lafayette, Ind. Meijer Store Director Amy Griffis said. "The look of shock and disbelief on a customer's face followed by tears of joy or laughter makes it one of the best days of the year. It means so much to get to make their holidays a little extra jolly."

In total, the eight *Very Merry Meijer* events held since 2014 gifted more than 3,500 customers with more than \$1.4 million in toys, clothes, electronics, groceries and small appliances.

Kim and Deron Rutledge were shopping for their annual Toys for Tots donation when they were approached by Champaign, Ill. Meijer Store Director Josh Kietzman and Food Night Clerk Johnathon Crain with the surprise \$1,000 gift card. The Rutledge family immediately became emotional because this year's shopping trip was especially significant.

"We budget for this donation every year, and this year we had budgeted a bit more in honor of my late mother who recently passed," Kim Rutledge said.

The Meijer team was so touched by their story that when Kietzman then turned to Crain to surprise him with a \$200 gift card for his hard work this year, Crain immediately handed it to the Rutledges to add to their donation.

Thanks to the unexpected \$1,200, the Rutledge family left the store with seven carts filled with toys, at least three times as much as last year's donation.

"Walking up to someone and totally changing the course of their day is simply incredible," Meijer Board Member Doug Meijer said. "What made this year extra special was getting to help shop Meijer Pickup orders and surprise those customers as well."

To view the *Very Merry Meijer* surprises, please click [here](#).

**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 258 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 [@Meijer](#) and [@MeijerPR](#) or become a fan

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