

Loyal customer honored as first guest at renovated Meijer Express

A Meijer Express station is often more than just a place to fill up on fuel. For many, it's a crucial part of their daily routine and a comforting presence in their lives. When our Meijer Express station in Benton Harbor, Michigan, was closed for remodeling, it left a significant void for its loyal customers, especially one dedicated nurse named Sonja Prusa.

Sonja, who has spent years depending on that gas station for both fuel and the beloved fountain drinks that are a staple of her daily routine, took it upon herself to reach out to us during the remodel. In her email, she conveyed the emotional connection she developed with the station and its friendly staff, stating, "It feels like a part of my daily life is missing."

As a nurse, Sonja works long shifts, and her daily ritual involved stopping at the Meijer Express station for her much-needed pick-me-up: a refreshing Diet Coke and Diet Mountain Dew. These fountain drinks, she claimed, were incomparable to anything else in the area, making their absence even more pronounced during the station's closure. To her, the gas station was not just a pit stop; it was a space where she felt welcomed, valued, and part of a community.

Upon receiving her heartfelt email, Store Director April Flagel wanted to do something special for Sonja. She understands the importance of community in her and her team's work, and Sonja's email epitomized why they do what they do. So April made the thoughtful gesture of inviting Sonja to be the first customer to walk through the doors of the remodeled station.

"When Sonja emailed asking when we would reopen, I wanted to reply with something special. Sonja's email is why we do what we do. The customers are the best part of this job," April said.

On the day of the grand reopening, Sonja arrived with a sense of excitement, ready to reclaim her spot in the familiar setting. To her surprise, she was presented with a beautifully curated gift basket filled with Meijer merchandise. This thoughtful gesture not only made her day but also showcased our team's commitment to appreciating their loyal customers.

"To me, Sonja is more than just a customer waiting for the gas station to reopen. She was part of our family here," April said.

Sonja's story reminds us that our locations are more than just businesses; they're spaces where connections are built and traditions are established. The Benton Harbor Meijer Express station has returned, ready to serve its community, and its relationship with customers like Sonja will only continue to grow stronger.

In a world where the hustle and bustle sometimes overshadow the simple joys of life, for Sonja, this Meijer Express station was a beacon of comfort and camaraderie, proving that sometimes, it's the little things – a friendly smile, a delicious drink, or a warm welcome – that truly matter.

Additional assets available online: [Photos](#) (2)

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