

It's looking a lot like Christmas throughout the area thanks to the Freer family in Godfrey

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
December 25 2016 7:01 AM





GODFREY - Every year, the **Freer family** devotes endless hours to **Community Christmas, sponsored by the United Way**, and this year, their hard work, plus countless volunteers and donors enabled them to be the largest donor ever.

Christmas morning is special in every household in the Riverbend, but it is especially special today at the Freer homes in Godfrey because they know today, many children will have presents under the tree and food on the table.

The Freer family collected an amazing \$26,800 in cash and donated \$20,000 in items to Community Christmas this year, making it the largest donation in Community Christmas history by a single business or industry.

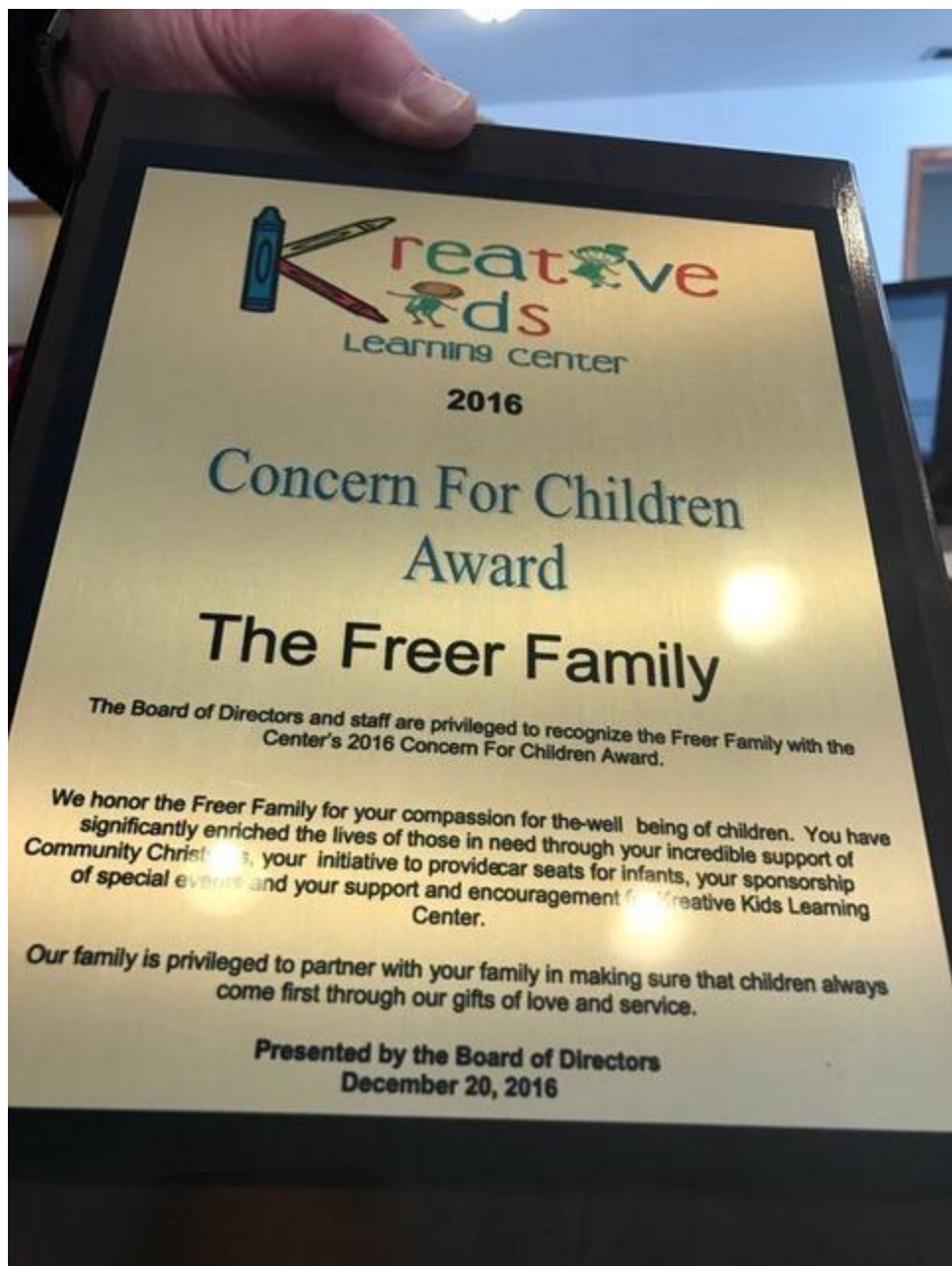
“We have been a part of Community Christmas since we opened in 1991,” **Margaret Freer**, one of the owners of Freer Auto Body in Godfrey, said. “I came from a family of eight and things were not always easy or plentiful, but my parents always gave what they could to those in need.

“We have always been very giving people and have instilled this in **Taylor** and **Lily**, our grandchildren. While we have seen tragedy and loss of our son, **David**, we try to look beyond that in that we are so very blessed. With all of my health problems this last year

it has been very hard. We have always been givers in that not only what we do for Community Christmas but so much for so many other different needy causes. After everything we do for Community Christmas often we have learned of a family in need and stepped up and helped that family have holiday memories too.”

Margaret Freer continued: “This past year in observance of our 25th anniversary ...we continued to give. We donated 25 car seats to Alton Memorial Hospital for families in need, bought food for Crisis Food Center and the Boys and Girls Club, scholarships to 100 Black men and the YWCA, Donated funds and helped with the construction of two soccer fields at Gordon Moore for Alton United Futbol, raised 34,000 with Christmas in July, then partnered with Optimist and Redbird Nest with the purchase of a trailer for Alton High Athletic Foundation.

“We donated to Godfrey Women’s Club, Cookies and Cocoa generated \$2,885. Plus we personally purchased approximately \$20,000 in bikes, coats, boots, toys etc and friends donated more. Donated to Salvation Army. This next week we are also going to be doing something kind and fun....Secret Santa sisters (Taylor and Lily) will be surprising people with acts of kindness....maybe pay for your groceries, gas, food etc.”



Kreative Kids Award On December 20, 2016

On Dec. 20, Kreative Kids Learning Center in Alton honored the Freer family with a **2016 Concern For Children Award** at its annual Appreciation Breakfast.

Margaret Freer said for the family: “We are very honored by this award. While we don’t do what we do for recognition...it is nice to know people notice. We love children and want to help them. ..they are our future.”

Keith Neuber of Kreative Kids Learning Center said it was a great moment to honor such a giving family to the community.

“It was such a privilege to honor a family that is so committed to the community,” he said. “We wish everyone in the area a joyous holiday season.”

Lily Freer said “Christmas morning she would have a good feeling knowing she helped other kids have a nice Christmas.”

Taylor Freer had a meaningful closing of this remarkable year and said: “Christ gave his life for us so giving is something everyone should do.”

“The girls are truly are wiser than their years and I am so proud to be called “MawMaw,” Margaret Freer said.