



Written by [Liana Stanley](#) on August 6, 2009

Celebrating Christmas in July in Krum, Texas

From Krum, Texas, comes the heartwarming story of a small town that pulled together to celebrate Christmas in July for a young girl who may not be able to celebrate it in December. Krum's Channel 11 reported that the event on July 25, which drew more than the entire town's population of 3,700, began with a simple question: "Daddy, when is Christmas?"



The answer was, "Soon," and was the beginning of Shawn Richards' preparation for an early Christmas for his daughter. You see, five-year-old Reagan has a very aggressive form of brain cancer, and following two surgeries and seven months of chemotherapy and radiation, doctors have given her only a few months to live.

Richards got out the family's decorations and made it Christmas inside the house, and a few of Reagan's neighbors decided to hold a small parade of neighborhood children on decorated bikes. But when Richards contacted his homeowners' association to get permission to put up lights and decorations outside, word of the event leaked out. As Kent Rivers, a volunteer firefighter who played Santa for the celebration, told the station, "It went from a little-bitty grass fire to a Texas-size wildfire."

And indeed it did. The small parade evolved into a grand party and a procession involving 50-60 community groups, 11 fire departments, veterans groups, cheerleaders, over 100 motorcyclists, police officers, a band, floats, hot rods, and much more. The Krum fire department erected a huge banner saying "Merry Christmas Reagan," and the party was kicked off with a CareFlight helicopter flyover.

Recovering from chemotherapy treatments, Reagan enjoyed the party from her bed, which had been brought outside for the occasion. There were gifts, candy, and snow cones; and a movie special-effects coordinator came all the way from Austin to bring a snow machine. Dallas/Ft. Worth's WFAA.com captured Reagan's visits with Santa (who arrived at the end of the parade on a fire engine covered with Christmas lights), Frosty the Snowman, and a live reindeer.

Richards told the Denton Record-Chronicle that Reagan loved the party and had a great time, and it was a great time for the participants, as well. Rivers (Santa) told the paper that just one look at Reagan made it all worthwhile for him. "When I stepped off the truck and saw her, she was beaming."

Hopeful that Reagan may be able to celebrate Christmas twice this year, Richards says the family is still "holding on to a miracle." "Everyone, keep praying for my daughter," he told the paper. "That's bigger and better than everything." But the way the whole community came together to support his daughter is something big, too, and something Shawn Richards will never forget.



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