

December 2021

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**Staying Connected**

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## **FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

This week, across all of our social media, we shared this simple message:

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FRED ROGERS CENTER  
for early learning and children's media  
at Saint Vincent College

"The greatest gift you ever  
give is your honest self."

- Fred Rogers

As the holiday “season of giving” continues, this message seemed to strike a chord with many helpers - educators, caregivers, parents, grandparents, and more. In just two hours, the message was viewed and shared over 10,000 times. Maybe it was a reminder many of us needed this holiday season?

What does it mean to give our honest self and allow others to do the same? Recently, Emily Uhrin, our Senior Archivist, compiled some documents about holidays, celebrations, and giving from the Fred Rogers Archive. Each resource she found about giving was also about receiving. I found myself reading and re-reading a Pittsburgh Magazine article from 2000 where Fred wrote, “Being a giver grows out of the experience of having been a receiver - a receiver who has been lovingly given to.” I wonder if many of us find it so much easier to be the one who generously gives than the one who can graciously receive. What a beautiful sentiment for this season of appreciation and gratitude - that our giving grows from our receiving and that our honest self consists of the giver and the receiver.

We wish you a holiday season filled with many ways of “generous giving and

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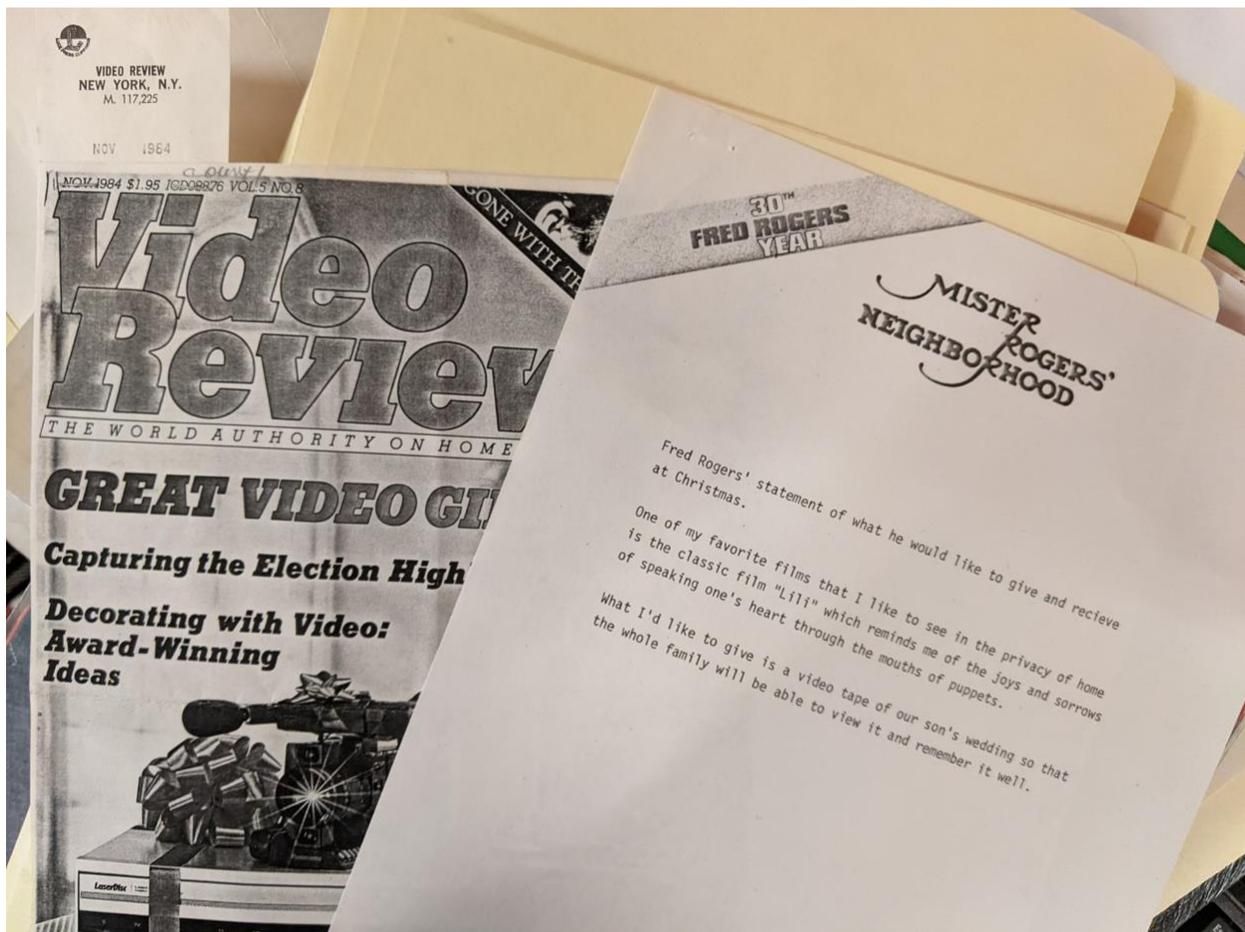
gracious receiving.”



Dana Winters, Ph.D., Executive Director, Fred Rogers Center

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## IN THE ARCHIVE



Everyone at one time or another is a giver and a receiver. The magazine *Video Review* asked Fred Rogers what he would like to receive for Christmas, and also

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what he would give. We learn that one of Fred's favorite movies is *Lili*, which stars Leslie Caron as a young woman who shares her thoughts and feelings with puppets. That is the videotape that Fred would want to receive as a gift. What Fred would want to give at Christmastime is the video of his son's wedding, a documentation of a joyous time in his own life. Sharing an important time with others can lead to the contented feelings that come from being a gracious giver and receiver.

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## FROM THE CENTER



Saint Vincent college was infused with an extra dose of kindness for the first three weeks of November, during our inaugural Kindness Campaign! Thanks to the generous support from the Citrone 33 Foundation, the Fred Rogers Center and

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various departments at Saint Vincent College teamed up to promote a culture of kindness, empathy, and well-being across the campus. The campaign kicked off on the evening of November 1st with a drive-in style movie-showing of the Fred Rogers documentary “Won’t You be My Neighbor.”

Grounded in the idea that kindness must actively be shared with others, the campaign engaged the campus community daily through social media posts encouraging small acts of kindness, such as calling a loved one or sharing a kind word with a stranger. There were also weekly tables in the student center giving students the opportunity to show kindness in more tangible ways such as writing thank you cards for veterans and staff at various campus departments, brightening a friend's day by sending a trolley-gram cookie, or learning about some of the volunteer opportunities available to them in the community. In the spirit of giving, many students chose to make a variety of dog toys at an upcycle crafting event that were donated to a local shelter. Students reported that they have been inspired to continue to foster a culture of kindness at Saint Vincent.

The Fred Rogers Center will pay it forward by sharing our model with other colleges and universities who wish to hold their own Kindness Campaign. We are also stories of kindness offered by our own students, staff and faculty to share with the campus community. We hope that you are inspired to offer a little more kindness and empathy to those around you today.

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## **I Wish King Friday XIII Would Call Me Again**

**By: Eliot Daley**

Fred and I had a lot of silly sessions. Our intense work on scripts or other weighty matters for “Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood” sometimes required a break, so we’d get silly together. And one day I began musing about whether Friday the 13th was King Friday XIII’s birthday. We decided that, well, of course it is! There is at least one Friday the 13th every year, and even better, some years there are two. And

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who is more deserving of having two birthdays in a year than the pompous and self-important King Friday XIII.

So the very next time Friday the 13th rolled around, I called Fred's office and told his beloved assistant Elaine that I wished to speak to King Friday. When Fred came on the line, he was fully in character as the King, whereupon I formally intoned, "Good day, your highness. This is your loyal subject Eliot calling to wish you glorious felicitations on your natal day." The King received my greetings with dignified gratitude, made a little small talk, inquired about the wellbeing of my family, and satisfied that all were well, concluded the call.

... To read the rest of the story please click [HERE](#).

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## WORDS OF WISDOM

"Love is like infinity. You can't have more or less infinity, and you can't compare two things to see if they're equally infinite. Infinity just is, and that's the way I think love is, too." - Fred Rogers

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**Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning &  
Children's Media**

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