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# 11 Neighborly Facts About the Mister Rogers Christmas Special

J.K. Rowling invented Quidditch in a pub.

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Tim Lybarger

filed under: 11, Lists, Pop Culture, tv



What do Jason Voorhees and Happy Gilmore have in common? They're both one step removed from the seldom-seen 1977 holiday special, "Christmastime with Mister Rogers." Here are 11 quirky facts about this obscure Neighborhood gem.

## 1. FRED ROGERS TOOK A BREAK FROM A BREAK TO MAKE THIS SPECIAL.

After almost a decade on nationally-televised public television, Mister Rogers' Neighborhood went on a two year hiatus in the late 1970s. With the exception of this holiday special, no new episodes of Mister Rogers' Neighborhood aired in 1977 or 1978.

## 2. IT'S APPARENTLY A MILD WINTER IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



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Unlike most holiday specials, there is no snow in the neighborhood during this show. In fact, it is warm enough for Francois Clemmons to sit outside enjoying a cold beverage during the opening segment.

### 3. HAPPY GILMORE'S GRANDMA IS MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBOR.



The part of Franny Hamilton is played by [Frances Bay](#), who is known for her roles as Fonzie's grandmother on Happy Days, Happy's grandmother in Happy Gilmore, and the lady with the dog at Daniel LaRusso's apartment building in The Karate Kid.

### 4. THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR IS JUST OKAY.



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Francois Clemmons leads a choir of children with a name that indicates either a dry sense of humor or mediocre talent.

### 5. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME FORESHADOWING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

One of the main characters in "Christmastime with Mister Rogers" is the "Music Man," a magical musician played by Stanley Clay. Thirty-five years later, [Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood](#) would premiere featuring Music Man Stan—the husband of Lady Elaine Fairchilde. A strange coincidence or a subtle nod to the original Neighborhood?



### 6. SLOPPERYDOZAFANOONDAPUCK

Gifts are not allowed to be opened in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe until King Friday XIII says "the word." The word for this holiday season is "Slopperydozafanoondapuck" which (according to King Friday) means "what a difference one person can make."





## 7. THIS SPECIAL WAS NOT JUST ABOUT CHRISTMAS.

Mister Rogers spends time talking about different families' traditions—Christmas, Chanukah, and those who celebrate neither. The Neighborhood Trolley is decorated with a banner that reads "Merry Christmas" on one side and "Happy Chanukah" on the other. At one point, Mister Rogers plays with a dreidel as he sings the Dreidel Song.



## 8. JASON VOORHEES IS BARELY REMOVED FROM MISTER ROGERS' NEIGHBORHOOD.

Included in the credits for "Christmastime with Mister Rogers" are scenic designer [Kathleen Ankers](#) (known for her television work including Late Night with David Letterman and ESPN's SportsCenter) and make-up artist [Tom Savini](#) (known for his extensive involvement with many popular horror films such as Friday the 13th and Creepshow).

## 9. THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS NOT IMMUNE TO FILMING GOOFS.

After three young friends stop by to share a Christmas carol, Mister Rogers walks away from the window. Outside the window, a studio microphone can be seen moving from the picture.



#### 10. KING FRIDAY XIII RECEIVES AN APPROPRIATE GIFT FROM HIS WIFE.

Known for unnecessarily using his extensive kingly vocabulary, King Friday XIII is presented with a "word holder" box—a long box which appropriately makes it a "long word holder." The perfect size for King Friday's voluminous erudition when it comes to etymology.



#### 11. MISTER ROGERS' HOLIDAY MESSAGE IS SIMPLE AND CLEAR.

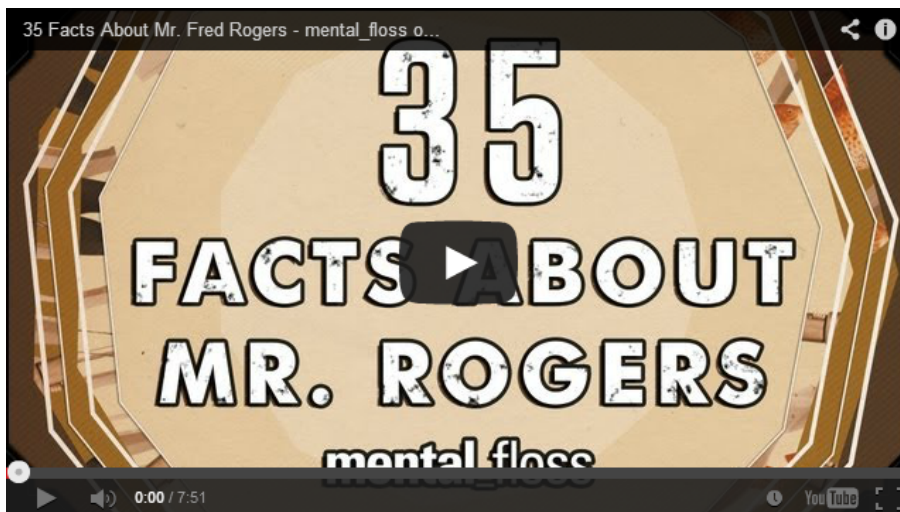
"I've been thinking about what I'd like to give you for Christmas. I'd really like to give you something that just fits your own wishes and needs the way these shoes just fit me. I suppose the thing I'd like most to be able to give you is hope. Hope that through your own doing and your own living with others, you'll be able to find what best fits for you in this life...I, for one, wish you good memories of this holiday. And I hope you'll be able to look for all the different ways that people have of showing that they love you."



Happy holidays, neighbors.

For a full summary of "Christmastime with Mister Rogers", [visit the Neighborhood Archive](#). All images are property of [the Fred Rogers Company](#).

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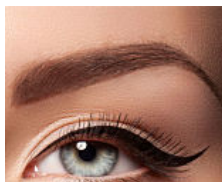
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DID YOU KNOW? Marlon Brando hated memorizing lines so much that he posted cue cards everywhere to help him get through scenes. He even asked for lines to be written on an actress's posterior. (That request was denied.)

