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# KRON-TV

**KRON-TV**, virtual channel 4 (UHF digital channel 38), is a MyNetworkTV-affiliated television station licensed to San Francisco, California, United States and serving the San Francisco Bay Area. The station is owned by Nexstar Media Group. KRON maintains studios in the same building as ABC owned-and-operated station KGO-TV, channel 7 (with completely separate operations from that station)<sup>[1]</sup> in the Financial District, and its transmitting antenna, shared with Fox O&O KTVU (channel 2) and CBS O&O KPIX-TV (channel 5), is located atop Sutro Tower near San Francisco's Twin Peaks. KRON-TV is the largest MyNetworkTV affiliate by market size that is not owned and operated by the Fox Television Stations subsidiary of the Fox Corporation, which owns the programming service.

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## KRON-TV



**San Francisco/Oakland/San Jose, California  
United States**

**City** San Francisco, California

**Branding** KRON 4  
(pronounced "chron")(general)  
*KRON 4 News* (newscasts)

**Slogan** *The Bay Area's Local News Station*

**Channels** Digital: 38 (UHF)  
(to move to 7 (VHF))  
Virtual: 4 (PSIP)

**Affiliations** **4.1:** MyNetworkTV  
**4.2:** Sky Link TV  
**4.3:** getTV  
**4.4:** Court TV

**Owner** Nexstar Media Group  
(*Nexstar Broadcasting, Inc.*)

**First air date** November 15, 1949

**Call letters' meaning** San Francisco **CHRON**icle  
(*sic*)  
(former co-owned newspaper)

**Former channel number(s)** **Analog:**  
4 (VHF, 1949–2009)  
**Digital:**  
57 (UHF, 2004–2009)

**Former affiliations** **Primary:**  
NBC (1949–2001)  
Independent (2001–2006)  
**Secondary:**  
NBC (2010–2011)

# History

## As an NBC affiliate (1949–2001)



KRON's original logo, from 1949, depicted what would become its 50-year association with the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

In the 1940s, when the channel 4 allocation in the Bay Area came open for bidding, it soon became obvious that the license would go to either NBC or the deYoung family, publishers of the *San Francisco Chronicle* newspaper. NBC wanted an owned-and-operated station (O&O) in the Bay Area alongside its West Coast flagship radio station, KNBC (680 AM, now KNBR). However, in an upset, the deYoungs won the license. They brought KRON-TV on the air on November 15, 1949 as a full-time NBC affiliate, operating it alongside co-owned radio station KRON-FM (96.5, now KOIT-FM). The station's call letters come from a modification of the *Chronicle*'s nickname, "The Chron". It was the third television outlet in the Bay Area behind KGO-TV (channel 7) and KPIX-TV (channel 5) within a year, and the last license before the FCC placed a moratorium on new television station licenses that would last the next four years.

KRON-TV originally broadcast from studios located in the basement of the *Chronicle* building at Fifth and Mission streets. It originally maintained transmitter facilities, master control and a small insert studio on San Bruno Mountain; "NBC" lettering was placed near the summit of Radio Peak in huge white letters. In August 1959, the *Chronicle* reported that the tower was severely damaged by an unusually strong thunderstorm, requiring major repairs before KRON could return to the air. Newscasts benefited from the resources of the *Chronicle* and there was cooperation between KRON and the newspaper. In the 1950s and 1960s, local programs produced by KRON-TV included the award-winning documentary series *Assignment Four*, *Fireman Frank* with George Lemont (died October 1985 at the age of 63),<sup>[2]</sup> and his puppets (including Scat the Cat, Rhode Island Red, and Karl the Karrot), and a live children's program hosted by Art Finley as *Mayor Art*. Bay Area kids, known as the "City Council", joined Mayor Art in the studio each day. The show featured Popeye cartoons mixed with science demonstrations, a newsreel feature entitled "Mayor Art's Almanac", games, prizes, and a sock puppet named "Ring-A-Ding."

*Assignment Four* was a documentary series that generally aired Monday evenings at 7:00 p.m. through much of the 1960s (beginning in February 1960). A promotional brochure declared, "each ASSIGNMENT FOUR story is concerned with cultural and ethnic activities or perhaps some fascinating phase of life and living in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area." Subjects ranged from 'Skid Row' to 'The Single Girl,' the 'Green Intricate Country of Napa Valley' to 'No Deposit, No

	<b>DT4:</b> <div>Grit (until 2019)</div>
<b>Transmitter power</b>	1000 kW <div>50 kW (CP)</div>
<b>Height</b>	511.7 m (1,679 ft) <div>507.2 m (1,664 ft) (CP)</div>
<b>Facility ID</b>	65526
<b>Transmitter coordinates</b>	<span><span><span><span><span>37°45′19″N</span> <span>122°27′10″W</span></span></span><span><span>﻿</span> / <span>﻿</span></span><span><span></span></span></span></span>
<b>Licensing authority</b>	FCC
<b>Public license information</b>	Profile ( <a href="https://publicfiles.fcc.gov/tv-profile/KRON-TV">https://publicfiles.fcc.gov/tv-profile/KRON-TV</a> ) <div>CDBS (<a href="https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=KRON-TV">https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=KRON-TV</a>)</div>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kron4.com">www.kron4.com</a> ( <a href="https://www.kron4.com/">https://www.kron4.com/</a> )

Return' (a study of garbage disposal that won a 1966 Emmy Award and Silver Medal Award in the 1966 New York International Film Festival). The documentary 'Not to Have Lived' (aired January 31, 1966) about mechanized society featured no dialogue or narration.<sup>[3]</sup>

In 1965, KRON-TV began broadcasting most Oakland Raiders games, which were at first part of the American Football League, which had a contract with NBC from 1965 to 1969, and then the National Football League's American Football Conference, which inherited the AFL's deal with NBC from 1970 to 1997 (the Raiders relocated to Los Angeles in 1982, stripping KRON of its status as the team's home station until they returned to Oakland in 1995; the station then served as the unofficial home station until 1997). In addition, during those same years (1970-1997), KRON-TV also aired select San Francisco 49ers games whenever they played host to an AFC opponent at Candlestick Park. In 1967, KRON-FM-TV moved to a new studio at 1001 Van Ness Avenue in the Western Addition neighborhood (a location that formerly served as the site of the Roman Catholic cathedral of San Francisco), where channel 4 operated until 2014. The television transmitter was moved to Sutro Tower on July 4, 1973, while the FM transmitter remained on San Bruno Mountain.

Since the 1970s, KRON's logo has incorporated a stylized number "4" design that is based on the Golden Gate Bridge. The vertical component is a bridge tower, the horizontal component is a portion of the bridge deck, and the curve is a portion of a suspension cable<sup>[4]</sup> (this logo was used as early as April 1974, during coverage of a Symbionese Liberation Army bank robbery). By about 1990-1991, this evolved into the "circle 4" logo in use to this day, with the "4" keeping the bridge design.

### Becoming a market leader

Until the late 1970s, KRON-TV was known for being very San Francisco-centric in its news coverage and audience targeting, an approach that would become costly to the station as population growth in areas outside San Francisco soared. Realizing this and refocusing on the entire market enabled KRON-TV to become the dominant station in the Bay Area. During the 1980s, KRON continued its dominance by airing top-rated syndicated programs, including the Merv Griffin-produced game shows *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune* (the original NBC daytime versions of both series also aired on KRON), as well as *Entertainment Tonight*. The game show pair would move to ABC-owned KGO-TV (channel 7) permanently in 1992 after KRON-TV experimented with its "early prime time" schedule that year, while *ET* also moved to KGO in 1988, before returning to KRON in 1992 (where the show has remained since).

In 1982, the deYoung family's Chronicle Publishing Company unit discussed a possible trade of KRON-TV (for \$100 million) to the Gannett Company, in exchange for acquiring Gannett's Oklahoma City station KOCO-TV. The proposal ultimately fell apart by September 1983.<sup>[5]</sup> In the late 1980s, KRON-TV was among the few local television stations in the United States that produced a game show: *Claim to Fame* was a weekly half-hour show hosted by Patrick Van Horn that usually ran on Saturday evenings. During that timeframe, KRON also produced a Saturday morning children's program called *Buster and Me*.<sup>[6][7]</sup> From the 1970s into the late 1980s, the station used Gabriel Fauré's *Pavane*, Opus 50 as the music piece played during its nightly sign-off, alongside scenic rustic shots from around the Bay Area. KRON also produced *Bay Area Backroads*, a half-hour program (which ran from the mid-1980s to 2008) that profiled places and people in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, and occasionally beyond. The program, which generally aired on Sunday evenings, featured hosts such as Jerry Graham and Doug McConnell.



The original version of KRON's current logo was based on the design of the Golden Gate Bridge. Station identifications used by the station during the 1970s and 1980s usually depicted the logo hidden in positive space within a full-scale design of the bridge.

For most of its tenure with NBC, KRON was the network's second-largest affiliate (behind only KYW-TV in Philadelphia) and its largest on the West Coast. Despite this, KRON occasionally preempted NBC programming. One such notable omission was *Another World*, which would eventually air on the station in the early 1990s; KRON's decision to drop the daytime soap opera in the summer of 1998 (leaving *Days of Our Lives* and the struggling *Sunset Beach* as the only network soaps on its schedule) is thought to have hastened NBC's decision to cancel it altogether a year later. Two NBC daytime game shows, *50 Grand Slam* and *Just Men!*, were never seen in the Bay Area. KRON also did not air NBC's soap operas in pattern (for example, KRON-TV aired *Days of Our Lives* after *Another World*, rather than the standard slot for NBC affiliates in the Pacific Time Zone—at 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. depending on the season and time slot). Channel 4 also preempted some of the network's prime time programs. Similar to fellow NBC station KCRA-TV in neighboring Sacramento, KRON-TV stopped airing the Saturday morning T-NBC lineup in the early 1990s. Historically, NBC was far less tolerant of preemptions than the other networks, but has recently eased its standards. The network would resort to purchasing stations for the sole purpose of switching or upgrading them to O&O status because of this (Miami's WTVJ and Salt Lake City's KUTV are such examples) or find independent stations to air NBC programs that the main affiliate did not air. In the case of KRON, many of the shows it preempted ended up on independent KICU-TV (channel 36). NBC had a somewhat contentious relationship with KRON, especially since it often lost valuable advertising in one of the nation's largest markets. However, it had little reason to complain about its ratings performance in the Bay Area, as channel 4 was one of NBC's strongest affiliates for the better part of a half-century. A shuffle of network affiliations around the country in the mid-1990s made channel 4 NBC's largest affiliate.

During the 1992–1993 season, KRON-TV (along with KCRA-TV) participated in the "Early Prime" experiment in which prime time programs aired one hour earlier (mirroring the scheduling of the network's primetime lineup in the Central and Mountain time zones), the half-hour late evening newscast also moved from 11:00 to 10:00 p.m. as a result. While KRON moved NBC's prime time programming back to the 8:00–11:00 p.m. timeslot in September 1993, CBS affiliate KPIX, who adopted the early primetime schedule at the same time as KRON, continued with the experiment until 1998—well after it had become owned by the network through CBS's 1994 acquisition by KPIX's then-owner Westinghouse. Though both KRON and KPIX ran hour-long newscasts at 10 p.m., neither were able to beat Fox affiliate KTVU (channel 2), due to that station's longtime dominance in the 10:00 hour that continues to this day.

In 1993, Channel 4 became the flagship station of the Oakland Athletics, after acquiring broadcast rights to the Major League Baseball team's games. This caused a problem in 1996, when the final day of the U.S. Olympic track and field trials conflicted with a scheduled Athletics broadcast. Since KRON-TV was contractually obligated to show the baseball game live, it rebroadcast the trials at midnight. KRON lost the Athletics' television rights following the team's 1998 season.

## Young Broadcasting purchase and loss of NBC affiliation (1999–2001); independence (2001–2006)

On June 16, 1999, the deYoung family announced that it decided to liquidate Chronicle Publishing's assets.<sup>[8]</sup> By this point, the deYoungs owned three television stations (including KRON) in large and mid-sized markets around the country, two of which were sold off to LIN TV (which traded KAKE-TV in Wichita and WOWT in Omaha to Benedek Broadcasting in turn). The *San Francisco Chronicle*, meanwhile, was acquired by the Hearst Corporation in a \$295 million deal in October of that year.<sup>[9]</sup>

NBC had made many offers for channel 4 over the years, but the deYoungs turned them down each time. It finally saw the opportunity to get an owned-and-operated station in what was then the United States' fifth-largest television market and quickly jumped into the bidding war for KRON. NBC was seen as the frontrunner to buy the station, until it was outbid at the last second by New York City-based Young Broadcasting, then-owner of Los Angeles independent station KCAL-TV and several other stations in medium to small markets, on November 16, 1999.<sup>[10][11]</sup> Young's purchase price for the

station (\$750 million at the outset, rising to \$820 million by closing) was a record price for a single station that stands to this day. To help finance the down payment, Young was forced to sell La Crosse, Wisconsin CBS affiliate WKBT to Morgan Murphy Media.

NBC president and chief executive officer Bob Wright had warned that if NBC did not succeed in buying KRON, it would require any prospective buyer to uphold specific terms if it wanted to retain the NBC affiliation. Wright did not rule out moving NBC's Bay Area affiliation elsewhere.<sup>[12][13]</sup> When Young closed on its purchase of channel 4, NBC made good on these threats by demanding that Young operate KRON under the same conventions as an NBC owned-and-operated outlet. Among other things, it demanded that KRON change its on-air name to "NBC 4" and run the network's entire schedule in pattern (reducing primetime preemptions due to local programming from 20 hours to five hours a year), allowing preemptions *only* for extended breaking news or severe weather coverage. NBC also demanded yearly payments of \$10 million from Young, a form of reverse compensation, flipping around the then-normal mode of networks paying their affiliates for their airtime (in turn, NBC would stop making annual payments to KRON of \$7.5 million to carry the network's programming) as well as to give NBC the first option on programming of additional subchannels on the station's digital signal.<sup>[14]</sup>

Rather than give in to NBC's demands, Young decided not to renew channel 4's affiliation contract, which was set to expire at the beginning of 2002. San Jose-based KNTV (channel 11)—which joined The WB (in conjunction with that network's existing Bay Area affiliate, then co-owned KBWB channel 20, now KOFY-TV) in 1999, after it agreed to drop its ABC affiliation at the behest of network-owned KGO-TV—later approached NBC with a proposal to pay \$37 million annually for the rights to broadcast its programming. The network accepted the deal in February 2000.<sup>[15]</sup> It did so primarily as a stopgap in case NBC failed in its bid to buy KRON from Young. However, Young's asking price for the station was \$735 million, only a few dollars less than what it paid to buy the station from Chronicle. NBC felt that price was too high, and walked away from the deal when Young refused to lower it.<sup>[16]</sup> In December 2001, NBC purchased KNTV from Granite Broadcasting for a fraction of KRON's sale price—\$230 million—making NBC the only major broadcast network to have switched from one Bay Area station to another. The last NBC program to be broadcast by channel 4 was a repeat episode of *Crossing Jordan*, at 10:00 p.m. on December 31, 2001. KNTV officially joined NBC later that evening at 11:35 p.m. (the regular broadcast of *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno*), ending KRON-TV's 52-year affiliation with the network.<sup>[17]</sup>

With ABC, CBS, UPN and now NBC carrying their programming locally on owned-and-operated stations (KGO-TV, KPIX, KBHK—channel 44, now KBCW—and KNTV respectively), and Fox and The WB under contract with KTVU and KBWB respectively, KRON-TV became an independent station by default; the station filled timeslots formerly occupied by NBC shows with syndicated programming and expanded newscasts. Without NBC programming (the network being near the top of the ratings nationally at the time of the disaffiliation, due to strong shows such as *Friends*, *Frasier*, *Law & Order* and *ER*), KRON's ratings started to decline, with viewership of its newscasts beginning to fall substantially by the time the station regained a network affiliation (a situation opposite that of Jacksonville, Florida's WJXT, which dumped CBS later that year for the same reasons as KRON with NBC, but remains a strong station as an independent).

## MyNetworkTV affiliation (2006–present)

On February 22, 2006, News Corporation announced the launch of MyNetworkTV;<sup>[18]</sup> the network was created partly in response to CBS Corporation and Time Warner's January 24 announcement that UPN and The WB would be shut down and replaced with the jointly-owned CW Television Network (CBS-owned UPN affiliate KBHK, whose callsign became KBCW by the network's launch, was named The CW's Bay Area affiliate; WB affiliate KBWB became an independent station).<sup>[19]</sup> KRON-TV became a MyNetworkTV affiliate when it debuted on September 5, 2006 (it is currently one of the largest MyNetworkTV-affiliated stations not to previously have been an affiliate of either The WB or UPN, second only to the network's Dallas O&O KDFI). The station began branding itself as "*MyKRON 4*" for MyNetworkTV programming,

although it continues to promote itself as "*KRON 4*" outside of the service's programming hours. After joining MyNetworkTV, the station moved its hour-long 9 p.m. newscast to 8 p.m.,<sup>[20]</sup> opting to run the fledgling network's programming from 9 to 11 p.m. (one hour later than MyNetworkTV's standard 8 to 10 p.m. scheduling in the Pacific Time Zone).

### Young Broadcasting bankruptcy

On January 10, 2008, Young Broadcasting announced it would sell KRON-TV. The company had been encountering difficulties in meeting interest payments on its outstanding debt<sup>[21]</sup> and Young's stock, which had been trading for a few cents per share, would ultimately be delisted from NASDAQ in January 2009, after failing to meet the minimum standards for being on the exchange.<sup>[22][23]</sup> One month later on February 13, Young made a filing to place the company under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.<sup>[24]</sup> Debt incurred from its 1999 purchase of KRON was believed to be one key factor behind the company's cash problems. Young originally hoped to close a sale of the station by the end of the first quarter of 2008, but no buyer emerged.<sup>[25][26][27]</sup>

On February 13, 2009, the company declared Chapter 11 bankruptcy.<sup>[28]</sup> Young cancelled a planned auction of all 10 of its stations five months later on July 14 at the last minute, a move believed to have been made due to a lack of suitable bids.<sup>[29][30]</sup> Instead of auctioning off the stations, Young and its secured lenders reached a deal where the lenders (among them Wachovia and Credit Suisse) would take control of the company, and Gray Television would manage seven of Young's ten stations.<sup>[31]</sup> KRON, WATE-TV in Knoxville, Tennessee and WLNS-TV in Lansing, Michigan (the latter two, unlike KRON, compete with Gray-owned stations in their respective markets) were the only stations not included in the management deal.

In February 2010, Young discussed the possibility of entering into a shared services agreement with KNTV's owner NBCUniversal.<sup>[32]</sup> That year, KRON informally reunited with NBC as it began to carry network programs during sports programming and breaking news events that force their preemptions on KNTV (this responsibility as a backup NBC affiliate was assumed by KICU in 2012).

Station management announced at a November 2011 meeting that no such agreement would take place, and that the station would instead relocate to a smaller, state-of-the-art facility within the next year to year-and-a-half.<sup>[33]</sup> A week later, it was also announced the station's master control operations would be operated remotely from Atlanta beginning in mid-January 2012. The move to new studios, and plans to operate master control from Atlanta, were scrapped by June 2012.

### Acquisition by Media General and Nexstar

On June 6, 2013, Media General announced it would acquire Young Broadcasting in an all-stock deal<sup>[34]</sup> — the merger was completed on November 12, 2013.<sup>[35]</sup> The move made KRON-TV the largest station by market size owned by Media General as well as the company's only station located west of the Rocky Mountains (most of Media General's television stations were in the Southeastern, Midwestern and Northeastern United States).

On February 10, 2014, Media General announced that KRON-TV would move into leased space on the third floor of the KGO-TV building (ABC Broadcast Center) at 900 Front Street, in space formerly occupied by radio stations KGO and KSFO. KRON-TV's studios at 1001 Van Ness Avenue would be put up for sale. Despite the co-location, KRON-TV maintains separate broadcast facilities within the KGO-TV building and employs its own staff completely separate from that of KGO-TV, with each station's staff restricted by keycards from entering the other's facilities.<sup>[36][37]</sup>

In June 2014, [Fox Television Stations](#) announced it would acquire KTVU and [KICU-TV](#) (channel 36) in a trade with Cox Media Group in exchange for that company's stations in [Boston](#) and [Memphis](#).<sup>[38]</sup> Prior to the announcement it was rumored that Fox had considered buying KRON-TV and moving Fox network programming to channel 4 (had Fox actually acquired KRON-TV, this would have made it one of the two major networks in the Bay Area [the other being channel 4's former network partner NBC] to switch from one station to another).<sup>[39]</sup> Fox completed its acquisition of KTVU and KICU-TV on October 8, 2014. Fox has made no announcement on whether or not they plan to move the MyNetworkTV affiliation to KICU, which would make KRON an [independent](#) once again. For the time being, however, KRON-TV remains affiliated with MyNetworkTV.

On January 27, 2016, [Nexstar Broadcasting Group](#) announced that it had reached an agreement to acquire Media General.<sup>[40]</sup> The transaction was consummated on January 17, 2017, and with it, KRON became part of the newly-minted Nexstar Media Group.<sup>[41]</sup>

## Digital television

### Digital channels

The station's digital signal is [multiplexed](#):

Channel	Video	Aspect	PSIP Short Name	Programming <sup>[42]</sup>
4.1	720p	16:9	KRON-TV	Main KRON-TV programming / <a href="#">MyNetworkTV</a>
4.2			Skylink	<a href="#">Sky Link TV</a>
4.3	480i	4:3	GetTV	<a href="#">getTV</a>
4.4		16:9	CourtTV	<a href="#">Court TV</a>

### Proposed subchannel affiliations

In October 2007, the [Retro Television Network](#) was expected to launch as a [digital subchannel](#) on KRON-DT2 as part of a test of the network by Young Broadcasting, along with sister stations [WBAY-TV](#)/[Green Bay](#) and [WTEN](#)/[Albany, New York](#). However, KRON never carried the network, and its HD signal remained on 4.2 after the announcement,<sup>[43]</sup> along with an intermittent traffic conditions channel on 4.3 (RTV is currently carried in the market by [KAXT-CD](#)). Eventually after the digital transition and widescreen upgrades, KRON's HD channel was moved to the main 4.1 channel.

In late 2010, Young announced an affiliation deal with [The Country Network](#) for several of its stations, including KRON. However like with RTV, TCN was never carried by the station, and the network was dropped from all of New Young Broadcasting's stations by November 2011.

Likewise, KRON was by default not made part of Young's carriage of the Disney-owned [Live Well Network](#) on its stations, due to the network's carriage on the second and third digital subchannels of Disney-owned ABC O&O [KGO-TV](#).

### KRON 4.2

KRON 4.2 was originally a 24-7 news channel.

On September 29, 2015, [Sky Link TV](#), a 24/7 [Chinese TV network](#), launched on channel 4.2, replacing the news channel.



## KRON 4.3

On August 19, 2013, KRON became the San Francisco affiliate for Tribune Broadcasting's Antenna TV classic television network,<sup>[44]</sup> which was added to digital subchannel 4.3.

Because former station owner Media General has signed an affiliation agreement with getTV, KRON 4.3 became an affiliate of that network on May 1, 2016.

## Analog-to-digital conversion

KRON-TV shut down its analog signal, over VHF channel 4, on June 12, 2009, as part of the federally mandated transition from analog to digital television.<sup>[45]</sup> The station's digital signal relocated from its pre-transition UHF channel 57, which was among the high band UHF channels (52-69) that were removed from broadcasting use as a result of the transition, to UHF channel 38,<sup>[46]</sup> using PSIP to display KRON-TV's virtual channel as 4 on digital television receivers.

# Defunct news services

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## BayTV

**BayTV** debuted on July 4, 1994, as a 24-hour cable news channel that was operated by KRON-TV in association with AT&T Broadband (now Comcast Xfinity), which carried BayTV on cable channel 35. The KRON news staff also provided local news updates on MSNBC and CNN Headline News on Bay Area cable systems during this period. KRON's now-defunct 9 p.m. newscast originally debuted on BayTV in the late 1990s and lasted until the cable channel ceased operations on August 30, 2001 (the 9 p.m. newscast was revived on channel 4 following KRON-TV's transition to an independent station in January 2002, though it was moved to 8 p.m., when it affiliated with MyNetworkTV on September 5, 2006). The channel's daily Silicon Valley news recap *New Media News* also aired nationally on Jones Media Group cable channel Mind Extension University/Knowledge TV until that channel shut down in 2000.

## KRON 4 24/7 Bay Area News Channel

On July 26, 2012, KRON launched another 24-hour local news and weather channel, called the **KRON 4 24/7 Bay Area News Channel**. The channel featured news, local weather and traffic updates using the common screen template and setup shared among all of Young's automated weather/news information subchannels. Unlike the cable-exclusive BayTV, it was carried locally on over-the-air digital subchannel 4.2, on cable through Comcast Xfinity channel 193, and was streamed on KRON's website.<sup>[47]</sup> The over-the-air channel was replaced by Sky Link TV on September 29, 2015, and the online live stream was shut down on the same date.

# Programming

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Syndicated programming on KRON-TV includes *Crime Watch Daily*, *Dr. Phil*, *Inside Edition*, *The Doctors* and *Entertainment Tonight*. The station also produces two locally-produced programs outside of local newscasts: *Bay Area Living - Home Improvement Edition* and *Bay Area Bargains*. Past local programs include *Bay Area Backroads*, *Bay Cafe*, *Henry's Home & Garden*, *Latin Eyes*, *Pacific Fusion*, *The Silver Lining*; and several series and featured news segments that were developed by Jim Swanson, executive producer including *Bay Area Bargains - Green Edition*; *Bay Area Living - Seniors Edition*; *KRON 4's Body Beautiful*; *KRON 4's Casino Adventures*; *Don't Invest and Forget*; *Health and Beauty with Dr Sonia*; *Living Green with Petersen Dean*; *KRON 4's Medical Mondays*; *KRON 4's Peninsula Beauty*; *KRON 4's Sizzling Hot Auto Deals* and *KRON 4's Spa Spectacular*.



## New Year's Live

From 1989 until January 2008, KRON-TV produced a countdown program called *New Year's Live*, which aired on New Year's Eve (sometimes beginning at 11 p.m.) and continued into New Year's Day (sometimes ending at 1 a.m.). Events in San Francisco were the focal point of KRON's coverage, especially the midnight fireworks show near the Ferry Building. Other West Coast television stations joined KRON in some years (including KCAL-TV/Los Angeles, KING-TV/Seattle, KCRA/Sacramento, KNSD/San Diego and KLAS-TV/Las Vegas in December 1990), featuring midnight countdown events in other cities, such as Las Vegas casinos and at the Seattle Space Needle. Former KRON weather anchor Mark Thompson served as the host during the program's early years. *New Year's Live* returned to KRON in December 2010 as an hour-long broadcast, hosted by Catherine Heenan and George Rask in-studio, with live reports from Henry Tenenbaum at Pier 39 and Vicki Liviakis at Waterbar on the Embarcadero. Starting in 2011, Gary Radnich joined Heenan as host at various locations in San Francisco each year.

## News operation

KRON presently broadcasts 65 hours of local newscasts each week (with 11 hours on weekdays and 5 hours each on weekends). KRON is the only remaining MyNetworkTV affiliate that airs and produces its own newscasts, after the service's Secaucus, New Jersey owned-and-operated station WWOR-TV (whose news department operated separately from Fox-owned sister station WNYW stemming from license requirements imposed by WWOR's 1983 license transfer from New York City to New Jersey) closed theirs in July 2013.

KRON's news operations were handled by the *Chronicle* until it launched its own news department in September 1957. It operated from a studio inside the *Chronicle* building at Fifth & Mission streets (the station's news department was located 30 feet from the *Chronicle* city desk). Appropriately for a station once owned by the *Chronicle*, KRON-TV has long been a very news-intensive station. it produced six daily newscasts at the time, including the Shell-sponsored 6 p.m. newscast *Shell News*,<sup>[48]</sup> with Tom Franklin reporting from the studio at the *Chronicle* and in filmed field reports. Franklin began the broadcast standing next to a map of the San Francisco Bay Area, with lights illuminated on the map next to the various cities that the newscast was to feature stories from. Franklin anchored most of the program from behind a desk that had a large Shell logo next to a "Tom Franklin" name plate, with a Shell "X-100" oil can that sat atop the desk. Live segments were used for late bulletins from the *Chronicle* city desk or for local and regional stories not suitable for film treatment. Some of the stories covered by *Shell News* in 1957 included the end of the "pedestrian scramble" system at downtown San Francisco street intersections, the end of the San Francisco-Oakland Southern Pacific railroad passenger ferry and the final game of the San Francisco Seals baseball team (to be replaced by the San Francisco Giants in 1958). In the 1960s, KRON-TV had anchors Art Brown and Jerry Jensen (who later moved to KGO-TV), and Linda Richards, who wrote predicted temperatures backwards on sliding glass panels with maps drawn on them, for viewers to see the weather forecast. Ed Hart, and later Frank Dill, reported sports with a focus on only the area's professional teams. KRON's early morning news digests in the 1960s utilized sign language by Peter Wechsberg and Jane Norman.

KRON-TV eventually branded its newscasts as *Newswatch 4* in the early 1970s. By early 1972, the station ran newscasts at noon, 5:30, 6:30 and 11 p.m. on weekdays and 6 and 11 p.m. on weekends, it also ran a late newscast that aired (then) immediately after The Tonight Show called the *Newswatch Sign-Off Edition*. Presenters then included Terry Lowry, Phil Wilson, Karna Small, Bob Marsden, Paul Ryan, Art Brown and Dave Valentine.<sup>[49]</sup> The station's newscasts were branded as *NewsCenter 4* from 1977 until 2001, when it was changed to the current *KRON 4 News*. A major change in KRON-TV's evening news broadcasts occurred on April 6, 1981,<sup>[50]</sup> when the station launched the 90-minute newscast "Live on 4" (from 4 to 5:30 p.m.). *NBC Nightly News* also moved from 7 to 5:30 p.m. (KPIX and KGO would follow this move with their national newscasts during the following decade). From late 1981 to late 1988, the 5 p.m. weekday newscast was *Live*

at *Five*; Bob Jimenez anchored in the studio with Evan White in the newsroom. *Live on 4* was replaced in 1983 with *T.G.I.4*, an hour-long light local news and interview program co-hosted by Jan Rasmusson and Patrick Van Horn. In the mid-1980s, KRON-TV produced and aired an afternoon talk program called *Bay City Limits*.

In 1981, KRON launched its first morning newscast with a seven-minute program (at 6:53 a.m.), the program was cancelled by late 1982. All the evening newscasts featured a variety of anchors, until settling down with the successful duo of Roz Abrams and Jim Paymar. After Abrams left for New York City's WABC-TV in 1986, Paymar co-anchored alongside Sylvia Chase (who had been a correspondent for CBS News and later for the ABC newsmagazine 20/20). The station debuted what was then the only local early morning newscast in the San Francisco television market on September 1, 1986, with the launch of *Daybreak* (which ran from 6:30 to 7 a.m., leading into *Today*). The first anchors were Lloyd Patterson and Lila Petersen.

KRON's newscasts during the 1980s regularly featured commentaries by Wayne Shannon in a segment called "Just 4 You", many of which had a humorous tone. Shannon received billing in newscast introductions along with the anchors, and weather and sports presenters. Another staple of KRON-TV newscasts in the 1980s was live traffic reports and news coverage from the station's helicopter "Telecopter 4". Bob McCarthy, Rita Cohen and Janice Huff were among the personalities who reported from Telecopter 4. Their traffic reports appeared regularly on *Daybreak*, during *Today* and *Live at Five*. Evocative of his folksy, down-to-earth style, McCarthy had a catchphrase, "hunky snarky", that he often used to characterize roads on which traffic was flowing smoothly. Will Prater was the main pilot of Telecopter 4 in its early years and Lou Calderon was the main photographer. KRON also broadcast from remote locations during this era (e.g., Super Bowl venues) via a satellite uplink unit dubbed "Newstar 4". These segments often began with an animation depicting a signal originating from the uplink location, bouncing off a satellite and ending at a satellite dish next to the words "San Francisco." KRON-TV regarded the satellite truck as a major competitive advantage over rival television stations, featuring it in a mid-1980s promotional spot which declared, "We got a mobile satellite up-link. They don't."

In the 1980s, KRON-TV produced lengthy analysis pieces for the "Cover Story" segment on its 6 p.m. newscast, many with an investigative journalism focus and sometimes produced by the 10-person "Target 4" investigative unit. The station reran some of these segments in an occasional program called *Cover Story Magazine*. The station also produced a half-hour public affairs program on Sunday mornings called *Weekend Extra*, which was hosted by Belva Davis and Rollin Post. This program frequently presented features from KRON's news bureaus in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, the only Bay Area station to maintain bureaus (which were later deemed to be too expensive and were shut down by the end of the decade). During this time, KRON news grew rapidly in viewership and collected a large number of awards, including two DuPont Columbia awards, a Peabody,<sup>[51]</sup> and more than 100 local Emmys. The station also produced a series of one-minute documentaries during the mid-1980s, *San Francisco Minutes* and *Bay Area Minutes*, which featured people, places and events in San Francisco and Bay Area history and usually featured narrations by KRON-TV personalities set to soaring music (e.g., Mark Thompson on San Francisco's cable cars, Lloyd Patterson on the San Mateo County coastline).

In the 1990s, the station utilized a "24 Hour News" format, with 30- to 60-second news updates each hour outside of regular newscasts. During the May 2001 sweeps period – its last as an NBC affiliate – KRON's newscasts beat KGO-TV's in the 5 and 6 p.m. timeslots by a very close margin, ending KGO's domination in those timeslots.<sup>[52]</sup> When KRON lost NBC to KNTV and became an independent station in January 2002, the station expanded its news programming by adding two hours to its weekday morning newscast (from 7 to 9 a.m.), and extending its 6 p.m. newscast to one hour to fill timeslots vacated by the departures of *Today* and *Nightly News*.

Unlike most news-producing stations that have become independent after losing a network affiliation or that have switched to one of the post-1986 broadcast networks, KRON kept its late newscast in the 11 p.m. timeslot instead of moving it to or adding one at 10 p.m. (avoiding direct competition with KTVU's long-dominant primetime newscast, though KRON's late news remained in competition against KGO, KNTV and KPIX's late evening newscasts); the station

also added a primetime newscast at 9 p.m. To this day, KRON maintains a newscast schedule similar to the one it had as an NBC affiliate. It is the only MyNetworkTV affiliate that has ever maintained a news schedule mirroring that of a Big Three affiliate. (as it carries morning, 5, 6 and 11 p.m. newscasts). Several of KRON's veteran anchors and reporters left the station after the loss of the NBC affiliation; KRON also began incorporating video journalists (many of which were newer hires) to report, tape and edit news stories.

Despite the overall decline of KRON as an independent, its newscasts initially pulled in respectable ratings though viewership was lower than it was before the station lost its NBC affiliation. During the February 2004 sweeps period, the station placed second in the ratings behind KTVU.<sup>[53]</sup> However, KRON's news viewership has gradually fallen since that point; also in 2004, the station posted an 8.7% market share, down from the 21% share it had as an NBC affiliate.<sup>[54]</sup> The 9 p.m. newscast created after becoming independent eventually fell to fourth place by 2005. In March 2006, KRON's morning newscast posted an average viewership of approximately 28,000 viewers.<sup>[55]</sup> By 2009, overall viewership for the station's newscasts had fallen to fifth place among the Bay Area's news-producing English-language television stations.

On September 17, 2007, KRON-TV became the third station in the Bay Area (behind KGO and KTVU) to begin broadcasting its local newscasts in widescreen—albeit in standard definition. In September 2008, KRON dropped its 5 p.m. newscast after the syndicated daytime talk show *Dr. Phil* was moved to the slot, the program's former 8 p.m. timeslot (which *Dr. Phil* held locally since the show's 2002 premiere) was replaced by an hour-long primetime newscast; this would be undone in September 2009, with the cancellation of the 8 p.m. newscast and *Dr. Phil*'s return to the 8 p.m. slot, along with the reinstatement of a 5:30 p.m. newscast (which expanded back to 5 p.m. by 2010). The 8 p.m. newscast returned in September 2011, concurrent with the replacement of the 4 p.m. news with *Dr. Phil*. KRON quietly upgraded its newscasts to high definition in April 2012, with the debut of new graphics. As of September 2013, only studio segments and on-air graphics are presented in HD, footage from field cameras and other news sources continue to be broadcast in widescreen SD.

KRON launched a new 10 p.m newscast on May 16, 2016 that competes with newscasts on KTVU and KBCW. However, this meant that KRON's 11 p.m. news was shortened to 15 minutes until the latter newscast was dropped when it launched a new 9 p.m. newscast on August 21, 2017, which competes with KGO's 9 p.m. newscast for KOFY-TV.<sup>[56]</sup><sup>[57]</sup><sup>[58]</sup>

## News team

### Notable current on-air staff

- Catherine Heenan – anchor / reporter

### Notable former on-air staff

- Roz Abrams - anchor (1982–1985; now retired from television journalism)
- Dick Albert - weather anchor (1975–1976; later at WCVB-TV/Boston, deceased)
- Cheryl Casone - reporter (2002–2004; now at Fox News Channel)
- Steve Centanni - reporter (1989–1996; now at Fox News Channel)
- Sylvia Chase - anchor (1986–1990; later returned to ABC News, deceased)
- Claudia Cowan - reporter (1995–1998; now at Fox News Channel)
- Leila Feinstein - sports anchor/reporter (2000–2003; later anchor at KTLA/Los Angeles)
- Art Finley - children's show host (as "Mayor Art")/host of *Pick A Show* c. 1966/reporter (1959–1968; deceased)
- Pat Finn - weatherman, later host of California Lottery's *The Big Spin*
- Michelle Franzen - reporter and fill-in anchor (1998–2001; now at ABC News)
- Emil Guillermo - reporter (1982–1989)

- John Hambrick - (1975–1980; deceased)
- Janice Huff - meteorologist (1990–1994; now chief meteorologist at WNBC/New York City)
- Marc Jampole - reporter (1980-1981); now public relations executive
- Vic Lee - reporter (1972–2006; now reporter at KGO-TV)
- Sam Chu Lin - reporter (1981–1984; deceased)
- Dave Malkoff - reporter (2003–2004; now at The Weather Channel)
- Mark Mullen - morning anchor (1991–1995 and 2002–2003; now anchor at KNSD/San Diego)
- Soledad O'Brien - reporter (1993–1996; now with Hearst Television)
- Jim Paymar - anchor (1982–1987; now runs a media consulting firm)
- Wayne Shannon - commentator (1982–1988; deceased)
- Gary Radnich – sports director
- Ray Taliaferro - anchor (1972–1977; then also at KGO-AM; deceased)
- Mark Thompson - chief weather anchor (1984–1990; later at KTTV/Los Angeles); now at KFI-AM
- Patrick Van Horn - co-host of *T.G.I.4.* (1983–198?), host of KRON-TV's *Claim to Fame* (1985–1989)
- Marta Waller - freelance writer (1984; later at KTLA/Los Angeles)
- Pete Wilson - anchor/reporter (1990–2001; later at KGO-TV, deceased)<sup>[59]</sup>

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## External links

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- [Official website \(https://www.kron4.com/\)](https://www.kron4.com/)
  - [Photos of KRON's news set \(http://www.newscaststudio.com/setstudio/kron/\)](http://www.newscaststudio.com/setstudio/kron/)
  - [Query the FCC's TV station database for KRON \(https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=KRON\)](https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=KRON)
  - [Query the FCC's TV station database for K41AF \(https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=K41AF\)](https://transition.fcc.gov/fcc-bin/tvq?call=K41AF)
  - [BIAfn's Media Web Database -- Information on KRON-TV \(http://www.bia.com/Broadcast-Media/Resources/Station-Search/resources\\_search\\_result.asp?calls=KRON&media=TV\)](http://www.bia.com/Broadcast-Media/Resources/Station-Search/resources_search_result.asp?calls=KRON&media=TV)
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