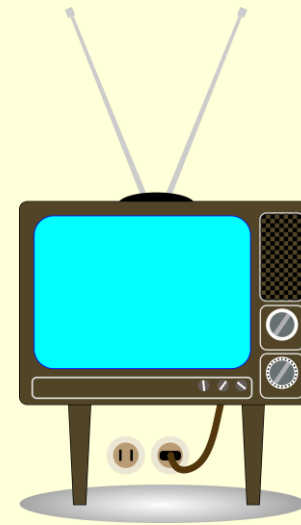


LEOH Trip

KPRC Channel 2 Television Station

September 17 and October 1, 2025



This trip selection was so popular among members, that two trips were scheduled to accommodate everyone; the first by Precinct One bus with driver James, and the second by car/carpool.



After receiving our official visitor lanyards, we were admitted to the studio, where we were greeted by our guide on both trips, **Mariah Gardner**. We learned that Mariah has worked at the station for 10 years, in a variety of roles and range of responsibilities.

KPRC has the distinction of being the first TV station in Houston, and the second one in Texas. It was also the first in Houston to broadcast in color. It began as KLEE-TV in 1949; however, when the Hobby family took ownership in 1950, they changed the call letters to KPRC (for **K**(C)otton **P**ort **R**ail **C**enter).

The station is currently owned by the Graham Media Group.

Its original location was 3014 Post Oak Road, near the Galleria shopping area. They moved to a new state-of-the-art facility in the Sharpstown area in 1972. In 2015, they moved to their current location, the parking lot of their Sharpstown building, which was then demolished.

We learned that all TV station call letters consist of 4 letters; east of the Mississippi River they begin with “W”, while west of the Mississippi they begin with “K”.

In the photo below, you can see that the station’s popular phrase “The Eyes of Texas” was in use from the very beginning.



KPRC-TV by Decade – the 1950's

The tour began by viewing large wall displays of a variety of events and newscasters from each decade of the station. Mariah pointed out highlights from each decade.

For those of us who grew up in the area and watched KPRC, photos of some of the station's TV broadcasters, events, and programs brought back many memories.

Before the Houston Astros joined the National League as the expansion team Colt 45's in 1962, they were the Houston Buffs, a minor league team associated first with the major league team St. Louis Cardinals, and then with the Chicago Cubs.

The displays also included some national TV programs popular at the time, such as *Howdy Doody* (don't forget Clarabelle), *Bonanza*, and *Late Show* hosted by Jack Paar.

Local newscasters pictured in the display include **Dick Gottlieb** and **Hal Layer**.

The lens was the first of its type to be used for television programming.



1975

Broadcaster **Ray Miller**, upper left, hosted the popular, award-winning local program *The Eyes of Texas*, focusing on the unique people, places, and events throughout the state.

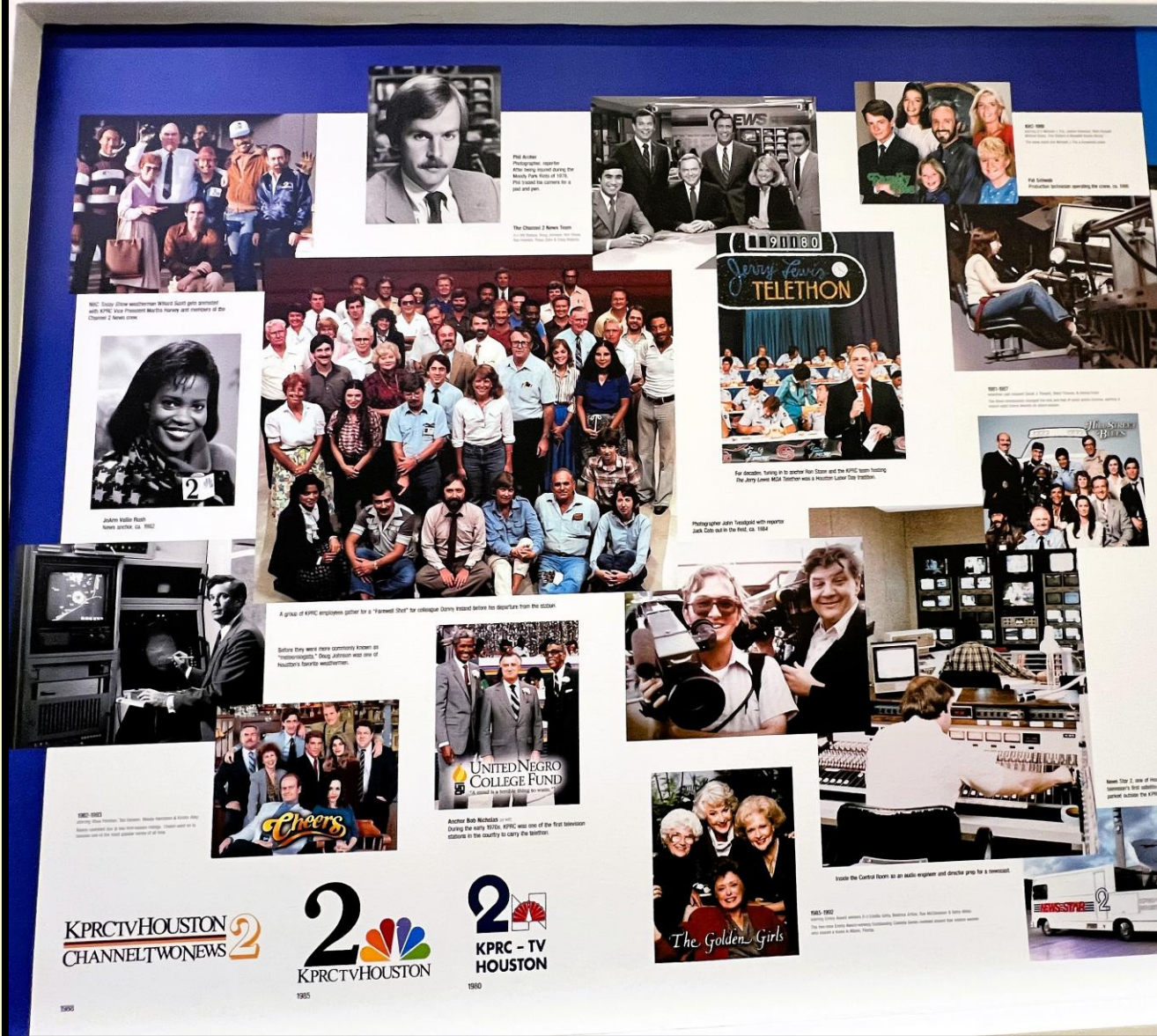


1980

The 1980's

Popular national TV shows in the 1980's aired on KPRC included *Golden Girls* and *Cheers*.

Locally, anchor **Ron Stone** and team hosted the annual *Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon*, a Labor Day tradition. Other newscasters during this time period included **JoAnn Vallie Rush** and **Phil Archer**.



1990



The 1990's

Popular national TV shows in the 1990's aired on KPRC included *Frasier*, *Friends*, and *Law & Order*.

KPRC reporters included **Bob Nicholas**, Houston's first African-American TV news anchor, **Jan Carson**, and **Spencer Tillman**. Seen upper left in her Superwoman outfit is **Gayle Anderson**, the *On Your Side* and *Nearly Noon* anchor.

2000



The 2000's

Popular national TV shows in the 2000's aired on KPRC included *30Rock*, *West Wing*, and *Parks and Recreation*.

KPRC reporters pictured top left include **Bill Balleza**, **Dominique Sachse**, and **Frank Billingsley**.

Below left, note Billingsley with weather dog **Radar**.

2010



The 2010's

Popular national TV shows in the 2010's aired on KPRC included *The Voice*, *The Blacklist*, and *This is Us*.

KPRC reporters pictured include **Bob Nicholas**, **Jan Carson**, and **Spencer Tillman**.

2020



The 2020's

Notable events included the national coverage of the 2020 Presidential election and the 2022 Olympics.

In June 2026, NBC, the oldest major broadcast network in the United States, will celebrate its 100th anniversary.

Last year, KPRC celebrated its 75th anniversary.



The Channel 2 News at 5 team
 (l-r) Doug Johnson, Jan Carson,
 Craig Roberts & Ron Stone

A few of the news anchor teams
 through the years



The station has a “mini-museum” just outside their newsroom.



The Control Rooms are the technical hubs of the station's broadcasts. Staff ensure that programming runs smoothly and on a precise schedule. Camera angles, timing of newscast or interview segments, lighting, countdowns via the broadcaster's earpiece of breaks for commercials, announcements, breaking news, etc., insertion of on-screen graphics, and much more, are all critically important to a seamless, smooth, and successful broadcast.



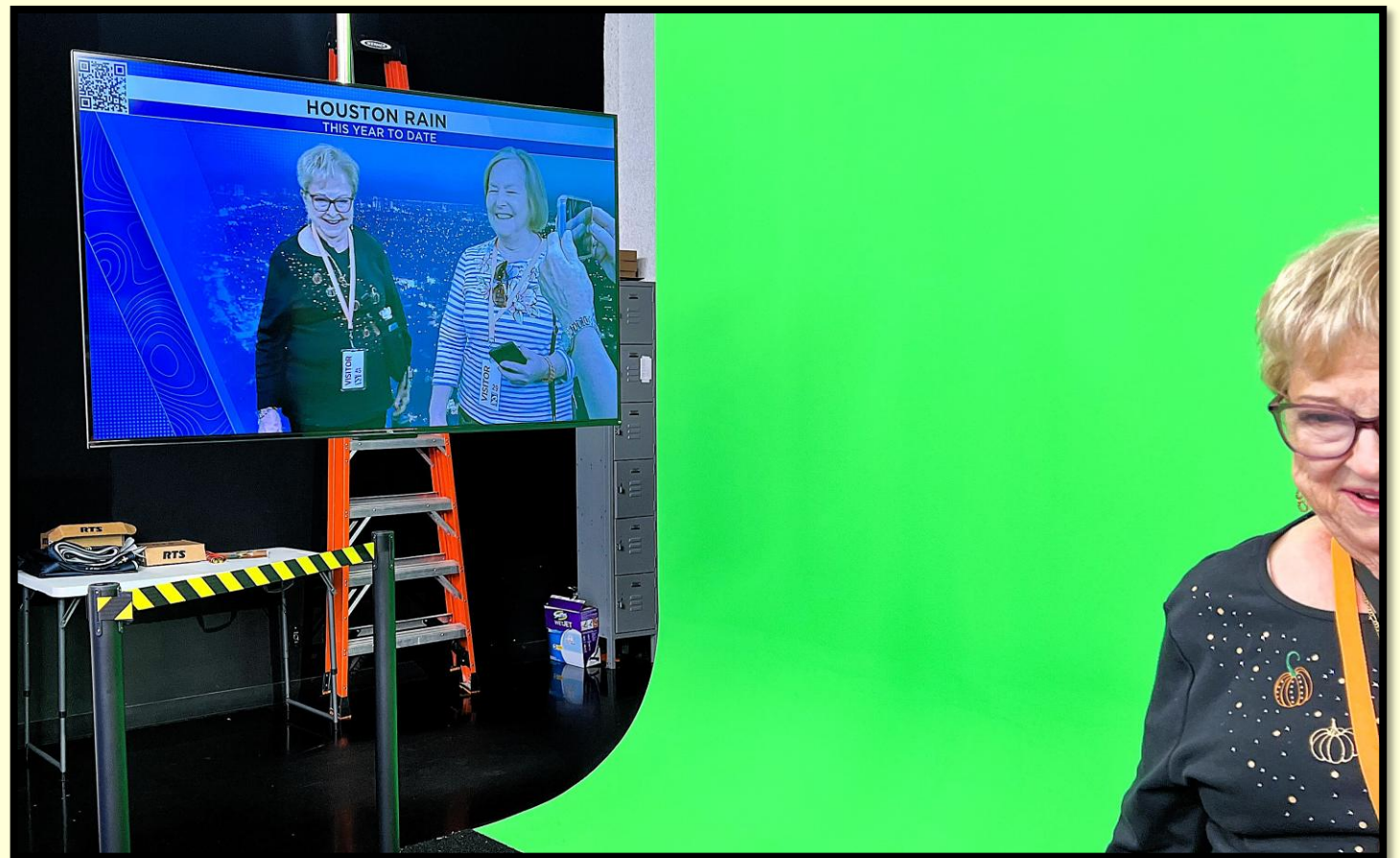
The director and producer for a specific segment will be an integral part of the control room during live broadcasting of the segment.

We learned that studio cameras are robotically controlled, rather than by hands-on camera operators.



Justin Stapleton is an award-winning meteorologist who loves to teach weather, and has done so at the university level.

Before joining the world of television, he worked as a crisis intervention psychologist; he holds a master's in clinical psychology as well as geosciences.



Members enjoyed a stop at a studio broadcast room, and a visit with meteorologist **Justin Stapleton**. He described the magic “green screen” and the use of his hand-held clicker to display weather map images on the screen. The green tape on the floor was his “mark” for standing during his broadcast. During weather segments, the weather maps are displayed on a side screen.

You can see that members Paula and Heide stood in front of the green screen and were shown at the same time on the screen to the side, with a weather map displayed behind them.



The news anchors broadcast from the desk shown on the left, against the huge panoramic display of downtown Houston. The extremely large TV screen on the right displays selected images during the broadcast.



KPRC EMPLOYEES



These wall-mounted photo displays are a nice way to honor and recognize the almost 200 KPRC employees.

KPRC EMPLOYEES





Both tour groups were fortunate to hear from the hosts of the *Houston Life* 1-2 p.m. afternoon segment, **Tessa Barrera** and **Derrick Shore**. They discussed their early careers and what led them to this show. The show itself highlights stories and people of interest in the greater Houston area. It is only slightly scripted, which can be a challenge. For example, when a guest responds with just a “yes/no” rather than participate more in a conversation, the hosts must fill in the gaps.

Some segments include reporting on an event occurring elsewhere, with additional reporters on site.

Occasional mishaps or near mishaps have also occurred on the set, such as an errant toddler almost pressing a button that could have shut down the show.

Kitchen segments appear to have everything needed for food preparation and cooking; however, the setup is mostly fake, with no running water. The hosts shared that sometimes the cooking segments could be a “nightmare” to run smoothly and on time.

Derrick is a 3-time Emmy winner. Earlier career highlights include seeing the Titanic up close and personal, actor appearances, and flying in an F-16 fighter jet.

Tessa is a Texas native who started her career in radio, was the first Latina sports anchor in south Texas, and is a sports fanatic.





Bill Spencer, investigative reporter, joined the Channel 2 investigative team in 2013.

For more than 38 years, he has been tracking down criminals, scam artists, and killers. Early in his career, his investigative reporting included multiple interviews with the infamous Pamela Smart, who orchestrated her husband's murder. At KPRC2 he created the *Spencer Solves It* project, in which he has helped hundreds in desperate situations resolve their problems.



Above is the "green room" where guests can relax and wait until time for their on-air appearance. As you would expect, there is also a separate make-up room.

To the left: **Bill Spencer** happened to be walking by our group, and immediately became engaged with members, explaining that he was working on a segment regarding senior scams, and wanted to interview interested members.



The last stop on our tour was the large newsroom, where staff were hard at work gathering details from a variety of sources. Channel 2 local news can also be livestreamed on KPRC2+. Previous segments of news specials and Houston Life can also be viewed on the website. You can even catch shows on *YouTube*! In addition, live cams are available 24/7 of some sites around town, including the Houston Zoo. The Houston Zoo live cams include the elephants, giraffes, and flamingos. Learn much more about Channel 2 on their website Click2Houston.com.





Following the tour, members enjoyed lunch at ***Los Tios*** on Buffalo Spdwy.

Thank you, trip coordinator **Ann Fairchild**, for hosting both extremely interesting trips to KPRC Channel 2!



Thank you, Ann,
for two very interesting and educational trips

Future Trips



Wednesday, November 12: St. Martin's Episcopal Church

This is a self-drive/carpool trip to this beautiful church in the Galleria area. Highlights of a 2-hr tour will include viewing the church's wonderful stained glass windows, and touring the gardens.

The December trip is in the planning stages. Stay tuned!

Signing Up for a Trip

Trip Coordinator Ann Fairchild may be contacted at fairann@sbcglobal.net or **281-686-1325**.

She will publish complete trip details, with the opportunity to sign up, closer to the trip date.

If the traveler quota is full, you may ask to be put on a waiting list.