



Kim Stephens has a *Great Day* every day as co-host of the Fresno Fox affiliate's popular morning newscast. The Bay Area native (she hails from Marin County) has been on the morning anchor desk there for a decade. After working on a morning newscast in the Bay Area, she certainly knows what she's doing. Viewers know that, which is why they watch her each weekday morning, making Stephens one of the most-watched anchors in Fresno. Want to know more about her? Did you know she's our Chapter's secretary and has served on the Board of Governors for the last few years? Read on. There's more to know about Kim.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in San Rafael - just north of San Francisco. Went to St. Raphael's from 2-8th grade and then Marin Catholic High School.

Do you have any siblings?

I am the oldest of two. Three years separate me and my brother, Brad. We nearly always got along well. (Except for long car rides.) He lives in San Francisco. I wish we lived closer to each other. I love being around him.



Do you have any pets in your family?

I grew up thinking I could never have a pet because I'm terribly allergic to dogs and cats. While reporting from a dog show in Knoxville, TN, I discovered a dog, a big dog, that I could have with no allergies! So, we have a 60 pound black standard poodle, Max. No foofy cut, though. ;)

Did you grow up thinking that one day you would work in television?

I didn't realize I wanted to be in TV news until my final semester of college- 5th year. After one semester as an intern writing TV commercials, I found my way in to the newsroom writing for the noon news. I loved the energy, and constant change. Still, I never imagined I'd be able to push through my shyness to interview people.

Have you established a niche for yourself in your career?

I think I found my niche a few years into working at KERO in Bakersfield. I was doing a live shot and felt happy and at ease explaining where I was and what was happening around me. I decided to talk to the camera as if it was my best friend and not worry about any news jargon, just be a normal person. That live interaction was/is my comfort zone.

I have a feeling that TV has been a big part of your life since childhood. True?

That television box always intrigued me. When it applied, it was the subject of my elementary school reports. Maybe that's because my father was in the biz. When I was in 2nd grade he moved from doing the morning stock report on KNBR with Frank Dill and Mike Cleary and got into sales and management at KBHK and then KTVU. He retired in 2000.

I long knew I wouldn't get into sales, the math intimidated me. I considered advertising but realized I got the biggest thrill in learning and sharing information. I was always comfortable with public speaking, but didn't know how to apply that into a career until my newsroom internship.

What inspires you?

Boy, I'm inspired everyday, it seems, by someone I've interviewed or reported on from sick kids who raise money for others, to unassuming people who go out of their way to help others. Those people remind me to stay grounded and purposeful in my goal to help others. In the TV business, Kate Kelly, Cheryl Jennings and Wendy Tokuda inspired me to just be real, friendly and connect with the viewer. Once, while reporting on the Robert Alton Harris execution at San Quentin, I stood in the crowd watching Wendy do her live shot. I was so jazzed to see her work right before I went live for my station in Bakersfield. And, on the days when I'm in a stressful live breaking news situation, I think of my former co-worker Terilyn Joe. We worked together at KNTV. When we first met I tried to be cool but deep down inside I was freaking out that I was working alongside a woman I watched every time I came home to visit my folks. I found her to be helpful, a tough, thoughtful mentor who exuded and expected professionalism. And, when the you -know- what was hitting the fan, she was a calm, perfect ad-libber when that red light turned on.

I must also say another big inspiration came from a former co-worker who I best not name. She inspired me to do the opposite of what she did. By watching her I realized I prefer to be kind to my co-workers and viewers, do as many speaking

engagements as possible and invest in my community.

Where was your first TV job?

About a month before I graduated in 1988 from Chico State in Broadcasting, I sent out tapes (3/4 inch - remember those?) to TV stations up and down the Pacific. Amazingly, Walt Brown saw something and hired me at KERO in Bakersfield. I started as the morning cut-in anchor, producing, writing and editing for a whopping \$100 a week. Through the 4 years there I did every job in the newsroom except sports and photography, got promoted to weekend weather, then weekend anchor, then 11pm anchor. In the beginning I was also working as a waitress and radio producer/reporter at KERN radio.

In 1992 I started Live at Five at WBIR in Knoxville, TN. Reporting and anchoring on that show was a blast - especially as we went live all around the Southeast. After a few years I was promoted to the 6pm and 11pm news when an icon retired. During this time I also earned my masters degree in Broadcast Management at The University of Tennessee and taught a few classes. (Peyton Manning and I were in school together, if I may name drop for a moment.) I also spent about a year at WVLT as the 6 and 11pm news anchor, started the 7pm newscast, and was the nighttime managing editor. Out of the blue, while on maternity leave, I got a call from Bob Franklin. I'd interviewed with him twice before and this time he invited me to join the Tech Team at KNTV. I couldn't pass up the challenge and the opportunity to get back home. My husband and I really wanted our son to be close to his grandparents so, I took a huge pay/responsibility cut and moved.

I got to KNTV in June, 2000. I reported for the Tech team with the two awesome Scotts - McGrew and Budman. Shortly after I got there the little ABC station become THE NBC affiliate and there was a lot of change in that newsroom. I quickly picked up the book, "Who Moved My Cheese?" I anchored a new 4:30am tech/business news, and did the morning business reports on the morning news with Laura and Brett Cannon. That's where I was on September 11th. Wow. As our new ownership and management was evolving I was moved to the 10am news as a reporter and anchored the weekend morning news. In the Fall of 2003 I left to start Great Day at KMPH in Fresno and have been here ever since.

What's a "day in the life of Kim Stephens" like?

A day in the life of me is busy but that's the way I seem to like it. I wake up at 2:30am, get to work by 4am, go through scripts, have a quick morning meeting with producers, get the news ticker filled with stories and start it all live from 5-10am. After I finish writing the promo, and stories for the website, I run to the break room for a quick lunch. Then, it's back to the newsroom to prep for the 11:30-noon Midday newscast. Most days I'm off work by 12:15pm. If I don't have a speaking engagement I may get to come home and relax with my husband for a little bit before we head to one of our son's classes or baseball games. Once a week I teach Catechism. I'm also the parent club president for our sons' taekwondo dojang. Some days it's too much. Some days I come home and sit on the couch with the remote and a glass of wine at, yes, 2pm. Dinner is 3:30pm. Bedtime is 6:30 pm.





Being a journalist usually means you are curious about everything. How curious are you as a person?

Do you HAVE to be more curious to do this job? I just AM, always have been, which is why this is such a natural fit for me. I much prefer to work with people who are in this job because of curiosity and the desire to inform and help others rather than 'Me Me' people who just want to be seen. I don't appreciate self absorbed celebrity seekers. I'm not in this business to be recognized or called famous.

I have to ask you this, as I know you like ice cream. What's your favorite flavor?

Kevin, I was always a chocolate ice-cream lover until my first date with my husband at The Buckeye in Mill Valley. He ordered a vanilla milkshake for desert Who does that!? Well, it was delicious and far from boring. So, vanilla is usually my order unless I'm in the mood for coffee ice-cream - a close second.

What do you usually do on weekends?

I cherish my weekends. It's all about sleeping in, when the boys don't have an early ballgame. Sometimes I'll sleep in to 9am! Glorious! And to have a fried egg rather than the oatmeal or cereal during the week is a treat. These little things make me happy. Sometimes I'll MC an event - usually a fun thing where my husband can come and it's like a date, but most of the time the weekends are tennies, jeans, no makeup and lots of laughter and fun with my 2 sons, husband and Max our dog.

You are quite involved -- not only with the Fresno community, but on our Chapter's Board of Directors, too. How do you do it?

I feel lucky to be on the Board of Governors - to be working with these people who are dedicated in helping others in this industry. I'm on the scholarship committee, mentoring committee and do a lot of Emmy judging for different markets. And, I must confess, when I'm able to drive up for the meeting in The Bay Area rather than be on the conference call, I'm like that 22 year old with her first job in the biz, just watching Terry Lowry and drinking in her amazing spirit. She, too, was/is one of my idols. I don't mean to sound like a weird stalker, Terry! I just greatly respect your work and grace.

Do you like dining out, or eating at home?

Perfect meal is at home - virtually anything my husband makes. He's our stay at home dad who is an amazing chef. White Bean Chili, Coconut Shrimp, Beef Wellington - I can't name a favorite. Just eating at home and enjoying some wine together is perfect.

Do you have a guilty pleasure?

Getting to sit and watch TV with my husband may be the best guilty pleasure. I always feel guilty for sitting when I feel like I should be doing something more productive. Our favorites are Orphan Black, Justified, Arrow. I'll also steal away time for The Good Wife, Revenge, Scandal and The Americans. Everything is DVR'd because of my early bedtime.

Wait. You don't like to go out to a nice restaurant?

If I go out to eat it's usually with the kids so our favorites for the family are chains - Elephant Bar, California Pizza Kitchen and the local Yosemite Falls Cafe. If it's just Rick and me - Trelino, Cracked Pepper and Flemings - but I can't tell you the last time we did that!

What do you like most about your job?

I really like my co-workers. I learn from them every day. We all have such different interests but are all truly vested in Great Day. Even though I wake up at 2:30 a.m. I don't ever dread going to work.

Do you have any mentors?

I've already named people who inspired me in this business but I watched them from afar, except for Terilyn. Two other people who I'm grateful to for their guidance are Robin Mangarin and Lynn Espinoza from KERO. I can still hear Lynn advising me to just be myself, and Robin helping me speak up for myself. And, Steve Dean, the creative services director at WBIR showed me how a TV station SHOULD promote and brand itself. The mentality of a #1 station, and all its employees is like no other.

What do you do to relax and unwind?

To relax I garden, do craft projects around the house, take photographs, bake, work out or root on my sons at their baseball games.

Being from the Bay Area, how do you like life in Fresno?

When my husband first suggested I apply for the job to start Great Day I told him there was no way I was moving to Fresno. Growing up in Marin, I never heard anything good about the place - always considered it the arm pit of the state. Well, what a pompous idiot I was! In all honesty I took the job because I'd get to work with one of the kindest people ever - Kopi Sotiropulos. Beyond that, I love the area because of the agriculture and produce, the kindness of the people, the site of the snow capped Sierra, and, I love the heat. We live in Clovis, a suburb of Fresno. The school system is incomparable. We could afford a home. We never could have this quality of life while I was working at KNTV, sadly.

Who are your favorite broadcasters?

My favorite broadcasters are Vin Scully, Chris Fowler, David Feherty, and Robin Roberts. I appreciate their conversational way of telling a story, getting an interviewee to open up and connect with the viewer.

Do you have any hobbies? What do you like to do when you're not working?

I love to read, even though it's just getting a few pages in before I fall asleep every night. I read a lot with my kids so - you may laugh at my recent nightstand collection: Harry Potter, 39 Clues, Percy Jackson. I did squeeze in 50 Shades of Grey, and just finished PT-109. I am now reading Re-Discovering Catholicism and The Definitive History of WWII.



What's your favorite newspaper?

USA Today - but it's online and read during commercial breaks and packages. I live and work in 20 second increments.

Being from the Bay Area, I have a feeling you grew up on our professional sports teams. Favorite?

As a little girl I was a huge Dave Casper and John Madden fan (even shot a commercial with Madden while in college.) But, when the Raiders left for LA, I became and still am a tried and true 49ers fan. (And Giants Baseball since birth. Hummmm Baby!)

What kind of personality would you say you have? Are you more serious, or are you just a big goof?

My friends growing up would probably all agree that I'm a goof. I find humor in some of the dumbest, most inappropriate things, but when I'm at work, I'm pretty serious. Thankfully I work with people, including our Great Day DJ, who help me let my hair down with fun stories and great music we dance to in commercial breaks.

Have you always been outgoing?

I wish I had more self confidence growing up. I'm so proud of my sons who have a strong sense of self. I didn't have that until college. I don't ever even fantasize about re-living this life. I'm proud that I stuck my neck out and took a lot of chances so I have no regrets.

What's your favorite vacation destination?

Favorite vacation destination is La Quinta. Kona, Hawaii is a right up there too - great places Rick and I have had the opportunity to celebrate some anniversaries. Some day Provence will be in this list - as soon as we can get away and make that a reality.

What do you like about being a journalist?

I love learning something new every day. That's my favorite part of this career. I also like having a way to connect with people and share that information that I hope can help them too. One thing I'm concerned about is the increasing blurred lines between entertainment/voyeurism and journalism. I feel like an out of date old lady when I question things on the basis of journalistic integrity. No, I can't accept that \$300 gift from an advertiser - even if another an air co-worker of mine did. No, I can't do a commercial for your company.

How about your taste in music. What do you like?

I absolutely love anything from Maroon 5, Lennie Kravitz and Lady Antebellum. My favorite current songs are Katy Perry's 'Dark Horse,' Pharrell's 'Happy,' Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines," and Eminem's 'The Monster.' Perennial favorites are Rachmaninoff's "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini," and, Claude Debussy "Clare de Lune."

Cold beer or a glass of wine after a long week?

I don't drink beer much anymore. My favorites are Guinness or Killian's Red, but these days I much prefer a Pinot from the Central Coast or a Zin from Lodi. When our Fresno highs get up to 100+ degrees, then, I'll take a New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc.

What's the craziest thing you've ever done?

Craziest thing I've ever done i.e. dumbest: jumping off a bridge in Chico into a river. It was crazy high, and yes, we were all sober.

How would you like viewers to see you?

I'd like for viewers to see me as a genuine person who doesn't put on airs, who is, kind, trustworthy and exemplifies integrity. However, I learned pretty early on in this business that not everyone will like me and I have to be OK with that. In fact a friend just told me the other day that there are some people in town, former co-workers, who says I'm a B. That hurt for a second, but when I thought about who they are, and I realized we have differing opinions on integrity and professionalism.

Do you like social media?

I had the biggest smile on my face the other day because a group of co-workers from Tennessee just shared a few tweets with each other about our days together in the early 1990's. We got re-connected in a second, with a tweet. A flood of happy memories came back. I appreciate social media for that. Sometimes I pull up Twitter, however, and my feed just speeds by in a flash and it's just way too much. I keep up as much as I can. It is stunningly helpful in breaking news, though everything must be read with temperance. When it comes to Facebook, the connection with viewers is deeper, more personal and rewarding. I try very hard to respond to each and every post. I think they deserve my time and respect. I am an administrator for 4 public Facebook pages, 3 Twitter profiles, 2 Instagram pages, 2 Pinterest and 1 personal FB profile. (that sadly gets virtually no attention.) Sometimes I get overwhelmed and sometimes I get to the point where I feel utterly speechless.

Stay tuned:

Tori Campbell is not only passionate about her work at Oakland's KTVU, she's also very passionate about good nutrition and making sure she and her family eat right. But, she's taken her interest in eating right to an all-new level. In the April edition of *Soundbites*, find out more about the longtime *Mornings On 2* anchor and East Bay resident.

The Health Reporter

the
Health Reporter

by Karen Owoc



Are you running on an empty tank? People in television and TV news often work long hours and at all hours. Even though your day may start at midnight, starting your day without a meal often results in feeling depleted, overeating later in the day, and making some not-so-smart decisions as you go along. Eating a good breakfast sets the stage for making healthy choices that will power up your body as well as your brain.

Why Eat Breakfast?

As you sleep, your body works hard to digest last night's dinner. By the time you wake up, your body and brain