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Dr. Don Is In The House

In 1980 Dr. Don Rose celebrated his seventh year at KFRC/San Francisco. During most of his career in the Bay Area, he was the market's No. 1 music air personality.

Don Rosenberg — long before he became Dr. Don Rose — was 15 and needed a couple hundred bucks to go to a Boy Scout National Jamboree in Valley Forge, PA. The local newspaper held a contest, and Rosenberg won it. He would report on the Jamboree for the paper. Not to be outdone, the local radio band jumped into the fray. “I was a terrible speaker,” admits Rose. “So I decided to go for radio. I swear that’s the only reason.”

In the middle of Rosenberg’s junior year, his friend Al Canyon scored a real radio job in Lincoln, NE. Rosenberg auditioned for Canyon’s old position at KWEB/Beatrice, NE and got it. “AI had a very unfortunate habit,” remembers Rose. “When he came to a word he couldn’t pronounce, he’d just juggle the mike switch.” Eventually, KLKM/Lincoln caught on and fired Canyon, and Rosenberg took over for him again.

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In 1972 Don suffered a heart attack. He was off the air from Oct. 3, 1972 until June of the next year. When he returned, his WFLF show was different. He says, “Instead of the rapid-fire, move-move-move thing, sometimes I’d just stop and say, ‘You know, we have to talk about this.’” He brought up his home life and had his family on the air at Christmas. “I started to be more Don Rosenberg on the air and less Dr. Don Rose.”

In 1973 Billboard named Rose Disc Jockey of the Year. While in Los Angeles, he ran into his old friend, RKO’s Paul Drew. Shortly thereafter Rose became the morning man at KFRC/San Francisco. He says, “I don’t think it’s the zaniness people remember me for; I think it’s basically one thing: ‘If nobody’s said it to you, it’d be the first: Good morning!’"