

2018 was a busy year for local TV and radio broadcasters. Across the country, local stations aired nearly 6 million stories on critical elections, 3 million broadcasts on deadly hurricanes and 2 million reports on the opioid crisis.

At **WDIV-TV/Local 4** we've covered everything from **opioid addiction, infrastructure concerns and gun violence to school safety, elections and educational initiatives**. Although the national media has moved on, we continue to report of **the aftermath of the Flint Water Crisis and water issues** that greatly affect this Great Lake State. We consistently address the important developments in our communities, some unique to specific areas and others that span across our viewing areas and tie us all together.

### **THE LARRY NASSAR SEXUAL ABUSE SCANDAL**

A story, which began in 2016, centered on Olympics team doctor, Larry Nassar and the growing number of reports of abuse of young athletes. The story continued to unfold several years later, throughout 2018. This was a story that had the eyes of the world on Detroit as it affected so many young athletes, many of them U.S. shining Olympic stars and hopefuls. As we did from the beginning we covered the latest developments extensively both on our air and on our website ClickOnDetroit.com. In late January it was time for Larry Nassar's sentencing and we were there live, through the powerful victim statements and the judge's statements prior to sentencing. In testimony that continued for days, more than 150 women shared their stories of abuse in a Lansing courtroom during Larry Nassar's sentencing. Judge Rosemary Aquilina sentenced the former doctor to 175 years in prison for his treatment of athletes under his care both under the USA Gymnastics team and the student athletes at Michigan State University. We livestreamed all the testimony at clickondetroit.com and carried his sentencing live on air. On the eve of Larry Nassar's sentencing hearing, WDIV-TV/Local 4 Reporter Nick Monacelli laid out the entire timeline of the former MSU Doctor's sexual assault case. Monacelli worked with our digital team to also produce an entire series on this national story exclusively for ClickonDetroit.com. As new developments occur, from the stepping down and ending of careers of the many involved, to the powerful "continuing on" by these talented athletes, we continue to be the place to turn for the most comprehensive in depth coverage.

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/nassar>

### **LOCAL NEWS BECOMES INTERNATIONAL**

In 2018, we were there in a large way for one such event, **the death of Aretha Franklin**.

**WDIV-TV/Local 4 broke the news of Aretha Franklin's death to the rest of the world.** The close relationship between the family and station allowed us to personalize and share her story with our viewers. A sample is below:

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/entertainment/aretha-franklin/watch-obituary-for-aretha-franklin-the-queen-of-soul->

As the eyes of the nation focused on Detroit and the outpouring of love toward our international musical treasure, we brought our viewers every moment of it. We told Aretha's story as only a local hometown television station could, through the love and remembrances of her loved ones. We immediately produced and televised a one hour prime time special celebrating Aretha. And, as the world gathered in Detroit for this massive celebration of life, **we provided over 10 hours of uninterrupted coverage** on air and streamed full coverage on our website ClickOnDetroit.com as well.

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/entertainment/aretha-franklin/aretha-franklin-s-funeral-in-detroit-a-send-off-fit-for-a-queen>

### **CELEBRATING OUR YOUTH**

All of us are keenly aware that our "youth" are our future and it is part of our DNA to celebrate them every chance we get. One such way is through our morning news segment, "Rhonda Walker's Brag Book."

It is a regular segment devoted to a young person who's making a difference in the community. It could be a standout student, a volunteer, a star athlete, or an all-around incredible person. Nominations are submitted through our website and the winners are featured in Rhonda's Brag Book. WDIV news anchor Rhonda Walker surprises them with a visit and features their efforts on Local 4 News Today. A sample is provided below:

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/brag-book/rhonda-s-brag-book-nominate-young-leader-of-the-week->

### **FIGHTING ILLITERACY**

Another important initiative here at WDIV-TV/Local 4 is our partnership with **Bookstock, metro Detroit's biggest book and media sale, where proceeds benefit literacy and education projects in metropolitan Detroit.** Our staff works throughout the year, with the Bookstock volunteers to plan and promote this annual fundraiser. As part of the event, we helped develop the B.E.S.T. awards that recognize elementary student finalists through an essay contest. The winners receive monetary grants for their school, their teacher and themselves. It has become a highly anticipated part of this literacy fundraiser. In the 16 years since their inception Bookstock has raised over \$2 million for literacy and education projects!

We are very proud of our long standing partnership on this event...and were pleased to get this feedback from the organization this year:

*Hello everyone,  
Well Local 4, you did it again! Just when we thought there wasn't possibly anything more you could do to support and promote Bookstock, you managed to exceed our wildest dreams! So on behalf of the entire Bookstock team, please accept our deepest gratitude for helping us make Bookstock 2018 another record year!*

## **BLOOD DRIVES**

Helping our Community to remain healthy and safe is also an important goal of ours. One example of how we play a part in that is through our partnership on **Blood Drives with the Red Cross**, producing public service announcements and important news stories to urge blood donations several times throughout the year

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/health/good-health/donated-blood-keeping-5-year-old-rochester-hills-boy-stephen-strong->

## **WEATHER SAFETY**

And safety is at the top of our minds as our full weather team partners annually, with the National Weather Service, Michigan Science Center and PlanItNow **for the full day Weatherfest event**. This event invites local school children to attend throughout the day and take part in seminars to learn about weather safety. WDIV-TV/Local 4 is the exclusive television sponsor of this event in our area.



<https://www.clickondetroit.com/weather-center/michigan-weather/weatherfest-is-may-14-heres-everything-you-need-to-know>

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/community/weatherfest-2018-with-the-local-4casters>

Keeping our viewers informed about up-to-the-minute weather developments is one of our top missions. In 2018 we continued our commitment to **weather radio event days** where the public was invited to a local retailer to purchase weather radios at a discount. We partnered with NOAA and Midland Radio for the ninth year with our goal of making sure our viewers have easy access to life saving technology that alerts and informs them during weather emergencies. **Since we began holding these events, approximately 45,000 weather radios have been purchased as part of our ongoing weather safety campaign.**

We're proud to play an important role in our community, helping to keep you and your constituents informed.

Below, we've quickly described some of our additional top stories of the year. We welcome the opportunity to give you a tour of our station and talk further with you about how we provide a voice for our community.

## Mid-Term and Local Elections

**In the run-up to Election Day**, WDIV-TV/Local 4 was a leader in our community as we provided crucial information about candidates for statewide and local elections. We were chosen to exclusively plan and host both, the Republican and Democratic gubernatorial primary debates in late June and July as well as the Michigan Gubernatorial Debate in late October.

### **WE HOSTED DEBATES**

#### **Democratic Debate**

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/michigan-elections/full-debate-democratic-candidates-for-michigan-governor-debate-in-detroit>

#### **Republican Debate**

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/michigan-politics/watch-republican-candidates-for-michigan-governor-debate-in-detroit>

#### **Debate between Gretchen Whitmer and Bill Schuette**

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/michigan-elections/watch-whitmer-schuette-face-off-in-michigan-s-governor-s-race-debate>

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/news/local-4-s-michigan-gubernatorial-debate-garners-high-ratings>



And we hosted and streamed a Democratic debate for a key district in our area, the 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional district, on our website, ClickOnDetroit.com.

### 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional Democratic Debate

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/michigan-elections/watch-michigan-s-13th-congressional-district-democratic-debate>

WDIV-TV Local 4/ClickOnDetroit also launched a new citizen engagement project called **Your Soapbox and Your Soapbox: 4 Minute Debates**. As part of our election coverage this unique initiative allowed us to make sure our viewers had the chance to speak out as well as see what others were saying. The project highlighted issues that mattered in our local communities and it became an important part of our Decision 2018 election coverage leading up to the midterm election.



A sample is below:

<https://www.clickondetroit.com/michigan-elections/your-soapbox-be-heard-go-vote>

Throughout the Election process, with in-depth reporting, on-air interviews in news and in our weekly Flashpoint program and messages urging our viewers to vote, WDIV-TV Local 4 played an important role in informing our viewers and making sure they knew the key issues and where the candidates stood.

### Extreme Weather and Emergency Situations

**At 8:10 p.m. on January 16<sup>th</sup>** our area was called to attention by the sound of a mysterious and very loud boom from the skies. As viewers clamored for more information to learn what was taking place, WDIV-TV and ClickOnDetroit.com quickly responded with answers.

The power of local television was evident as we addressed the specifics that were on our viewers minds. First and foremost our community wanted to know if they were safe and also what had caused this extremely unusual set of circumstances.

In addition to coverage on our air we stayed with our viewers, answering questions and talking to experts and witnesses on both our website and through Facebook live throughout the evening.

**The National Weather Service identified a meteor that flew overhead** causing a magnitude 2.0 earthquake and in later days fallout from that meteor was being discovered in our area.

As scientists weighed in, we provided continuing coverage throughout the next several days, updating this freak occurrence.

We're proud of the role we play as first informers. **That evening, millions had questions and concerns and we were there with the answers.**

See below:

[https://wdiv.screenlight.tv/shares/M6zilqdEltxxeZUkaioxOsyxbvAN1Mi7?\\_ =1546977145850](https://wdiv.screenlight.tv/shares/M6zilqdEltxxeZUkaioxOsyxbvAN1Mi7?_=1546977145850)



We appreciate the opportunity to bring some of our important stories of the year to your attention, and look forward to continuing serving our community in 2019. We hope you accept our invitation to visit our station when your schedule allows it, so please contact me at any time.



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