



## **SOUTHFIELD**

February 20, 2013

# **Documentary about embracing aging premieres in Southfield**

## ***Local filmmaker explores pain and privilege of maturing men***

*By Jessica Strachan C & G Staff Writer*

SOUTHFIELD — It hit local director and producer Keith Famie like it does any man his age — there's more time behind a person than ahead of them at a certain point.

For Famie, born and raised in Farmington Hills, it was when he was about 50 years old. Now 53, the Emmy-award winning filmmaker says he confronted several issues with his new documentary, "The Embrace of Aging," premiering this weekend in Southfield.



**"The Embrace of Aging: The Male Perspective of Growing Old" will premiere in Southfield this weekend.**



"Everyone will tell you it's like someone hit a light switch; oh my gosh, I've lived more than half my life already. In fact, the years ahead of me are going to be the most difficult," Famie said. "But with that, with aging, comes great wisdom and experience, so you learn to embrace it."

Famie and his crew spent two years surveying everyone from health gurus to

psychologists, health care professionals to scientists, and of course, men facing aging head on. They traveled as far as the mountains in Sardinia, where life expectancy for males soars past any other place in the world, and they also cued in several locals from different walks of life.

“What we learned was that, to age healthy and gracefully, you have to be disciplined about it,” Famie, a father of two, said. “A lot of men opened up quite personally about aging. The production of the film impacted me, too. I changed a lot of things in the course of filming — we filmed 110 hours. I stopped eating gluten, try to exercise every day; I’ve been eating a lot better. There’s no question that while I was in the process of making this film that I started looking at my own lifestyle.”

Rabbi Joseph Krakoff, a Southfield resident and spiritual leader at Shaarey Zedek, was one of the men who opened up about aging and what it means for a man’s spiritual walk.

He said he was able to offer a sense of the Jewish perspective on aging and bring together some Jewish men to talk about their own ideas.

“There’s recognition that certainly there are wonderful things about aging. Our tradition speaks a lot to wisdom, and with aging comes a lot of wisdom and a lot of respect,” Krakoff, 43, said. “Everything from literally standing up to show respect for elders who walk into a room to listening to their experiences and respecting them just by virtue of the fact that they’ve been there before. There are lessons we should learn from them and respect we should extend.”

In Judaism, one starts life over at the age of 70, Krakoff noted. At 80, one reaches the age of physical, emotional and mental strength.

“The numbers really are just numbers,” he said. “It’s all about how we live. Chronology is important, but not as important as our attitude and our approach to aging.”

There are also other, less glamorous aspects of aging that Famie said he wanted to commiserate with people in the film. Many health concerns, from Alzheimer’s to arthritis, diabetes to prostate cancer, are addressed.

“My hope is that men in the audience, maybe they will get a checkup they’ve never had. Maybe they will start eating healthy, looking at loved ones differently. Maybe all of those things will happen; they will walk away thinking, ‘My God, I’m so glad I saw this film,’” he said.

Also featured in the film is Drew Nieporent, business partner of Robert DeNiro for

the famed Tribeca Grill in New York, who speaks about his battle with weight, the concerns of his doctors and keeping up with his career demands.

A terminal prostate cancer patient, a Vietnam veteran whose exposure to Agent Orange has threatened his life, shares his story on how he copes with his inevitable and what will be premature passing. "Embrace of Aging" also takes a look at senior living neighborhoods and hospice centers, including a look at 100 senior softball players ranging in age from 70-90 who gather twice a week and candidly speak out on aging.

"We touch on all ranges of aging. The film is funny, insightful and educational. It's even upsetting at times. These are real men talking about real issues," Famie said. "No one escapes aging, and these are real guys opening up and being who they are at every age."

At the premiere, Chuck Gaidica, local newscaster, will emcee, and live entertainment will be provided by singer/songwriter Steward Francke. Comedian Bill Mihalic will perform. For more information on the film or to watch the trailer, visit [www.embraceofaging.com](http://www.embraceofaging.com).

"The Embrace of Aging" premiere will showcase 132 minutes of the film and is the first of a three-part series on the subject of aging. The evening will conclude with a sneak preview of the second in Famie's series, "The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old," which is currently in production.

### **Premiere of 'The Embrace of Aging: The Male Perspective of Growing Old'**

- Doors open at 5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, at Shriners Silver Garden Event Center, 24350 Southfield Road in Southfield.
- Tickets costs \$75 and must be reserved in advance. Proceeds benefit the Bo Schembechler: Heart of a Champion Research Fund and the Alzheimer's Association of Michigan.
- For more information, visit [www.embraceofaging.com](http://www.embraceofaging.com); to reserve tickets for the premiere, call (248) 869-0096.

<http://www.candgnews.com/news/documentary-about-embracing-aging-premieres-southfield>