



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHAZ MILLARD, ASSOCIATE PRODUCER OF VISIONALIST ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS
 Brenda Badish, 73, dons a wet suit while being filmed for a segment in the 13-part documentary series "The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old." Badish once was confined to a wheelchair due to her weight. She has since lost more than 170 pounds.

TV series documents women aging gracefully

Stories include weight loss and following dreams

By Lisa Roose-Church
 Daily Press & Argus

Brenda Badish says age should not be a deterrent to anyone when it comes to living.
 At age 68 and nearly 300 pounds, Badish was confined to a wheelchair, unable to bear the pain of walking. She wanted a change.

About five years later, she's lost more than 170 pounds and is telling her story in a 13-part documentary series, "The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old." The Gregory resident appears in Episode 9: Staying Active, Staying Strong,

which airs at 2:30 p.m. Dec. 28 on Detroit Public TV.

"It's been quite a journey for me," Badish, now 73, said about her transformation and reason for participating in the documentary, filmed by Keith Famie and his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions.

"I started off in a wheelchair, unable to do anything, and I've now completed a triathlon," she added.

The series, which begins airing Sunday on Detroit Public TV, also includes a segment on Joannee DeBruhl's Stone Coop Farms in Brighton. DeBruhl said she agreed to participate in the program because it's an opportunity for conversations about issues that matter to women.

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"I thought it was important for people to know that you can still find something that's incredible to do ... even when you're 50."

JOANNEE DEBRUHL, farm owner featured in the series

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incredible to do ... even when you're 50," she said.

In the segment on Badish, she is seen working out with her trainer, Kelly Fletcher of the Hamburg Fitness Center, and participating in the triathlon at age 71. It includes funny moments, such as a 20-minute struggle to get into a wet suit for the triathlon.

DeBruhl, who is featured in Episode 10: Having a Purpose, is shown working on the organic farm she started with Shanon Rau and Tom Rau, a Livingston County businessman who is the co-executive producer of the series and who has financially supported all the series for Detroit Public TV. DeBruhl's segment airs at 2:30 p.m. Jan. 4.

DeBruhl discusses how she turned losing a job into following her passion for farming to feed others.

"I was able to find something I absolutely love to do," DeBruhl said.



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Joannee DeBruhl of Stone Coop Farms in Brighton will appear in the 13-part documentary series "The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old" on Detroit Public TV.

"You can always find something you're curious or passionate about. ... Part of the journey for me is accepting me for myself, and that meant the gray hair."

The series opens with women answering Famie's question: "How old are you?" While some of the women answered without hesitation, some of the women — ages 40-105 — admitted they lied, and they explain why.

In the end, the women agree that life isn't about a woman's numerical age, but rather her experiences handling the aging process.

Famie, a 10-time Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker, said among the women featured is a single mother who shares her life after a cancer diagnosis as she raises her daughter.

Also included are stories from a master yoga instructor and a group of women who walk Jackson Hole mountain in Wyoming. The

mountain is known for its steep terrain and its vertical drop, which exceeds 4,000 feet.

Interspersed between the women's 30-minute episodes are interviews with professionals, including a psychologist, a cardiologist and physicians, all of whom address various aspects of the aging process for women. Jill Jack, a singer/songwriter, and a group of singers recorded the series theme song, "Look Beyond Your Horizon."

The series focuses on several areas of concern for aging women, including menopause, cancer and heart disease. It also discusses sexuality and spirituality.

"It's an opportunity for conversation on how to deal with getting older and wrinkles or gray hair," DeBruhl said.

The series on aging women follows Famie's "The Embrace of Aging: The Male Perspective of Growing Old."

Badish said she hopes viewers who are experiencing similar issues will realize change is not impossible.

"I hope they can see that you can change and you can get out there and do a little work every day, exercise and diet," she said. "It doesn't make any difference how old you are."