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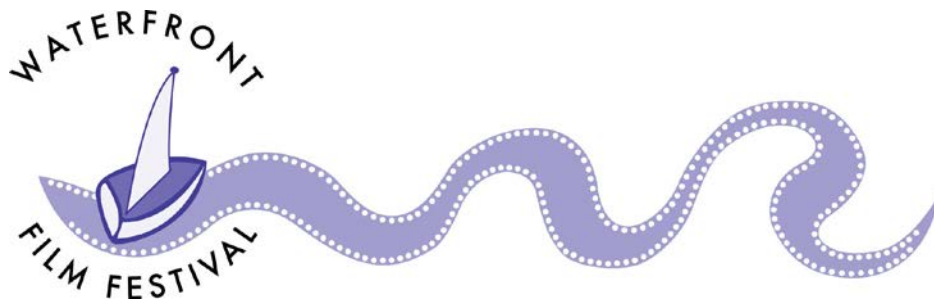
Film announced, tickets on sale for Waterfront Film Festival June 22 event

Holland, Mich., May 16, 2017 – Waterfront Film Festival recently announced the opening of its new screening and event venue located in Holland, Michigan. The Thursday, June 22 Grand Opening will feature a multiple Audience Award winning favorite film as well as a Meet & Greet Reception. The event is aimed to help bring awareness to a rare genetic disorder that affects a local wheelchair-bound woman who also was recently diagnosed with Stage IV cancer. The film shown will be “THE ATAXIAN” – an inspiring documentary about two guys affected with the degenerative neuromuscular disorder Friedreich’s ataxia who race across the country on bikes to raise money and awareness for the cause.

FILM SYNOPSIS

Unable to walk due to the neuromuscular disorder, Friedreich’s ataxia (FA), Kyle Bryant and a team of friends attempt the most grueling bicycle race in the world, The Race Across America (RAAM). The feature-length documentary, “The Ataxian,” spotlights a man whose will and determination carry him and his teammates across a continent under almost impossible conditions—an act that sparks others to take action in their own lives. Stunning cinematography exposes raw, unfiltered emotions juxtaposed against the most inspiring landscapes across America. With purity and grace, the film examines the life of a man aggressively living every moment in a race against his own mortality. TRAILER: <http://TheAtaxianMovie.com/>

“An inspiring story of will and determination, The Ataxian features gorgeous cinematography and unforgettable storytelling.” – Huffington Post



Holland resident Holly LeBlanc who was diagnosed with the disorder over 20 years ago contacted Waterfront Film Festival about showing the film. WFF Co-Founder Hopwood DePree said, "This is exactly the type of programming we are passionate about offering to the community: An entertaining film that can bring awareness to a worthy cause. We have known Holly for a long time and we are thrilled she contacted us about showing this film. It is a great feeling when one non-profit organization can help another for a good cause." Waterfront Film Festival will donate the proceeds from the fundraiser ticket sales to raising awareness and finding a cure for Friedreich's ataxia.

Film cast is expected to be in attendance, as well as Holly LeBlanc, for the screening and after-party.

Seating is limited so advance tickets are recommended. Tickets are priced at \$25 to attend the film and Fundraiser Reception at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 22 and 7 p.m. Friday, June 23 at Waterfront Film Festival's new facility located at 479 Columbia Avenue in Holland. An encore matinee screening on Saturday June 24 11 a.m. will be offered for \$10.

Tickets and more information can be found at: www.WaterfrontFilm.org

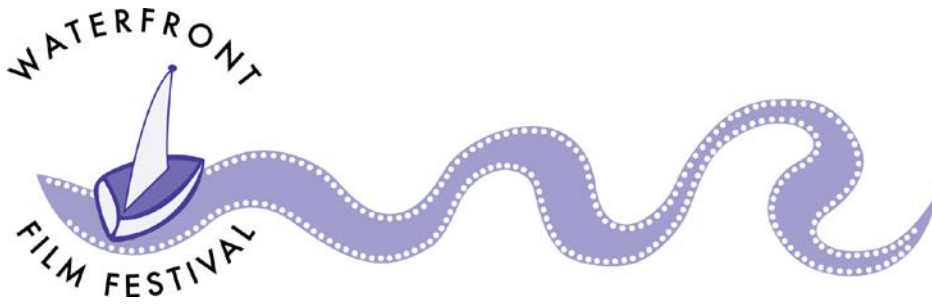
About Holly LeBlanc:

Holly LeBlanc has always had a passion for people who are hurting. At the age of 18 her life took a major detour and she was faced head on with a life altering illness that resulted with a compromised digestive system. During her recovery, doctors discovered she was living with a neurological disorder. After five years of a misdiagnosis, they determined she had Friedreich's Ataxia or FA for short. FA is a life-shortening disability. As a result of this disease she has lost her ability to walk. Her coordination and speech are affected. With the help of her family, friends and service dog, Barkley, she is able to navigate life. Recently, Holly was also diagnosed with Stage IV cancer.

Holly made a choice long ago to be better, not bitter, in her life. She desires to give purpose to this pain. We all have challenges during our lives and each story is unique. It is through the sharing of her story, people will discover hope for their own battle.

The non-profit she has recently started is called "It Takes Hope".

www.ItTakesHope.org



LeBlanc will share her story tonight, Tuesday May 16, at Central Wesleyan Church, 446 W. 40th Street, at 6:30 p.m. That event is free and open to the public.

About WaterfrontFilm.Org

Since 1999, the non-profit Waterfront Film Organization has been offering unique film experiences, education and opportunities. Based in West Michigan, Waterfront founded one of the leading destination film festivals in the Midwest, regularly hosting Midwest premieres of Academy Award winning and nominated films. For more information on Waterfront Film Organization visit www.WaterfrontFilm.org, “like” us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/WaterfrontFilm](https://www.facebook.com/WaterfrontFilm) and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/WaterfrontFilm](https://twitter.com/WaterfrontFilm)