

CELEBRATE 2022

Silver

Tangled

Magazine



*Within
The
silver locks*

Women. Life. Style.

MEET KAREN

58 | *Event Planner, Writer | Silver Since 2018*

Silver hair isn't just a state of being, it's also a state of mind.

My hair had been a source of pride and prejudice for as long as I can remember. It was brown, not the often-bleached blonde shades that our high-school cheerleaders proudly turned heads with during small-town Texas football games. It was, of course, without the coveted radiant shine being marketed in magazines, touted on TV and crowding store shelves. One boyfriend compared my hair to a horse's tail. And, it had waves so it could never affect the face-framing silken blanket that the Partridge family's Susan Dey showed off each week. As a teenager I squeezed lemons or poured on Sun-In, wore hot curlers to school and sprayed my head with Final Net in the parking lot. If I couldn't have straight hair, I was determined to mold my locks into a cascading Farrah Fawcett waterfall, praying it wasn't a humid day. As a college student, I asserted my independence by becoming a redhead (like my fiery grandmother) which lasted well into my 40's. I tried every



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shade of red with various hot tools of torment to force my wavy hair into submission. When the Brazilian Blowout was introduced, I was first in line.

Looking back at photos, I see myself as a girl, a young woman and then a wife and mother who was desperately trying to meet the expectations of society. Despite proclaiming myself as an independent feminist, my hair, makeup, and clothing choices were often based on trying to fit in rather than stand out. As I aged, I recognized I was trying to chase the younger version of myself even when an older woman stared back at me. Finally, on my 50th birthday, I made a strong decision to stop straightening my hair. I found a curly hair stylist, donated my curling and flat-irons, hair curlers and straight hair products and decided to go cold turkey. It was amazing. My hair, in shock at finally being released from its straight-jacket, became a thing of beauty - Rapunzel-like in its determination to unfurl into ringlets.

And then came menopause.

My shower, clothing and furniture became a repository for

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(Karen Rappaport McHugh, cont.pg.46)



handfuls of hair. Strands of gray burst stubbornly through my scalp almost overnight. Hair color of any shade began to look flat. Salon visits became more frequent, my wallet emptied out and my at-home treatments never yielded the same results. No matter what I tried to stay "young," I knew an older woman was struggling to break free.

I had friends with silver hair. I said it looked good on them. I noticed some celebrities with platinum styles. I said they were famous and didn't need to care. I said gray hair would only look good on women with light eyes, a certain skin tone, a different shade of silver. I made every excuse for why it was fine for others and not me. I've both heard and said them all.

The truth is there is no truth except my own.

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As a woman now in my 50's I realized there would be no graduations, milestones, or markers to guide me toward this next phase of aging. For most of my life, I tried to emulate something and someone. Now, it was up to me to set the example, become a guidepost and model for my daughters and for younger women.

My curly hair stylist, younger than me, was letting her grays shine. She casually mentioned that whenever I was ready, she would be there to support me. On my 55th birthday, I told her I was ready. She toned my burgundy locks to a cool brown, she told me it wouldn't be easy, and she assured me that she was there to help. She also said that hats make a fashion statement. Luckily, it was December.

People told me I looked like Bonnie Raitt as the silver emerged and began to frame my face. I noticed that I my natural color, which I hadn't seen in years, was much darker than I remembered. My hair began to thicken and shine again. I noticed that I did too.

Released from any expectation of who I should look like, I started revisiting my clothes and wondering who I should dress like. The answer came in a flash.

Dress like yourself. Myself. My self.

I'm 58 years old now. I feel fortunate to be alive, to be healthy and to be representing the wise women who know that aging is a blessing. I want to celebrate her. I'm determined to look and feel my best in any way that seems right to me.

I strut in my cowgirl boots, sashay in sexy outfits, and show off my sassy silvers.

That's who I am today. It might change tomorrow but that's up to me to say.

COVER
MODEL



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