

## Wordsmith wonders

### Local songwriters advance to competition final

By Kathleen Hay, KHAY@STANDARD-FREEHOLDER.COM

Updated 1 year ago

CORNWALL – The community's talent pool has just got even deeper.

Singer-songwriters Nancy Beaudette and Graham Greer are no strangers to garnering accolades for their wordsmithing abilities, but both are now finalists in the Mountain Stage NewSong Canadian regional song competition.



Now in its eighth year, the contest is one of North America's premier showcases of emerging performing songwriters across an array of genres.

In total, there are six regions - West, Midwest, Southwest, Southeast, Northeast and Canada - with 10 songwriters advancing to represent each region. One is then selected from each region to perform in the international contest finals Oct. 10 in Charleston, West Virginia, home of the Mountain Stage radio and television show.

In addition, there are six songwriters from a general round - open to anyone, anywhere on the planet - who also perform at the fall show.

But all those mindboggling numbers aside . . . the real proof of local talent in the pudding is that two - count'em two - regional finalists from across the whole of Canada are from the Cornwall area.

That's what first caught Beaudette's eye when she opened her notification last week.

"Being selected as one of 10 Canadians is great, but I think the fact two are from Cornwall, is really cool," she grinned. "The talent pool in this area is vast and diverse, it's fantastic.

"It's narrowed the odds not just to one in 10, but theoretical one in five."

Normally, added Beaudette, she shies away from contests, however, the fact it was advertised on Sonicbids - in effect a job board for artists - gave it credibility . . . and also the fact that many high-profile artists have performed on the Mountain Stage Show, such as Sheryl Crow, Norah Jones, Alison Krauss and the Barenaked Ladies.

"Mountain Stage is an NPR (National Public Radio) station," chimed in Greer. "It's like the show Prairie Home Companion, which had a movie made about it.

"Major names appear on it and it's an opportunity for the final winner to have their song broadcast on television and radio."

Greer decided to submit three entries - Wirewalker, Buttercup and Bring Me Fire - while Beaudette opted to enter only one, Something Beautiful, in early June.

General round finalists will be announced Sept. 10 in preparation for the international Mountain Stage New-Song contest finals in Charleston, WV on Oct. 10. Like most contests, there's cash prizes involved, but not huge; in fact, the top co-winners only receive \$300, as does the winner of best song.

But it boils down to much more money, it's about artistic integrity.

"One of us may move forward, and one may not, but anytime you make it to the top 10 list nationally in any discipline, I think it's significant. I just think it's so cool that two of us from Cornwall were able to achieve this," Beaudette stated.