

Sharing her story through song

■ Daniel Bushman

After experiencing an assault in 2014 while riding a transit bus in Vancouver, singer/songwriter Meghan Bowman will be sharing her story as she sings from her latest album, *The Watchmen*. Growing up on a farm by Guernsey, Bowman will be at the Lanigan Christian Fellowship Church during the evening Apr. 29. The performance is part of Bowman's tour with Jodi Faith as the pair will be venturing out west before heading to the east coast later this year.

After doing a west coast tour during the summer of 2012, Bowman is excited for the opportunity to hit the road again. "Jodi heard me singing at an event in Lanigan at LifePoint Church last year and invited me to tour with her this summer. It's a dream come true that it's actually happening!"

So far, the only stop in Saskatchewan is the show in Lanigan but Bowman said they have dates set in Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

"There will be a donation box at the Christian Fellowship Church on Apr. 29 if you would like to donate towards this tour. Anything can happen while two crazy kids like Jodi and I are on the road and that's a good thing. We will be singing in all sorts of different venues and to people from all backgrounds and circumstances. I'm looking forward to it!"

Performing her songs from *The Watchmen*, the selections will be more than just words off a page. Talking about her experience of assault, which prompted Bowman to write the album, the performer was gracious enough to share her story with the Advisor.

"In October 2014, I got on a transit bus in Vancouver. I was heading to school and immediately as I sat down I noticed a gentlemen staring at me. He got up from his seat and came to sit down beside me. His first words were, "I want to know you." I began to talk to him and try and answer the questions he had for me. I recognized though that this was not a normal situation and so I did my best to not give him too much personal information. He persisted and didn't stop asking his questions until I gave him answers that satisfied him. I remember wracking my brain, trying to remember all I had learned in class about "boundaries" and trying to utilize those tactics to

keep myself safe. But at some point, my fear began to grow and I just tried to do whatever I could to keep him calm. He was very confusing to me – some moments he seemed really nice, other moments he was a little more aggressive and sometimes he even seemed confused. Eventually, the physical boundary was crossed and his hands were on me. Nothing happened that was too intimate, he had his hands on my back and his fingers in my hair. He kept trying to hug me. It could have been a lot worse of course. I think I thought it wasn't a big deal at the time. I got off the bus and went to my singing lesson but I was pretty shaken up. After my teacher did some music therapy with me, she took me to counseling services, then they told me to call a hotline. The hotline transferred me to the police and then two officers came to see me on campus to take my statement"

Bowman said everything seemed to go back to normal after the incident as she tried to forget the whole thing ever happened. About two months later, Bowman began feeling like everything was not normal. "Anger, shame, fear, paranoia that I was being followed by strangers on the street, nightmares and flashbacks were all things that started creeping into my life. Sometimes I would actually re-experience a lifelike feeling that his hands were on me again. This was frustrating for me! I just wanted to leave this all behind but that was starting to seem like an impossibility. In these moments, I would sit down at my piano crying, beginning to play and see what words I would sing, scream or cry out."

For Bowman, music became an outlet. "Music is beautiful. This was not the first time music was offering me a place to explain myself and it will not be the last."

While the artist admits the songs are not pretty, well crafted, thought out or even make sense, she said it did not matter. "They were simply created to help me pro-

cess the shame I felt and I never imagined anyone else would ever hear them."

Since that time, the songs have been put on an album and Bowman is keeping her eyes focused ahead.

"Many days, I ask myself if I have the courage to release these songs but I just continue to take one step at a time. Sometimes I feel physically sick before I'm about to share my story or do a concert and I think, "What are you doing? You're going to break down in front of a room full of people and make a fool of yourself!" Then I do it anyway. And you know what? Every single concert I have played since starting to sing these songs and tell this story have resulted in people coming forward and sharing their own story with me. If you are one of those people, thank you. I felt alone some days in all of this, but we really have to start being honest with each other and realize that we are not alone."



Admitting there were times in the beginning where Bowman felt like she walked the album out alone, the performer said after production started a group of people around her were willing to help see the creation of the album through. "And now, in some ways, it feels like there is more of an army behind me, propelling me forward. From people who have donated funds or encouragement, to

the people who actually did artwork, photography, producing, mixing of the album, to people who shared their own personal stories with me – that's the army. There are people who are trying to discourage me too of course. There are people who get offended or who misunderstand what I'm trying to do – but that's ok. It's all part of fighting for change."

The Apr. 29 event in La-

nigan will be the first place people can purchase physical copies of *The Watchmen*. Bowman said the album will be up for sale on iTunes and other digital distributors that day as well. The Lanigan Pharmacy and the Guernsey Hotel have also agreed to sell copies of Bowman's CD after the concert.

To follow Meghan's journey, visit www.meghanbowman.com

THE AMAZING CREATURE TOUR
with
 
Jodi Faith & Meghan Bowman

TOUR KICKOFF & FUNDRAISER
Friday, April 29 @ 7pm
Christian Fellowship Church
ADMISSION BY DONATION
EVERYONE WELCOME!

From Lanigan to Langley, Lantzville to Labrador

Carlton Trail College.
discover your future

UPCOMING CLASSES

St. John Ambulance Babysitter's Course
WATROUS: May 14, 2016; 9 am—4 pm
WATROUS: May 15, 2016; 9 am—4 pm
Price: \$40 (*The Watrous Kinettes will subsidize 50% of your tuition.*)

Amazing Salads and Techniques
WATROUS: June 4, 2016; 1:30—4:30pm
Price: \$45

Appetizing Appetizers
DAVIDSON: May 28, 2016; 1:30—4:30pm
Price: \$45

Quilting – Bargello Runner
WATROUS: May 3 & 10, 2016; 7—10pm
Price: \$65

Red Cross Standard First Aid/CPR C/AED
WATROUS: June 18 & 19, 2016; 8:30 am—4:30pm
Price: \$175

St. John Ambulance Standard First Aid/CPR C/AED
DAVIDSON: June 13 & 15, 2016; 9—5pm
Price: \$175

H2S Live
LANIGAN: June 15, 2016; 9—5pm
Price: \$199

Foodsafe
WATROUS: May 28, 2016; 9—5pm
Price: \$99

*Applicable taxes included.
For details or to register contact:*
306.946.2094
watrous@carltontrailcollege.com

CarltonTrailCollege.com
1.800.667.2623

BE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL TAKEN CARE OF



Shannon Briske, B.Comm, CFP
Senior Financial Advisor
sbriske@assante.com

Byron Briske, B.Comm
Financial Advisor
bbriske@assante.com

Assante Financial Management Ltd.

What can you expect from Shannon Briske and his team? Expertise. Insight. Attentiveness. And an integrated wealth management strategy that incorporates investment objectives, cash and credit flexibility, capital preservation, estate planning... In short, everything you need to make more, keep more and be more secure. Please call for a private consultation.



301-500 Spadina Cres. E, Saskatoon SK, S7K 4H9
T:306-665-3244 or 1-800-465-2100, F:306-665-6691