



Musicians get valuable exposure at songwriting competition

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Robb Moss was a finalist in the Old Pros category at a songwriting competition in Lethbridge last month. Carmen Solana-Martin

Three musicians, who all began their musical journey by performing in Bragg Creek, recently took their careers to the next level by competing in an Alberta songwriting competition.

On April 27, Robb Moss, Leanne Copithorne and Tynan Groves competed as finalists in the sixth annual South Country Fair Songwriting Competition 2013, at the Slice Bar and Grill in Lethbridge. Greater Bragg Creek area singer and songwriter Robb Moss, was a finalist in the competition's Old Pros category. The Americana country-folk musician, who entered with his song 'Fools Gold', said it was important to perform in the contest to network with musicians and other music industry professionals.

"It was fun to share music and meet other musicians who went through the same songwriting process," said Moss. "Being chosen as a finalist is industry recognition." Though Moss said music is his great hobby, he acknowledged his songwriting skills have improved due to hard work and perseverance.

"Everyone has goals with respect to songwriting and I can always improve," he said. Moss was also one of the 20 finalists who performed in the Pros and Prose division of the Calgary Folk Music Festival songwriting contest, held at Calgary's Ship and Anchor pub in April. Moss said the skill of the other songwriters in the Calgary competition was intimidating, but he felt the experience was about sharing not competing. "It was an absolutely magical day and kind of cool to be part of that world," said Moss. "The songs were beautiful and I can't say enough about how thrilled I was to be a part of it."

Springbank singer and songwriter Leanne Copithorne's Americana country-roots folk band Elbow River is a family affair, as her daughter Kaitlynn and Kaitlynn's fiancé Brandon Smith, as well son Charlie, are

members of the group. They placed second in the South Country Fair songwriting competition Newcomer division and won a \$250 prize. Copithorne entered the competition with Already Gone, the first song she ever wrote and performed in public. Her day job as dressage coach is competitive, and Copithorne said she brought the same determined spirit to the songwriting competition. "As a dressage coach, my whole business is about competition," said Copithorne. "I thought we did a pretty good job and were pleased." "Leanne put on a great performance," said Moss who watched her show. "It was a really catchy song." Former Bragg Creek resident, singer and songwriter, Tynan Groves, said he plays jazz influenced punk-folk music. He and his wife Shelly, a violinist, perform as a duo in the group Spirit Hall, and they performed his song 'Make You Understand' in the Old Pros division of the South Country Fair songwriting competition. "I thought Lethbridge was awesome," said Groves. "The coolest part is it made my wife and I get together and play music." Groves, who admitted he entered the competition on a whim, was impressed with the level of talent of the other songwriters. "It was crazy how good those songs were," he said. Even though Groves said it was disheartening not to win, he plans to enter more songwriting competitions. "I'll do it again," he said. "I recommend that all songwriters participate in songwriting competitions." Copithorne and Moss also plan to enter songwriting competitions next year. Songwriting competitions are not the only thing on the musical agenda for the three artists, who all plan to record new albums soon. Groves said his band the Bobby Kork Orchestra plans to release a two-song EP in this fall. In September, Moss said he plans to start recording a new album, tentatively titled One Byrd's Hand, and release it in early 2014. Copithorne's group Elbow River is recording its first album and hopes to release it in June 2014. This summer, Moss and Copithorne will perform at the Water Valley Celtic Festival June 22 in Water Valley.