

ByTheWay

The journey of a wondering soul

A Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2018

ByTheWay

An official Introduction to the journey ahead.

First off, thank you to everyone who took the time to accept my offer to join me on this exciting journey, by way of subscribing to my emails. For as long as I can remember, I've been a creator; of words, pictures, songs and dreams. I have shared these creations on various platforms, drawing sporadic attention to my work. That changes today. With this first issue of my newsletter comes a commitment to you. Many of you have been there since the beginning; to read my blog posts, to listen to my dreams—chaotic and unorganized as they may have been—and to support me in my moments of unbelief. I'm committed to giving you my best work, as loyal subscribers but more importantly, as supporters of my greater vision, ByTheWay.

What is ByTheWay, Anyway?

If you aren't familiar with the big vision of ByTheWay, allow me to give an official introduction. ByTheWay was conceived back in 2016. On September 15, to be exact, via a [blog](#)

[post](#). The vision started as a blogging series. I had also recently started work on a novel that is now in the final stages of its first draft. As I have pursued my goals over the last couple of years, I am finding this concept of ByTheWay weaved into every facet of my journey. As my goals expand and my vision for my career grows, so does ByTheWay. I'm leaning into this phrase to define my work. At least to date. It's the overarching theme of everything I do.



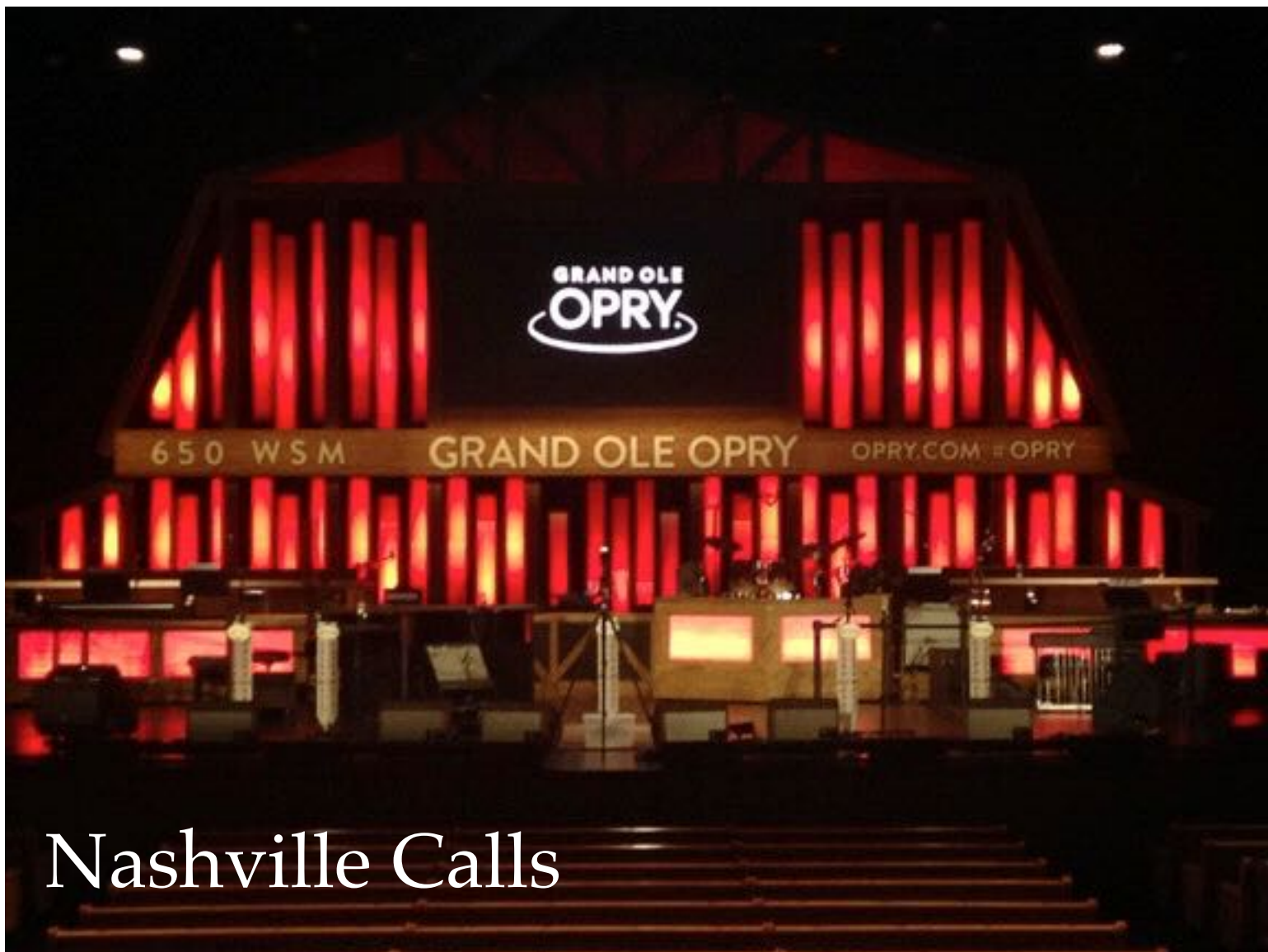
Heather Lake, Calif.

I hope you will take a moment to review the blog post where the concept was in its infantile stage. The concept is the same today, only it's a wandering toddler sinking it's fingertips into everything new, taking major falls as it learns to walk and experiencing unequalled delight at the discovery of new things every single day.

Each issue of this newsletter will cue you into those discoveries, little by little.

As I write, I am in the negotiating phase of purchasing the domain. I'm hoping by the time this newsletter hits your inbox, I will be the proud new owner. But if the negotiation doesn't land in my favor, I've learned that there are many bends and curves in the journey, intermixed with the vistas and views. There are even a few speed bumps and poisonous plants and vicious predators along the path. I've learned to not only accept them, but to expect them. Because there is always something else waiting around the next bend.

This journey is both a test of my faith and a testament of it. I've waited (*years!*) to step out and accomplish these next steps. But the fact that I am stepping [Continued on Pg. 4](#)

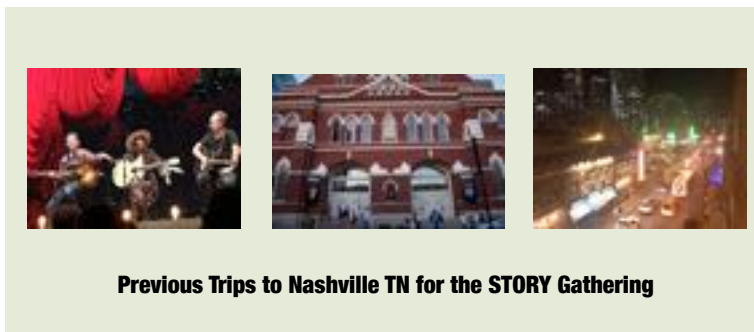


Nashville Calls

Many of you know that I've been to Nashville the last two years to attend the STORY Gathering. Because of this conference, I've found the courage to move forward with this dream of mine. Because of the conference, I've been able to identify as one of "them": the talented ones. The ones with a story worth telling. The ones that were cool enough to tell their story. I've found my place in this world among *them* and I'm so excited to take my third

annual trip this coming September.

Each year, I've had specific



Previous Trips to Nashville TN for the STORY Gathering

takeaways, challenges and experiences; tools to combat the things that blocked me from doing my work. In

2016, I attended my first conference after watching from afar for nine years. I wanted to attend for almost

a decade but I was too scared. In 2016, though, I faced that fear and took the invitation to step through a

proverbial door into a new world. And I believe that step has changed the course of my life.

Last year, in 2017, I was introduced to this little voice inside of me named Courage. Though I had faced my fear the previous year, I was still ignorant of the fact that I had a dose of courage in me and that I could tap into that courage when I needed to face hard things. By way of a journal exercise with Amber Rae, the author [Continued on page 4](#)

What Next?

“The vision must be followed by the venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps - we must step up the stairs.”

- Vance Havner



Monterey, Calif.



Kansas City, Mo.



Sierra Nevada, Calif.

So what are the next steps? As I previously stated, I've been working on a novel. Right now, I am trying to get all my ducks in a row so that when it's completed, I will have a platform to market to. That's where you come in. My followers. My loyalists. I hope you will be there with me, in the end, when I finally get to announce it has hit the market!

This project has been a long time in the making. Too long. In part because of a lack of discipline. But mostly because of fear. I've held the project tightly and closely, afraid to invite anyone into the most vulnerable places of my life. But I'm letting some of that go. I'm at the stage where I'm

asking people to review the first draft to get their input as readers.

And that's why I'm calling on all of you. I won't be able to let everyone read the book right now, but I can use your input on the things I have published to date. What works and what doesn't?

I am still meandering my way down this artistic path, learning what belongs where. I'm finding my way as a storyteller who writes, who takes pictures, who makes music, who speaks on occasion and now, who is forming a business. As I meander further down this path, I intend to use every platform available (socials, podcast, etc) to share my content, my

book, and my vision. As such, I want to know what makes my audience tick.

At the end of the newsletter, I will list some ways you can support me in this cause. Everyone is busy and I understand that. But if you can find the time to take any of the actions to help me grow my audience and spread a message of encouragement to others who are wondering about the maze of life, it would be much appreciated.

In order to achieve my publishing goal, I am in search of a writing coach, an agent, an editor and ultimately a publisher. But I am

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About Me

I am intrigued by creations and the



stories behind them. Be it the handiwork of nature, aesthetics, song lyrics or the architectural construct of a building, a family or a plain old

sentence.

I look at the world through curious eyes and have a deep sense of wonder. I never get tired of learning about the mysteries of this planet (and beyond) or the complex life that thrives here.

I show particular interest in melancholy art forms that depict a timeless ache or wistful longing. And I have my own archive of creations in the form of photographs, stories, poetry and songs.



Yellowstone, Mt.

For a glimpse into my stories ByTheWay, find me on all of the socials and Follow my BTW blog at www.leahbigham.wordpress.com.

Unless otherwise noted, all verbiage, photographs, poetry and quotes inside ByTheWay are the work of Leah Bigham. When sharing, please credit accordingly.

Nashville Calls

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of Wonder Over Worry, I found that voice and have used my courage to take monumental strides forward this year, both professionally and personally. It's been one of the best years of my life.

My first two STORY Gatherings have set the bar high. But I am confident that this year will be just as amazing. I am so excited to get to share the experience with you this time around. Be on the lookout for a recap in the next issue!

What Next?

Continued from page 3

taking one step at a time, heeding the advice of my father to do every day what I *can* do. I don't have all of my next steps outlined, but I'm taking the steps that I know are defined day by day, trusting that the big picture will show itself in the end as I faithfully walk down the path. My next steps include connecting with the people



Gettysburg, Pa.

who will help me achieve my goals.

Along those same lines, I'm learning to embrace my talent as a storyteller and learning to benefit other people and other agencies with this gift. I am working on a couple of projects that will both serve in this capacity and support my BTW endeavors in the long run.

ByTheWay

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out today, deciding to take this passion of mine to the next level and unveil my vision to the rest of you is a *testament* of faith.

One thing I know: the one in who my faith rests is the original author and creator. This whole vision is His. And I am just along for the ride.

Ways to Support

Moving forward, to catch the eye of agents, editors, publishers and the like, I'm on a mission to build my platform. Here's a list of ways you can help.

1. Connect with me on the socials
2. Follow my blog (and read it)
3. Share ByTheWay with others
4. Email me with any feedback you have regarding this first issue, what you would like to see more/less of.



Yosemite, Calif.

5. From what you have already seen of my work, let me know what you would like to see more of.

- A. Blog Posts
- B. Pictures
- C. Poetry
- D. Songs

The Story In A Twilight Sky

*There's a night sky with a western glow, dimming in the east.
Whispering a windy tale, blueing twilight beckoning
Calling me out of the safe, well-lit harbor I call home
To meddle in the outer world where the called-out-ones roam.
I smell an aroma, I'm allured by summer's scent,
My glowing face breaths dust on screen, reads a story in the sky of "a life fully lived".*

Dear Core Supporters,

We all know how important it is to strengthen your core. It develops stamina, longevity, strength and balance. If only I had a nickel for every time my gym instructor interspersed reminders to strengthen our core between lifts, squats, lunges and planks...

The same is true when we step out on ventures like these, doing the hard work to strengthen a thought into a vision and ultimately a reality. The core needs to be strengthened. You are the core of BTW: because you asked to be a subscriber, because you are reading this newsletter because you are supporting me in my figurative plank. You are the core. And I am full of gratitude to have you along for the ride, to sustain this project. Thank you

for lending me strength, stamina, balance and longevity for what's ahead.

I'm reading through *The Journals of Lewis and Clark* and am stricken by their unique qualifications, tenacity, leadership and curiosity. President Thomas Jefferson noted in a letter to a friend that Lewis' unique attributes qualified him for the expedition: courage, prudence, habits and health, knowledge and experience were among them.

Because he and his partner, Clark, were so right for the job, it's recorded that "From the moment when the expedition left.... discipline was absolutely perfect, in spite of danger, discomfort, alarmingly limited and often unpalatable rations, occasional starvation, cold, wet, exhaustion, and the isolation of a small group seeing far too

much of one another over a long period, usually a dangerous cause of friction. All the factors that undermine morale were present most of the time--and morale remained high."

I am not oblivious to how arduous this journey will be and of what I'm committing to. Like Lewis and Clark, I know there will be hardships ByTheWay. But I am hopeful that my own unique attributes are distinctly right for this adventure. I am prayerful about my areas of lack, inviting personal change and growth and adaptability.

Above all, though, I know that none of that can happen without a strong core. A million times over, thank you! And I hope you enjoy the journey we are about to trek together.

Del Byt