



Protecting the Home Front



Photos and story by Melissa Murray

Sitting one evening watching television in their Collingwood, Ont. home, Elizabeth Lougheed-Brown complained to her husband Corp. James Brown about the high-pitched shriek the television made.

But he didn't hear it.

After working for nine years in artillery with the Canadian Forces, Brown, now 28, had lost a small part of his hearing. "It was a terrible sound, but he couldn't hear it."

"James decided because of his hearing and because we were starting a family, that it was time to transfer to a safer job and become a family man," said Lougheed-Brown, Brown's wife of two years.

The switch from a job in artillery to a job as a traffic technician in Trenton, someone who prepares and organizes planes for cargo and personnel, was a relief to Lougheed-Brown.

And the switch from job to job within the military isn't uncommon for military personnel.

Susan Sweetman, executive director of the Military Family Resource Centre, said her staff may be called to talk to spouses about "remustering" or occupational transfers.

It may not be about trying to find a safer position, but it might be that the transitions, said Sweetman, whether it is deployment overseas or to a different base, are more predictable, said Sweetman. Or they exist less often and in longer chunks, she added.

"There has to be an aligning of the moons for transfers to work out," she said.

Fortunately, the moons aligned for the Brown family.

Brown works about 40 hours a week and is enjoying time at home.

Still, every time Brown leaves for work, his wife and two children, seven and 19 months, wait by the large window in their living room and wave to Brown between checkered curtains. "It's a tradition," said Lougheed-Brown. "You never know when he'll be deployed again."



Top: Corporal James Brown waves to his family from his car as he leaves for work. His wife, Elizabeth Lougheed-Brown and his two children, Timothy, seven, and Clara, 19 months, have a tradition of waving to him as he leaves every day from the living room window.

Counterclockwise top left: Brown gives his family a wave before leaving for work at CFB Trenton. Middle left: Brown finishes taping walls for painting during storytime with his family.

Bottom left: The whole family enjoys a warm autumn day raking leaves and twigs outside their Trenton home.

Bottom right: Brown scoops up his two children outside their Trenton home. Brown, 28, has been a member of the military for 12 years.

