

INFOCUS

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Melissa Murray

Corp. James Brown and his wife, Elizabeth Lougheed-Brown, have fun playing with their daughter Clara, 19 months, outside their Trenton home.

This week INFOCUS ...



Page 1
Protecting the Home
Front



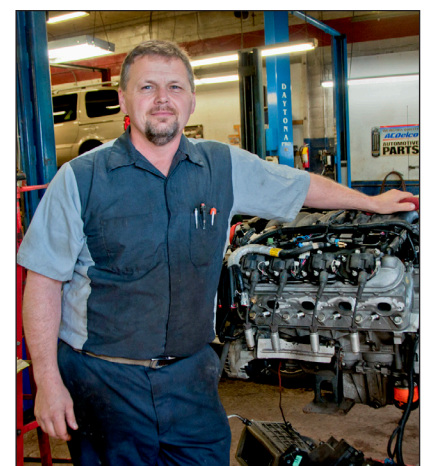
Page 2
Newborn



Page 3
Stronger Together



Page 4
Stuck



Page 5
The Family Fix



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.





A newborn calf attempts to take its first steps.



Bruce and Peter Stewart inspect a newborn calf.



Bruce Stewart pulls a calf from its mother during a birth at Stirlane Farm in Brighton on Nov. 5, 2011. Pulling the calf minimizes the pain the mother feels during the birth.

Newborn

Story and photos by Dan Pearce

Dairy farmer Bruce Stewart calls and urges me to hurry to Stirlane Farm as quick as I can. It's a 45-minute drive on the best of days.

Several months ago, I followed Stewart around his farm, documenting the day-to-day life of a dairy farmer.

As he showed me the calves, some of which have only been alive for a week or two, he sees my eyes light up, and he smiles. He knows what I'm about to ask.

"How often are new calves born and how far in advance do you know?" I say.

Having been a dairy farmer for over 20 years, the birth of a calf is hardly a new experience for Stewart. In fact, "calving" is almost a weekly event.

Even armed with this experience, predicting the time a calf will give birth is still very much a guessing game.

"It's not an exact science," he says. "We can try and predict

the day, but even if we get it right, it's almost impossible to narrow it down to a specific time."

Undeterred, I assure Stewart that he can call me anytime, day or night. We exchanged cellphone numbers.

Several months later, I've all but given up on getting that call, but early on a Saturday morning, my cellphone's buzz raises me from a dead sleep.

"Still interested in getting some pictures of a calf birth? You better get here quick," Stewart says.

"I can be there in 30 minutes," I reply.

The farm draws closer and just as I begin to spot it far in the horizon, I get another call.

"The head and feet are out, how far away are you?" Stewart asks.

"I can see the barn. I'll be there in two minutes," I reply.

As I pull into the driveway, I begin reaching behind me to

find a lens, any lens.

I jump out of my truck and rush through the barn entrance. Stewart is waiting patiently, leaning up against a door jam.

"She's in the next room. You have to be careful and approach her slowly. She's easily startled," he says.

He opens the door and we enter slowly. She lies uneasily on her side in the Stirlane Farm milking parlour. She is in the latter stages of calf birth.

Stewart approaches the cow, careful not to upset the labouring mother. He speaks to the cow, and assures her repeatedly, "Everything is fine. You'll be okay."

All but the head and front legs are still inside the mother. Stewart wraps chains around the baby calf's front legs and looks at me.

"Are you ready?" Stewart asks.



A mother and a barn cat watch over a calf as Stewart feeds it shortly after birth. The newborn is separated from its mother within hours.



Bruce (left) and Peter Stewart leave their barn after overseeing the birth of a calf.



Ron Hylton checks the time as he and his wife, Mary-Ann, make supper together in their home at Emmanuel Residences. Because of arthritis in her knees, Mary-Ann spends most of her time in her armchair and will prepare food there, while her husband does the actual cooking or baking and cleaning.



Mary-Ann Hylton chops up some vegetables with a bit of help from her husband, Ron.

Stronger Together

Mary-Ann Hylton patiently waits inside the van while her husband, Ron, goes outside to scrape down the icy windows, starting with the side windows before finally going to the front. Settling into the driver's seat, Ron starts the van, turning out of the parking lot and on to the street. Unless the weather is much worse, going to the Zellers restaurant for the early bird special is a daily routine for the couple. It's not just Zellers that's the routine; it's how they get to a place that repeats itself.

Ron's job is to load and unload the wheelchair in and out of their vehicle, and for Mary-Ann, it's a painful and long process to get in and out of her chair. Having had arthritis in her knees since she was 40 years old, she started using the wheelchair around 10 years ago.

At home around suppertime, Mary-Ann is comfortably seated in a big armchair, her foot propped up on a stool close beside the chair. In front of her is a tall, stable tray, which eventually becomes covered in a cutting board and various vegetables. "Should I just cook the beets and potatoes together?" Ron asks, and is responded to with a curt, "No." His wife is still very much in control of which vegetables are cooked and for how long.

Once Mary-Ann finished with her chopping, Ron takes the food to do the various cooking and boiling chores and taking things in and out of the oven. "Ron does the preparing of the meals," Mary-Ann explains. "I can't cook around there, or I'll burn myself."

Married for 57 years, in the past few years, Mary-Ann has found herself depending on her husband for a lot more. "If anything happens to him, I guess we end up in a nursing home," Mary-Ann says quietly.

She is always very patient while she waits for him to grab things off of the shelf at the store, or while giving instructions on where she wants something placed or how she wants something cooked. Ron does everything he can for his wife without a second thought or complaint, quietly and lovingly. He never talks about it - he just does it. It seems as natural to him as breathing.

He can only lightheartedly laugh with Mary-Ann about how he takes care of her, "Yeah, the pay's not so good!"



Ron Hylton scrapes the window of his van in preparation to go to the Zellers Restaurant for breakfast.



Ron and Mary-Ann Hylton are served their breakfast at the Zellers Restaurant.



Ron Hylton selects a box of crackers for his wife, Mary-Ann, as she is unable to select grocery items from her wheelchair.



STUCK

Life wasn't always this way for Sherri and Garry Reid. The couple met 27 years ago in Trenton where they both worked together as security guards. Ten years ago, Garry's health started to take a toll. Garry and Sherri were both living with his mother when the symptoms of diabetes Type 2 became apparent.

"Ma was cutting my toe nails with a pair of scissors," begins Garry. "She was cutting too close to the skin, and the cut led to an infection," Sherri explains.

"My toes then started breaking one by one," says Garry. "I couldn't walk. It started with my big toe, then the third, fourth and fifth. I was in the hospital a fair share."

Eventually Garry had all the toes on his one foot amputated and then three months later, the toes on his left foot "started to act up," as Garry puts it.

Diabetes affects the circulation of blood through insulin. Diabetes is caused by an inability to produce or use insulin. The lack of insulin used to break down glucose (sugar) leads to a build-up of glucose in the blood (hyperglycemia) and leads to complications like poor circulation. It's like the glucose makes the blood more "sticky" and thickens the inner lining of blood vessels.

The hands and feet are usually the first places to be affected since they are furthest away from the heart. The lack of blood circulation to Garry's feet made it more difficult for his body to heal the cuts on his toes.

On Nov. 6, 2001, Garry was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. The next summer, Garry was informed by his doctors that he would have to have his right leg amputated.

"It was like a nightmare. Sherri thought I was joking," says Garry. "Diabetes is one of the worst problems in North America," says holistic nutritionist Ella Markan.

"There is some awareness that people have about it, but there is little understanding what it is. Therefore, I think the problem is still on the rise and is going to get worse," explains Markan.

"About 80 per cent of people with diabetes are Type 2 which is completely preventable or curable. It is so rampant because we have pretty much raped our food."

After 10 years of living with his amputation, Garry has learned to adapt to his condition. However, Garry did not monitor his diabetic condition, and once again, he was admitted into the hospital -- this time to have his left leg amputated.

"Then I had to say goodbye to that leg," Garry was in the hospital for two months recovering from his amputation.

Twice a day, Garry takes metformin for his diabetes as well as two insulin injections. Sherri also has diabetes, but she has Type 1.

"We have had a lot of setbacks. I lost my job, a new car, the capability of working, and then I had to stay at home to be a couch potato," says Garry.

Garry lost his ability to work and is now compensated by Ontario Disability. This has put Sherri out of work as well because you cannot earn more income than you receive from disability.

"If you get caught working, you have to pay back," says Garry. "If I get caught again, we will lose disability," says Sherri.



Top: Garry Reid takes an insulin injection twice a day.

Counterclockwise: Garry Reid shows the scars on his legs where he was amputated just below the knees. "Pills didn't put me to sleep during my surgery for my second leg, so I watched the whole thing," says Reid.



Next: Ginger is one of the two cats that belong to Garry and Sherri Reid. The Reid's cats are pretty much family members and according to Garry, "When you're up or down, they always love you."

Bottom: Garry and Sherri Reid moved into their two-storey home 10 years ago after Garry had his right leg amputated after his diabetes spiraled out of control. Garry sleeps in their living room on the couch since the one bedroom in their home is upstairs.



Photo and Story By Brynn Campbell



Located at 112 Station St., Allan's Auto Repair has been called one of the best auto repair shops in Quinte.



One of Allan's most dedicated workers, his brother, 50-year-old Mark Woodley.



Chris Hebden takes a moment break before having to mend a wire in an automobile.

THE FAMILY FIX

Story and photos by Rachel Cohen

It's 5 a.m. on Nov. 11, 2011. As the sun begins to rise over Belleville, 55-year-old Allan Woodley opens up the doors to his locally owned family business, which has been running for over 25 years. Located at 112 Station St., Allan's Auto Repair is recognized as one of the best auto repair shops in Quinte.

"It's something my father and I always spoke about-- that one day I would open up my very own auto repair shop," Allan says.

Allan, who grew up in Belleville, knows more about cars than anything else, he admits. As time goes by, business keeps getting better and better.

The area near the repair shop was bustling with traffic as more than 1,000 Belleville residents made their way to the service at Memorial Park on Station Street for Remembrance Day.

"We remember, and our thoughts of past sacrifice are in our hearts, but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done at the shop," Allan said.

As he turns on the lights in the office, his workers begin to arrive. The majority of the men who work in the shop are on apprenticeship through Loyalist College. One of Allan's most dedicated workers is his brother, 50-year-old Mark Woodley, who has been working with Allan ever since the shop's opening.

"It was always just Allan and I, we did everything together, and eventually that meant getting our hands dirty with oil and fuel," Mark says.

The family-owned auto repair shop was humming with customers as early as 7 a.m. as people eagerly waited in line to drop off their vehicles.

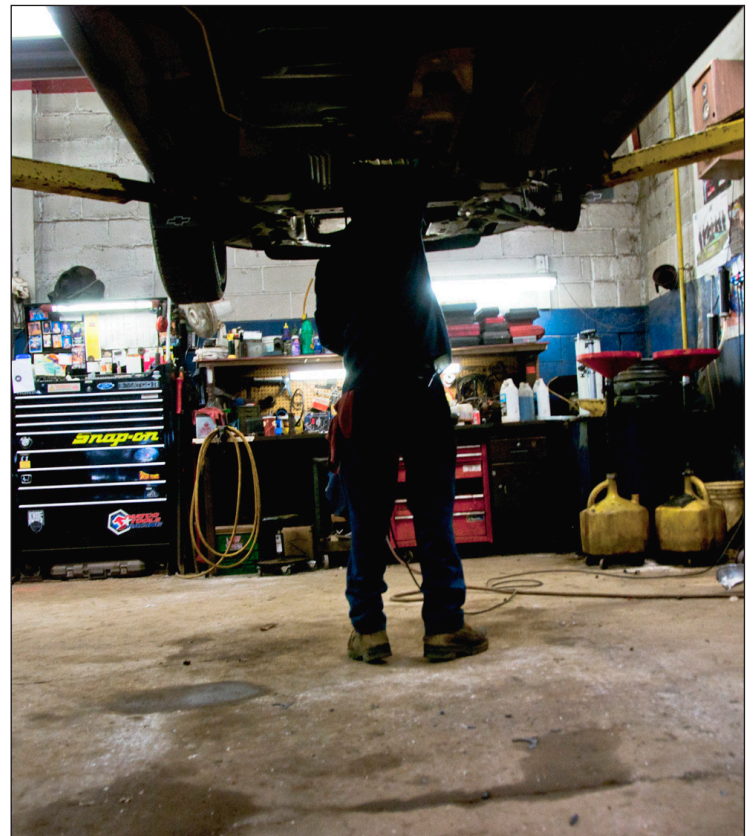
"People aren't buying new cars as often," Allan says. "Cars are a lot more complicated than they used to be, and people can't fix them."

The smell of burnt tires pierces through the crisp winter air. Allan's staff does not stop working until people are back on the road with their vehicles. More and more people are relying on local auto repair shops that are well established, and used car lots have seen growth.

"The shop checks and repairs brakes, does oil changes, tune-ups, belts, hoses, radiators and windows, and does engine diagnostics for foreign and domestic cars," Allan says. "Also available are alternator, starter, fuel pump, clutch and transmission services."

Oil stained everything including Woodley's newly washed blue overalls. His pale hands and fingers are taped and withered from his constant use of tools. After a long day's work, Allan has shown true dedication.

"In these tough economic times, the citizens of our area need a mechanic they can trust and afford," Allan said.



Kyle Chambers has been working at Allan's Auto Repair since 2004.



After a long day's work, Allan's taped and withered hands stained in car oil show no sign of being tired. "I love shaking my customer's hand knowing I have done my job right."