

2016

Grow community with us. | 401 6th Ave. N. Virginia, MN 55792

**FREE**  
**CLASSIFIEDS**  
441<sup>st</sup> Edition

ation Network™

own**FOCUS**.us

Locally Owned



DOWNLOAD

FREE APP

**DISCOVER MN**

YOUR CONNECTION TO MN BUSINESSES



## The Mississippi, museums and more **A Field of Dreams visit**

By Cindy Kujala | p. 4

## The art of storytelling **Grandpa's majestic pine**

By Kirsten Reichel | p. 7

## Got company? **Volunteer at a Habitat build**

By Mariah Peterson | p. 10

## Lost in Itasca County **A lake, 40-acres and gold**

By Jody Hane | p. 27

**GE**  
**HOME**  
ng Friends™

Virginia  
741-1481  
Toll Free  
1-866-875-5011  
Hibbing  
263-3276

SERVICE SINCE 1911

**BUY OF THE WEEK**

**2016 CHEVROLET CRUZE LT**

MSRP ..... \$20,200

**SALE PRICE**

**\$17,999\***

#G7318377



**IRON TRAIL MOTORS**

**218-741-2355**

\*Plus tax, title, license, \$75 doc fee, on approved credit. All values in dollars.

# Don't know what to do when relatives come to visit? VOLUNTEER!

IRON RANGE – When relatives come to visit there are always some essential questions that need to be answered. Who is coming? When are they arriving? When are they leaving? Where is everyone going to sleep? What will we eat? And, of course, what are we going to do when they are here?

These were the questions my husband Josh and I had to answer when we invited 14 of our relatives to stay with us for a weekend. The 14 relatives included two-year-old twins and a four-year-old girl. I knew we had to find activities to get us out of the house as much as possible. I looked at the wolf center and the Sudan Mine tours, both of which would cost money and with 16 people it would add up quickly. I knew we would go out to The Ridge to hike and, of course, we would canoe and kayak on the lake by our house. But what else?

Josh and I are pretty active in helping North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity raise money for building affordable homes by participating in the Habitat 500 bike ride, but we haven't been able to actually build on the homes a lot. So when we got an email from Susan Garrett, Habitat's volunteer coordinator, asking for volunteers on the same weekend our family was coming up, something amazing happened.

I will admit my first thought was "Sorry! We have family up that weekend and we are going to be super busy already." Then my husband said, "Well, we need something for everyone to do, so why don't we take the family to the Habitat house and help build?" I went back and forth for a while on this; it would be kind of fun, but would that be something my family would want to do? I finally called my mom (of course) and asked what she thought. We eventually decided that, yeah, this could be something fun to do with the family.

Once everyone was at our house we figured out who wanted to volunteer to build and who was going to stay home. We ended up with a group of eight who headed over to the Habitat build site in Aurora. As a plus, a neighbor at the build site (Bruce, nicest gentleman you will ever meet) cooked us lunch that day. Awesome!

We had a wide variety of people with us that morning. Both my dad and brothers have experience in home construction, but my brother's girlfriend, my uncle, and one of my cousins had little to none. The Habitat crew at the build site did a great job teaching everyone how use the tools and finding jobs for everyone to do. My uncle admitted to me that he was not sure if he was going to enjoy the experience before we got there, but afterwards he said he had a great time helping out and meeting new people.

We spent the morning roofing and laying shingles. Everyone had a job they were comfortable with, either on the roof or on the ground. Lunch was delicious and we decided to stay a little bit longer so we could get the job to a stopping point.

At the end of the day, this experience was amazing. Too often we get wrapped up in thinking about ourselves. "If it doesn't benefit me, then forget it." This experience was a great way to break that thought-process and do something good for our community. I know the next time we have family up we will look to see if there is a Habitat house being built for us to work on. It got us out of the house and we were working together to support a wonderful family in need! Why would you not do this?

*Mariah Peterson and her husband Josh Peterson live in Gilbert, MN.*



Josh and Mariah Peterson of Gilbert are Habitat 500 riders and supporters. Submitted photo.

## **A note from North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity**

North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity is deeply grateful for friends and supporters like the Petersons. Our volunteers not only enjoy that wonderful feeling of helping others help themselves, but they learn new skills and deepen relationships with the groups and individuals with whom they volunteer.

Do you have a group, organization or family that would enjoy a new experience? Contact North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity today and let us know when you can come and help build homes, communities, and hope while growing closer as a group!

Applications are currently being accepted for the affordable housing program in Hibbing, Chisholm and the Quad Cities. Families qualify to work with Habitat to build their home based on their need for housing, their ability to pay Habitat's affordable mortgage, and their willingness to be a partner in the home building process. To apply give Marnie Maki, Habitat's family services specialist, a call at the Habitat office: 866-749-8910.

Information is also available at [www.nslchfh.org](http://www.nslchfh.org).