



Habitat 500 Bike Ride

Fundraiser for North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity



Support a Rider . . .

. . . pave the way to a better life!



North St. Louis County
Habitat
for Humanity®

Seeking to put God's love into action,
Habitat for Humanity brings people
together to build homes,
communities and hope.

**Inside, meet
our 2014
families and
the riders
who will
bike 500
miles this
July to raise
money and
awareness
for
Habitat!**

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Office: 218-749-8910
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Dear Friend of Habitat,

Sometimes it is hard for us to think of the world from a child's point of view. About a month ago, we finished selecting all of the five Habitat partner families for our 2014 building season. With your help, we will make a difference in these families lives this year. I met with each family to go through our orientation to the program. Though I have seen it many times in my tenure at North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity, I don't get tired of seeing the excitement and relief in a parent's eyes when they realize that the help that you provide through the Habitat for Humanity home building program is real! They will be able to get out of the cycle of renting one substandard and unaffordable apartment after another. They will be able to afford important things such as better food, clothes and education supplies for their children. Often what I see in the eyes of the parents of our partner families in those first initial visits is hope. This newsletter is about that hope, it is about our mission of putting God's love into action to bring you together with these families to build not only homes, but community and hope in their lives. You are the difference, you are that person who says, "I care and I will help you help your family."

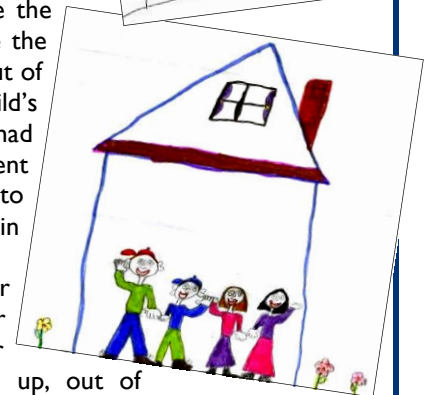
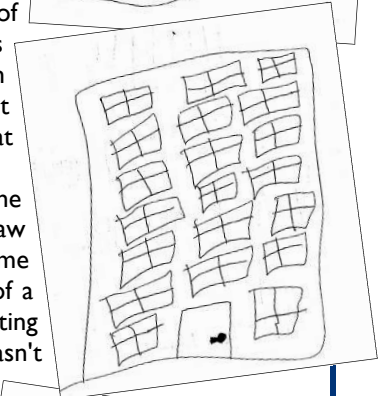
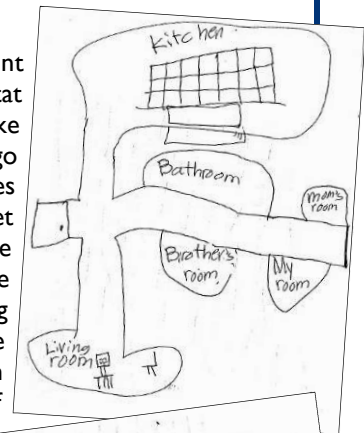
One of our partner family's brought their young daughter into the orientation meeting. I gave the child a piece of paper and asked her to draw me a picture of a house. I was stumped as I looked over from time to time to see the above picture developing. It turns out that her perspective of a house was a house plan. She was planning her future house! It is interesting to see that the kitchen and bathroom are very important to a child! It wasn't until after they left that I happened to turn the page over to see the second picture. (center right) Again, it took me a while to figure out the drawing out. "What a strange house, this child must like looking out of windows," I thought. Then it dawned on me, this was the child's current house, an apartment building that her mom and dad had described as an unsafe environment for their child. My commitment to Habitat's mission was renewed right then. I am so grateful to partner with you to be the solution for these families challenges in finding simple, decent and affordable homes to live in!

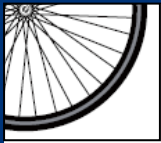
Please take a moment to "see" these five families and their challenges from a new perspective. They have come far in their journey of searching for a solution to their situations to find your kind and generous heart; a heart willing to give them a hand up, out of substandard housing, and into a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Thank you for your generous support. You are making the last picture on this page a reality!

Sincerely,

Nathan Thompson, Executive Director





A Habitat home, it's about . . .

The Kinnunen family, Tower • Riders: Deb Hultman, Caroline Owens, Dave Bergum

Habitat address:
205 2nd St N. Tower
Ground Breaking:
Sunday, June 1st 2:00pm

Debbie Hultman, Dave Bergum and Caroline Owens know exactly why they are riding 500 miles during one week in the middle of July. They know they are helping Jessica Kinnunen move into her own home. But this is about more than home ownership: it's about a family moving to a safe neighborhood in Tower, Minnesota, where nine year old Jerry will be able to play in his backyard; it's a huge move toward security, both physical and economic; it's about stability, which is so important to all of us, but especially important to a nine year old boy; it's about having adequate living space, and; it's about the opportunity to thrive.

Jessica heard about Habitat for Humanity from her grandmother.

She was skeptical about the program, since she has experienced many disappointments in her lifetime. She thought the program was just too good to be true. However, her grandmother kept insisting she apply, and she finally did. She was amazed that she kept progressing through each step of the application process. She still finds it hard to believe that she will soon own her own home. This has been a dream of hers for a long time, and she had always considered it just a dream. Now it is moving closer to a reality. Her dream includes a backyard, a place to make repairs on her car, and possibly a barbeque.

Jerry is completing the fourth grade. He is looking forward to attending Tower Elementary School next year, and is excited about walking to school. He is a thoughtful, caring and friendly young man, with a warm smile. He loves his two cats, Rosie and Sly.

The money donated for Jessica and Jerry's home will be used to purchase materials, while volunteers will provide the labor. Jessica is anxious to begin building her home. She has an aptitude for repairing things and likes working with her hands; she looks forward to learning new skills

while working on her house.

We all make a difference by what we do. Debbie, Dave and Caroline are very fortunate to know the



Above: Riders Caroline Owens, Deb Hultman and Dave Bergum

impact that raising money for this Habitat home will have. Jessica's dream of home ownership, including the security and well being of her son, will become a reality. Jerry and Jessica will be able to take advantage of the opportunities enjoyed by all who live in a safe, decent and affordable home.



Above left: Jessica Kinnunen and her son Jerry.
Right: Caroline Owens and Deb Hultman

Thrivent Builds partnership in Virginia!

The Thompson England Family, Virginia •
Riders: Greg Krog, Rev. Brian Birk

Habitat address:
312 5th Ave N. Virginia
Ground Breaking: July 27th
Sunday, at 2:00 PM



to have their own home. They tried many times to qualify for a home loan and kept receiving the same discharging answer, NO!, until they found out about the Habitat program and finally received a YES! Finally, there was someone who was interested in supporting them in their quest to supply a simple, decent and affordable home for their family. Thanks Habitat!

Their present apartment has limited space for storage making for very cramped for living. They are very much looking forward to having more living space and a storage shed. Amy is excited purchase more organically grown groceries for her family at the co-op nearby. She has already helped with construction on the new Habitat office in Mt. Iron and Thor is looking forward to building on his own home.

Amy and Thor's home is being built in partnership with a Thrivent Financial grant called Thrivent Builds. This grant will pay for 50% of the cost of the home and local Thrivent Members have committed to raise another 10% towards the cost of the home. Brian, myself and others will be riding in the HFH 500, July 13-19, to help raise these funds for this family's home. Please support us as we raise funds and ride our bikes 500 miles to help build a home with the Thompson England family.

There is also another great Thrivent option to support Habitat for all you Thrivent Financial

members. North St. Louis County Habitat is on the **Thrivent Choice Dollars** list. You can choose to support this great organization and the work they do to help our neighbors in need into affordable homes by designating your Thrivent Choice dollars. If you have any questions on how to do that please call the Habitat office at 218-749-8910 and ask for Tom Long for more information.

Sincerely,

Greg Krog
Habitat board member
Thrivent Financial Representative in
Virginia, MN



Above: Riders Greg Krog and Rev. Brian Birk

Hello, Rev. Brian Birk and I are riding this year to support the Thompson family as they work with Thrivent Builds to construct their home in Virginia.

Amy England-Thompson and Thor Thompson are anxious to begin working on their Habitat for Humanity home. Their home will be within site of Bailey's lake in Virginia and half a block from the Natural Harvest Food Store. Amy and Thor are very excited to have the chance



Above left: Riders Greg Krog (back), Rev. Brian Birk, (front)
Above right: Thor Thompson, Amy England Thompson, Lynette Pearson (8), Tyler Thompson (7), Zoe Thompson (5), Alric England (2)



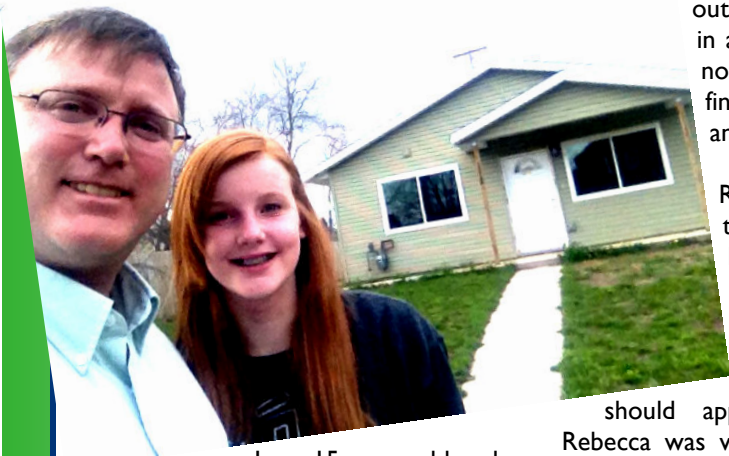


God is working in this organization!

The Robinson Family, Hibbing • Riders: Margie and Nathan Thompson

Habitat address:
1212 E. 13th St. Hibbing
Dedication: July-August

Hi, I am Marjorie Thompson, and yes, that's me and my dad in the "selfie" in front of the Robinson's house.



I am 15 years old and I am riding the Habitat 500 for my 3rd year with my dad, Nathan Thompson. We ride the Habitat 500 to raise money for people who need affordable housing. Last year, it was a great experience to ride the bike ride, raise funds for families and complete my first century ride. A century ride is a 100 mile bike ride in one day. It took us 10 hours but we made it and it was an amazing experience!

This year we are specifically raising money for the home for Rebecca Robinson and her family. Rebecca works at a salon, while being a mom. Rebecca enjoys seeing her kids grow up and seeing the little bits of herself in them. She has three kids: a 21 year old boy, and two girls that are 15 and 12. Rebecca and her family love watching movies and playing video games in their Hibbing apartment.

Their apartment is a very

old, two story side by side duplex that they rent from a landlord. The apartment isn't in great shape; it's slanted and has cracks in the walls. Also, there are electrical issues that are not up to code so they cannot get renters' insurance. They were going to have to move out of their apartment in a year or so and did not want to have to find a new apartment and landlord.

Rebecca heard about the Habitat for Humanity program from her older sister. Her sister called her up and told her she really should apply for a house.

Rebecca was very hesitant at first because owning a house is a whole different level of responsibility than her apartment. After her sister spoke to her, she kept seeing Habitat for Humanity everywhere she turned and so decided to just put her trust in God and sent in her application.

When Rebecca got the call that she had been selected for a Habitat house she panicked a little. Luckily she has a lot of church and family support and Habitat to help her make this transition! In Rebecca's old apartment she couldn't renovate or change anything so she and her family are excited for a new home where they can make it their own style with paint, flooring and other decorative choices. Rebecca is doing a lot of her Habitat sweat equity work on other Habitat projects including the new Habitat office as well as her own home. Her new Habitat home in Hibbing is a "Recycle Home". A home which Habitat reacquired and is now fixing

up to sell to a new partner family. Rebecca and volunteers are working to repaint and put in new trim and floors. She can't wait until her home is completed in July or August.

She would like to give a huge thanks to all the Habitat supporters and volunteers who are making an affordable home a reality for her and her kids. She says you are super supportive and helpful! She can really see God working in this organization.

Everyone deserves a decent place to call home that they can afford and that is what Habitat is all about. Please help us raise money for Rebecca and her family's home and for many other families just like her that need our help.

Thanks,

Margie Thompson
Habitat 500 rider
Soon to be 10th Grader
Daughter to North St. Louis
County Habitat for Humanity's
executive director



Above: Rebecca Robinson and family

A parents dream: to have stability.

The Tupa Family, Hibbing • Riders: John and Deb Filander



**Habitat address:
1216 15th Ave E. Hibbing
Ground Breaking: September**

April Tupa and her daughters, Aaliyah, 10, and Carly, 7, are eagerly looking forward to the groundbreaking of their Habitat for Humanity home in September.

The Tupa's home will be built in partnership with the Chisholm and Hibbing High Schools and the Hibbing Community College's Electrical program. Through the Applied Learning Institute, these schools will be able to make the Tupa home their class room for the 2014—2015 school year. This enables the teachers to teach students about home construction and electrical systems in an actual construction site vs. just building a shed or a fish house at the school shop. Students also get to learn about Habitat for Humanity, and the life changing work that we do, as they learn. Many times the students come back as volunteers to keep applying what they have learned: home construction and making a difference in your community through volunteering!

April grew up in Chisholm, and graduated from high school in 2002. She works two jobs, one as a caregiver for the disabled at the Range Center, and also as a cashier at a convenience store in Hibbing. April also suffers from MS, having been diagnosed at the age of 17, which complicates life's challenges as a single parent. April's dream for her life and her children is to stabilize their living situation. She has been forced to move four times in the last three years! They have lived with friends, relatives and now rent a small four room (not bedrooms just four rooms) home in Kelly Lake, MN.

This past winter's extremely cold temperatures and their present rental's poor windows and inadequate insulation resulted in \$5,000 in fuel bills last winter. The new Habitat home for the Tupa's will be located in the Brooklyn neighborhood area of Hibbing. The "school build" will mean a completion date of late May of 2015. Though there is one more winter to go through in her apartment, April is looking forward to the energy efficiency that a Habitat home will soon provide. April is also looking forward to the stability of not having to move so that her daughters can start participating in school activities such as swimming and basketball.

Deb and I will be blessed when we are able to attend the Tupa's home ground breaking



Above: April Tupa and her two daughters, Aaliyah and Carly

this September and are especially excited for the new life that they will enjoy in their Habitat home starting next summer.

Thank you for your support in helping us raise funds for this family. With your help we will be able to provide April, Aaliyah and Carly with the stability, sustainability and comfort of a home that they can afford to live in, even when Northern Minnesota brings on the extreme winter temperatures.

Sincerely,

Deb and John Filander



Above: Riders Deb and John Filander, Mt. Iron



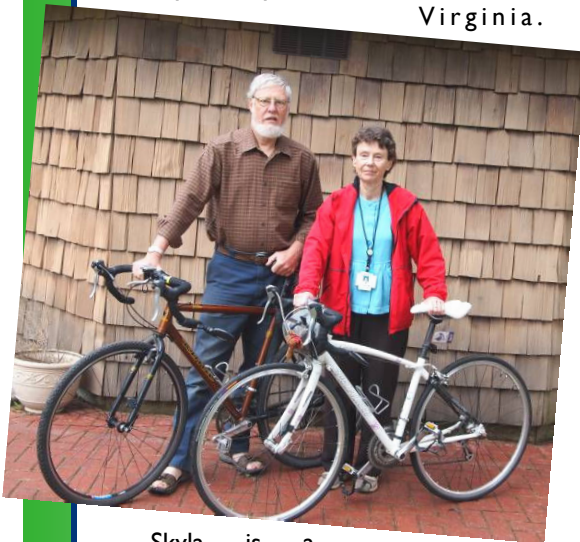


The excitement “is building” with Habitat!

The Wallace Home • Riders: Doug and Christy Gettle

Habitat address:
Mineral Ave, Mt. Iron
Ground Breaking: September

Christy and Doug Gettle will be riding this year for Melissa Wallace. Melissa and her three children, Skyla, Aryona, and Donald live in Virginia.



Skyla is a freshman and excited about getting her driver’s license this next year. She loves dancing and is excited about having a shower in her new home. Aryona is the middle child and just turned 13. Her passion is sports and she is excited about having a large yard of her own. Donald is 11 and he is excited about having a yard to mow. Melissa, after the ice age winter we have just gone through, is excited about living in a comfortable home that is NOT COLD and being faced with \$800 utility bills in the winter.

At the beginning of each Habitat 500 ride, riders are reminded that this is a ride—not a race! Pace yourself and enjoy the ride. For us it is an endurance marathon but by taking one day at a time, even one mile at a time it is easily doable. Melissa’s journey with Habitat for Humanity has also been a long ride. A co-worker suggested that she

apply for a Habitat house five years ago. A year later she finally picked up an application but never finished filling it out. A third time, a friend actually helped her finish filling out the application and sent it in. She was astonished at how fast her application was processed but then disappointed to hear that her application was denied. Again, at the urging of others, she resubmitted her application after fixing some issues with debt. She was presented at the March board meeting and approved to begin building this fall on a lot in Mt. Iron. Her perseverance paid off but more than that, the encouragement of friends and family was what Melissa needed to get to this **point**.

This brings up a **point** that we would like to make to you, our Habitat supporters. There are many families, our neighbors, who need affordable homes and are also in need of some encouragement from you, their friends, family, and co-workers to take that step of courage and apply. North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity is currently accepting applications for homes that will be starting this time next year. You could be the person who gets a deserving family on the road to a home which meets their needs and helps stabilize their life!

Melissa works two jobs—the second one pretty much to pay for heat and utilities for the old house she is renting. She works as a primary care attendant and has noticed that not only are her clients cognizant of her mood and energy level but that they feed off of it. If she is tired or crabby, they are tired or crabby. In the same way, she sensed the enthusiasm of Habitat’s staff and volunteers. Their excitement about someone that they don’t even know getting a new

home is contagious and she is excited! Pace yourself, Melissa. This next year of building will be exciting but also a long haul. Be encouraged by your new Habitat family of volunteers and feed off their excitement.

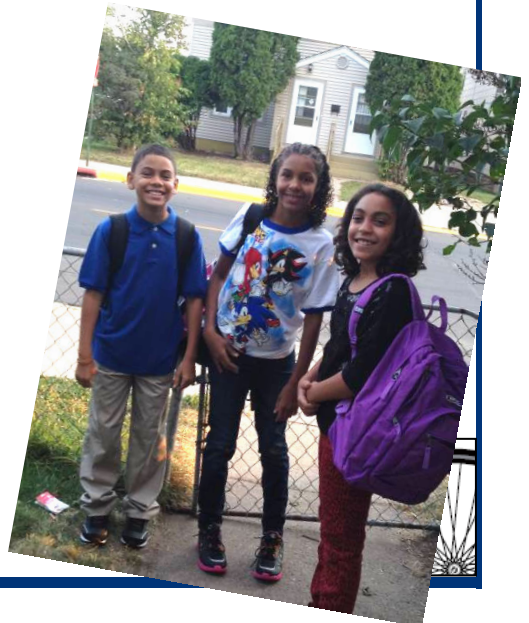
Thank you for your support! The excitement is building with Habitat and you are certainly making that happen with your kind generosity.

Sincerely,
Doug and Christy Gettle,
Virginia, MN



Above: Melissa Wallace with Donald and Aryona

Below: Donald, Skyla and Aryona



To live and leave a legacy...



I ran across a definition of "Hospitality" that I like: it is "To share what God has provided for you". It is so simple and such a powerful statement. I sometimes think of hospitality as entertaining, or giving your best maybe even above your normal means, but this new definition frees me to share with others based on God's blessing to me. What a wonderful picture of what it means to live in the presence of God and what a legacy to build into the fabric of our life.

My most vivid memory of my mother is the "open table" she practiced: there was always room at the table for another person. I don't know how she stretched the meals far enough sometimes because we were not people of much means but it never bothered her if we brought someone home for supper or if family and friends dropped in, there was always room. She left me a legacy of hospitality.

As I reflect on what type of legacy I am leaving, I find it troubling to understand why I sometimes think of being generous as for when I have more. If I am going to leave a legacy of generosity I need to live it today and tomorrow, and make it a part of my life that my children, family and friends can see. When I think of the definition of hospitality, it frees me to apply it to so many areas of our life.

What legacy are you leaving?

We know you get asked to give to Habitat and many other organizations with great passion and frequency, but it is how you respond that will be

your legacy to family and friends. Do they see your value of helping others by giving a gift to help break the cycle of sub-standard housing and giving them a 'hand up' into affordable housing?

Sometimes we do all we can and still want to do more. Leaving a "Legacy" gift can be another way of writing your own legacy that you leave when your earthly days are complete. We ask you to consider a gift to Habitat now, but we want to ask you to consider a legacy gift that will demonstrate your caring long into the future.

Leaving an inheritance to your children and family is importance to all of us, but it will make a lasting legacy when you value the work of Habitat for Humanity and include us in your estate planning. Your children, grandchildren and extended family and friends will take notice of your gift to Habitat, it will complete your legacy of caring and generosity and demonstrate what you want to pass on to them, your legacy.

Legacy gifts can take many forms and we want to help you find the one that will work best for you. Some of the simplest ways are to adjust your Will and Testament to include North St. Louis Habitat for Humanity as an organization you want to give a portion of your estate to, or make Habitat a beneficiary in your Life Insurance, Retirement Savings or

other financial resources you will leave to those you value. There are more complicated ways like Charitable Remainder Trusts and other instruments that Habitat for Humanity International has the expertise to prepare and administer that will provide a legacy gift for North St. Louis County Habitat's work.

If you have already included North St. Louis County Habitat for Humanity in your estate planning would you tell us about it so we can thank you and hear your story?

If you have questions or want help in how to make a Legacy gift to Habitat, please call us, we will be happy to help.

Thank you for valuing the work of Habitat and please take time today to include us as you build your legacy.

Thank You!

Tom Long
Resource Development
Manager



Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his presence continually.

-1 Chronicles 16:11

WEBSITE AND EMAIL

Track the progress of this year's projects and find when and where volunteers are needed by visiting our website:



www.nslchfh.org

Or feel free to call us for the latest volunteer opportunities:

(866)749-8910

If you would like to receive email updates on volunteer opportunities and events please send us an email with that request to:

habitat@nslchfh.org

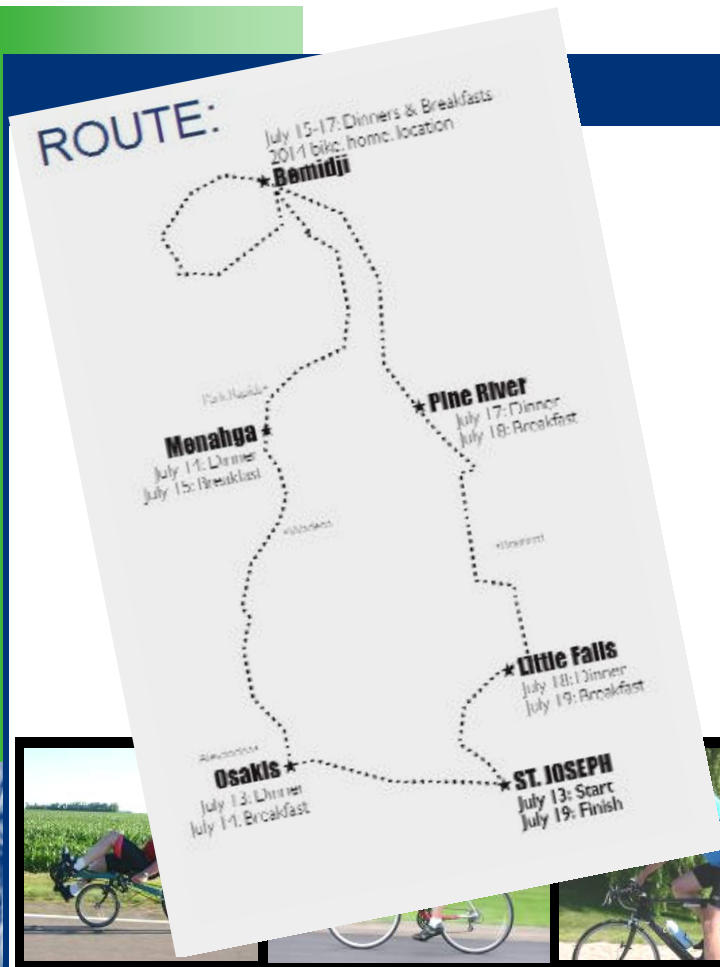
Mission:

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.



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RIDING TO BUILD A CYCLE OF HOPE!

This July 13th –19th, eleven cyclists will embark on a 500 mile journey to raise money for Habitat for Humanity homes. To truly come to understand the heart and mission of Habitat for Humanity, they have met with Habitat’s 2014 partner families to share and celebrate their Habitat stories.

We invite you into their stories and on their journeys as together we are:

“Building homes and hope in North St. Louis County”.

