MEET THE LOCALS: JERRY AND TORI COVINGTON

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By: Heather Rule

Tucked into the quiet of lakes country, the Covingtons balance a calendar of choir rehearsals and ball games with chickens, gardens, and a community they love. Jerry and Tori Covington lived in Fergus Falls, then moved to rural Underwood about six years ago. Their children attend school, and they work in Fergus Falls. They have four children, the three younger ones still at home, ages 17, 14, and 12. They spend lots of time going to various kids' activities and school functions, including choir, gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, football, track, baseball, and soccer.

The Covingtons said they like interacting with their friends and neighbors.

"We have a little, tight-knit community of people that we hang out with and talk to," Jerry said. "Our kids have just a great place to play outside. They enjoy that."

Jerry is the Operations Manager at Tag-Up in Fergus Falls, meaning he wears a lot of different hats every day. The manufacturing company specializes in sports branding and mainly makes bag tags and locker name plates. Their work is displayed nationwide, from professional sports locker rooms to college stadiums. In January, Jerry and Tag-Up completed their work for all the college football bowl games. Then it was time to transition into work for the upcoming hockey tournaments.

The work is a lot of fun and very interesting, especially with the variety of customer interactions from people across the country, Jerry shared.

Tori works from home in her role with the HR service center for Minnesota State. She's worked for the college for more than 20 years, previously in the fine arts department. She transitioned to a full-time position working with payroll, which has allowed her to work from home since the pandemic.

Jerry is originally from Mississippi. He was in the Air Force for 12 years and eventually landed in Fargo, where he met his future wife through a mutual friend. Tori is originally from Otter Tail County, loves the lakes country, and enjoys the quiet of the rural, non-city area.

"When I was younger, I probably thought I wanted to live in the city," Tori said. "But now, I just like the quietness of it, and everything is laid back."

The family spends lots of time on the lake, plus tending to their garden and chickens on their land. They enjoy dining at local restaurants throughout the county, too. They prefer the rural area to the city.

"It's a good place to raise a family," Jerry said. "We just enjoy it."

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