



Mill Direct News

Living the Log Home Lifestyle

Spring 2022

VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

Up to several weeks ago, we have had a very mild winter. Suddenly, it changed. We are now getting our fair share of winter weather. I'm here sitting at my desk on 2/3/22, tapping out one word at a time, while a real winter storm rages outside.

Winters are always hard on wildlife. We try to feed the birds all winter and most of the summer. The boys put out corn for the deer and other animals. The two winters of 1977/78 and '78/79 were detrimental to a lot of wildlife. As an example it literally wiped out the Quail in our area.

One day in '77, my dad and I went out to the woods with a horse and a sled to get fire wood. The snow was perhaps 20" deep in places. While sawing and loading firewood we noticed several Chickadees scratching around on the freshly cut firewood under the dead bark looking for larvae. We then pried some of the bark off the firewood ourselves and found some of which we held up for the birds. Soon, several came and lit on our hands to eat. One perched atop my cap before landing on my hand. While it was exciting for us humans to experience this, it was a matter of life or death for these small birds.

Last night after us owners deliberated for a while we made the decision to go ahead with Log Cabin Days again this year. The intent is to have it every year again going forward instead of every other year. The tentative date is September 16 & 17. Hope to see many of you there!

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Designing the Interior of Your Home

- by Jara Thomas

Building the log home of your dreams? Your building plans are finalized and now it's time to start selecting your interior elements and finishes! Where do you start? So many decisions to be made: painted or stained cabinets, wood or tile flooring, granite or quartz countertops? With so many options available it's easy to get overwhelmed. First, take a deep breath and remember this can be a fun and exciting process. You just need a plan!

As a general rule of thumb, I prefer to start with the heart of the home, the kitchen. Start with your kitchen cabinets. There are 2 basic styles of doors to choose from with variations on edging profiles. The first style is a raised panel option (traditional) and the second style is a recessed flat panel (shaker). Next it's time to determine if your cabinets will be stained, painted, or perhaps a combination of the two. You can add a pop of color on the kitchen island while keeping the wall cabinets stained or a neutral paint color.

Once the style and finishes of your kitchen cabinets have been made, it's time to move on to your flooring and countertop options. When considering your flooring options (wood, tile, L.V.T), do your research



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Forest for the Next Generation - by Levi Hochstetler

Sometimes we need to ask ourselves, "The decisions I make today, how will they affect the next generation?" One of the big concerns for all of us should be, "Will there be enough trees left for our grandchildren?" "Will they be able to go to the woods and enjoy hunting, bird watching, camping or going on a picnic?" More importantly, "Will they have the natural resources to buy the wood products we take for granted: homes, cabinets, furniture, flooring, along with countless other items?"

Being in the lumber industry, Hochstetler Log Homes senses the responsibility of doing our part in making sure there will be plenty of forests left for future generations. We perceive the many benefits and impact forests have on our continued well-being.

One, of course, is the ability for our children and grandchildren to continue manufacturing log homes. However, perhaps even more importantly, is the environmental benefit trees have on us.

According to the National Woodlands magazine*, "about half of a trees volume is carbon, as a tree grows it draws carbon dioxide from the air, converting it into a plant tissue and releasing oxygen as a by-product. This means a tree is both a

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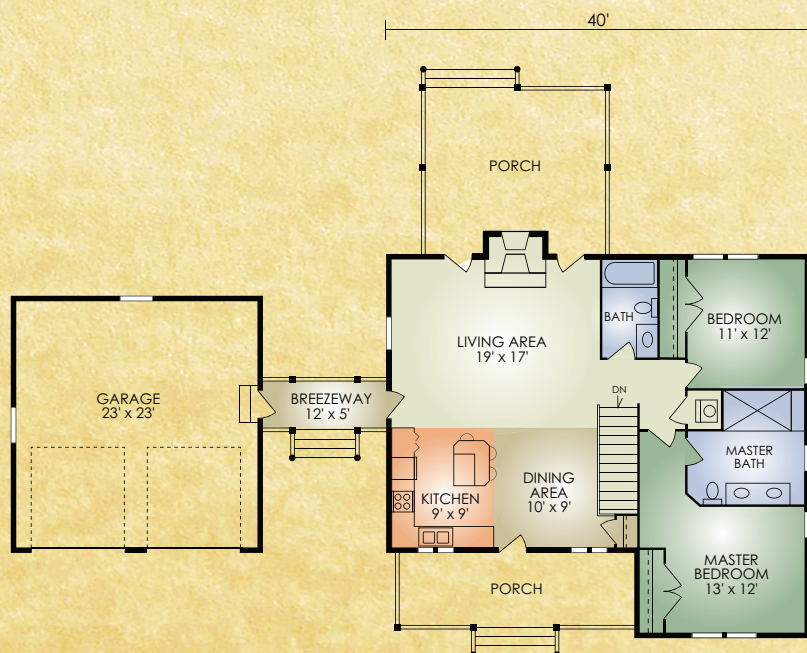
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Cuyahoga

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The Cuyahoga is a 2 bedroom, 2 bath ranch with the ambiance that has made log home living so comfortable and relaxing. The open-concept great room has the stone fireplace and timbered ceiling that makes the spacious room so impressive. The kitchen features an island with serving counter and built-in pantry. The master bedroom has a sizable bath with walk-in shower and double sink vanity. The second bedroom also has an adjoining full bath. A 2 car garage and open breezeway complete this plan. The timbered gables, outside fireplace, custom windows and multiple roof lines make this home unique and stunning.



Designing the Interior of Your Home

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and determine which type of flooring suites your budget and lifestyle. Also keep in mind that if you're doing a tile floor that has a lot of variation and movement consider choosing a countertop material that won't compete pattern wise. Or vice versa, if selecting a wood floor, consider choosing a countertop material that does have some variation or "movement".

With some of these main design choices made (cabinets, flooring, countertops) other materials and finishes, such as backsplash tile, wall color, and cabinet hardware options will start to fall into place. However, if your selections aren't coming together like you thought they would and your questioning some of your design choices, consider hiring an interior designer to assist you. That's what we're here for! 🏠

Jara Thomas
Jt Interiors
Jt.interiors17@gmail.com
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CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

“We were very pleased with the whole experience and have recommended you to several people who have stopped to look at the home. Joe, in shipping, was excellent to work with and we appreciated how he was always available for us. Everyone was very kind and helpful through the whole process. We love our home. Thank you.”

-- Millers- Oak Hill, OH

“The entire project went about as smooth as it could go! The entire staff helped us through the process and answered every question we had along the way. The materials were all delivered on time and all the available options let this be our dream home!”

-- Frye- Fredricktown, OH

“Visiting the mill and Log Cabin Days sold us on the people and the process of building a log home. We looked at stick framed 2x6 homes from local builders and decided the cost was worth the log home “Our Last Home”. From start to finish the people at Hochstetler Log Homes were wonderful to work with. Designing with Steve was easy and you could tell he enjoyed his work. This process was a long one for us as my wife was not ready to build another house. Now that we are in, she loves the log home.”

-- Petersens – Ashland, OH



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Vacations ON THE BLUFF

by Nathan Hochstetler



- Photography by Style Life Photography



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When one is looking for that perfect vacation spot (without the crowd) close to Nashville, Tennessee they are sure to find themselves at the Cumberland Plateau. This is where Steve and Becky Brandt were drawn year after year. They enjoyed hiking the many trails in the Cumberland Plateau's area parks. It was the perfect place to unwind from their arduous work as physician and cancer researcher at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. Also, a dream was forming, "Someday we will build a vacation home on one of these bluffs."

After 15 years of keeping their eyes open they finally came to the perfect spot, "Bluff Woods," a gated log home community. Alan and Sherri Jensen started the community in 1998 with only 30 acres. Today, it has grown to 650 acres, including a Hardwood Reserve with a lake and lots of hiking trails located on 350 acres in the center of community. All homes need to be built with logs and the lots are spaced far enough apart to offer privacy to each buyer.

The Brandt's fell in love with log homes while staying in one while on vacation in Oregon. So having only the option of building a log home there did not dissuade them, it was the perfect choice. The lot they chose was on a bluff on the side of a mountain with a million dollar view.

Next, it was time to find a log home manufacturer. Becky did the in-depth research, which came naturally with her background as a cancer scientist. They attended a Log and Timber Home show in Nashville and researched on-line, but

finally the search stopped with a call to Hochstetler's. "The person on the phone was very knowledgeable about their products. But there was no pressure in pushing his own agenda. He gave us the options; explained the differences, and left us with the final choice. Another important factor was that they had their own mill and had been in business for over 30 years," said Steve.


Hochstetler's floor plan, Woodhaven, was very close to what they were envisioning, with a few modifications. One was to lengthen the great room. "It was the best change we did," recalled Steve, "it gives us plenty of room for seating arrangements, and allowed us the best view of the surrounding mountains." Becky really likes the openness between the kitchen and the great room. While she is in the kitchen cooking and Steve is in his favorite chair they can still talk with each other.

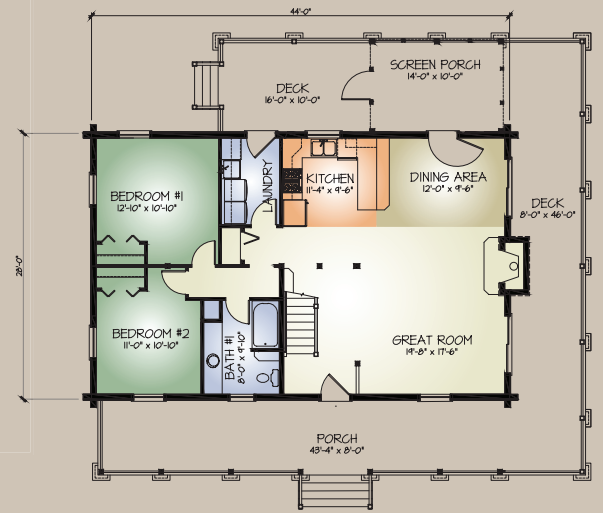
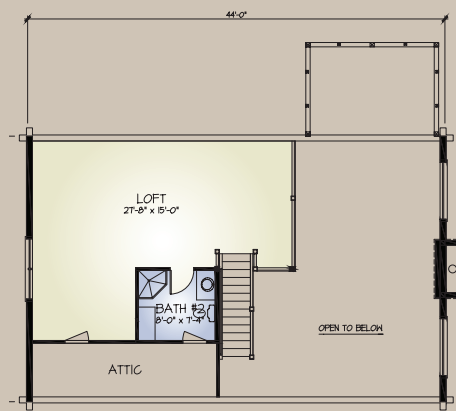
They have two bedrooms and full bath on the main floor and a large open area in the loft where guests can stay. With the grade of the land they were able to put in a walkout basement which gave them an extra room for storage, exercise equipment, etc.

The Jensen's acted as general contractor and builder. The Brandt's were very pleased with their craftsmanship and how great the communication was between them. Steve advises all home buyers, "When hiring a builder, make sure you have no difficulty communicating with him. It is so important to make a project go smoothly."

One of the feats the Jensen's and their two helpers, Danny and his son, had to overcome was to craft a round timbered staircase. After many days of tedious work they finally had a staircase completed that the Brandt's loved. "It is so strong and beautiful," said Steve, "we just absolutely love it!"

"The energy efficiency of our log home is remarkable," says Steve, "We are trying to live a more responsible life here, using minimum resources and energy. During the summer it stays cool and during the winter it is easy to heat, and it does not use a lot of utilities."

In closing, Steve said, "We are so grateful for the excellent material that was provided. It was so wonderful to work with ethical people with good service and who were easy to communicate with. We truly have a classic log home for our vacations on the bluff." 



For additional information about this home, please contact Hochstetler Log Homes at 800-368-1015.

Forest for the Next Generation - cont'd from page 1



carbon storage (think battery) and air purifier at the same time.”

Thus, you might question, if trees are so important to our health, why do we harvest them? Their answer is, “when a tree lives past its natural age span it becomes unhealthy and begins to deteriorate and actually becomes a carbon emitter. For this reason it is essential that woodlands are actively managed and trees harvested several years before they mature.” Young trees that are growing will pull more carbon dioxide out of the air than older trees; accordingly, it’s important to remove the large trees so that the next generation of trees has room to grow. Thus, the young trees can keep purifying the air for us humans, allowing us to continue to breathe pure fresh air! And, not only that, it should help reduce the greenhouse effect. This confirms what we in the wood industry have suspected all along.

Knowing the benefits of trees, wouldn’t you agree that next to food crops the best use of our land is forestry? (Other than a few clearings for log homes!) If you’re thinking of planting trees, Hochstetler can help. In 2020, we started a program where we provide a limited amount of free pine seedlings to landowners that want to plant 5 or more acres within a 50 mile radius of our milling facility. It’s like a partnership. We provide the seedlings and you have them planted. There are contractors that will plant them for you, or if you so choose you can rent the equipment and plant them yourself.

Once they’re planted there is very little maintenance. Mowing only helps the deer find the trees! You basically don’t do anything for 20 years. At that point we would recommend a select thinning. You do that by removing the lesser value and damaged trees, allowing for the healthy trees to get more sunlight and nutrients, helping them grow faster. If you want to enhance the value of your trees even further you could prune them up past the twelve foot mark. That way, the first twelve foot log will be clear wood.

In about 40 years, the trees would be ready for their first select harvest. We recommend a three-time harvest plan every ten or so years. Each time you should be able to harvest about 50 tons per acre. In today’s money that would generate about \$3200 for each harvest with a total of \$9600 per acre. Dividing that by 60 years equals to \$160 per acre. That will grow your money income tax-free until you harvest. Also, check with your state. Some states have programs that benefit the landowner monetarily in order to help promote tree planting.

While this makes sense monetarily, it also is a “feel good” program. You’re helping reduce carbon dioxide in the air and, at the same time making sure that your grandchildren will have the trees they need to build a home and furnish it. In fact, maybe the very seedlings you plant today will become part of their dream log home tomorrow!

If you have 5 or more open acres within 50 miles of Loudonville, Ohio give Steven Hochstetler a call at 419-368-0005 and see how our pine tree planting partnership might work for you. We are already maxed out for 2022. However we still have some capacity left for 2023. We have plans to plant over 70,000 pine trees this spring, which should grow into enough timber to produce more than 150 log homes over the next 60 years! 🏠

*National Woodlands magazine is printed quarterly by National Woodland Owner Assoc. 374 Maple Avenue E. Suite 310 Vienna, VA 22180-4718.



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Preserving Your Beautiful Log Home

- by Nathan Hochstetler



You have just moved into your beautiful log home, you're enjoying the comforts of owning one, and now you're wondering how you can preserve the beauty to be enjoyed for generations. It's really not as hard as you may think. Here are a few guidelines to follow to keep your log home cozy year after year.

1 Interior. Humidity level is one of the most important things to control in your log home. Make sure you have a de-humidifier installed in your home and keep it set at 30-40 %. If you get the home too dry it will promote more checking and drying out of the logs than necessary. Also, you don't want to have too much moisture in the home or you might get mold. Try to keep a consistent cooler temperature (for sure the first few years) in your home, this will help keep the checking down to a minimum as well.

Another benefit of a log home is that the interior finish should never have to be re-applied and the checks do not have to be caulked.

#2 Exterior. You want to spend a day, once a year, going over the exterior. Wash it to remove any dust that might have collected on the logs, just the same as you would any other home. Also, look for and fix potential moisture problems. Log Homes are honest, if there is a problem you will be able to see and fix it quickly, before it becomes a major issue. (Call us for a once a year maintenance checklist.)


After 2 years, caulk the upturned checks that are exposed to the rain. By caulking these checks, you will prevent moisture penetration and extend the life of the finish. Checks that are turned down, or those that are located where they are not exposed to rain (under an overhang or porch) don't need to be caulked. The reason for waiting 2 years is so that the logs have had time to acclimate (settling, movement, etc.).

The caulking should be a water base product that stays flexible and sticks like glue. Conceal made by Sashco works very good for this application.

Fill the check completely then take a wet rag and wipe all the excess caulking, leaving only the caulk that is inside the check. This will make a nice clean look.

After 3 years, your home should be about ready for its first re-coat of stain. Sometimes just the side that gets hit with direct sunlight will need it. Be sure to clean the logs before applying the stain. I would recommend just brushing the stain on for your re-coat.

Once you put another coat of stain on, it is satisfying just to step back and enjoy the beauty of the logs, it should look just as good as it did on move-in day. You shouldn't have to re-stain for another 4-6 years depending on your climate. Log homes are beautiful and you can keep them looking that way for generations!

For additional information on the best method of cleaning or staining the log home, please contact us at 800-368-1015 

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CABIN FEVER

“Old School”


by Bill Dinkins

You've probably heard the expression “old school” in reference to the way things used to be done, but I want to give you some examples of how school really was “back in the day”, in my case the 40s and 50s. And, like most, I've got my share of stories about teachers, both good and bad. But all were strict disciplinarians!

In high school, I had a math teacher, Mrs. Houston, who looked like 90 if she looked a day. No makeup, gray hair swept back in a bun, with a flowery cotton dress hanging loosely on her rail-thin body, she was the epitome of old school. She prided herself in her ability to do instant calculations (I'm sure to make us look incredibly slow and stupid). For instance, she would say, “What is 1,564 x 392?” After about 5 seconds she would say 613,088! Now, I know the answer to 1,564 minus 1,563 but failed miserably at her astronomical calculations. She was truly amazing!

In those days, paddling for misbehavior was not child abuse, it was the norm! No “Johnny you shouldn't have dunked Susie's pigtail in the ink well, should you?” Teachers were more direct. They would say, “Johnny, get up here. We're going to have a meeting with Mr. Bruce.” The class went silent. At our school, Mr. Bruce administered the punishment. He was an imposing figure, a former college defensive tackle who stood 6'4 and weighed about 340. He had perfected the paddling technique by having several holes drilled into the paddle, thus enabling it to deliver the maximum impact. The procedure was to have the student bend over and grab his ankles while Mr. Bruce administered three whacks. It's amazing how quickly we learned, I don't recall a single student going through that again. Now I know why they sometimes called it the “Board of Education.”

Today, we have new math. Just yesterday I went to a McDonald's drive-thru for a cup of coffee. My total was \$1.29. I didn't have a dollar so I gave her a five, and to make things simpler, 29 cents in change. She said, “I'm sorry, we can't do that, we're out of four-dollar bills.” Fortunately, the manager overheard our conversation and showed her what to do. It's a good thing younger employees have the register to tell them the correct change. If they didn't have those they no longer could call it fast food! And, I thought new math was supposed to be faster. I think NOT! We had to memorize multiplication tables so you knew instantly what 7x9 or 12x12 was, and although we hated it, it saved time.

Let's talk about English. Remember before computers we just talked and laughed, face to face? Nowadays, we text and LOL! You don't even have to be a good speller, just select “Spellcheck” or “Check Spelling”. Both my aunts were school teachers and had beautiful handwriting, which they called cursive. Once again our educators decided that was too difficult and went to printed text, which is much slower. But what do I know, I've only been around for 81 years! 



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