



# Mill Direct News

Living the Log Home Lifestyle

Summer 2021

## VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

The weather had been on the cool side earlier this spring with frost up to mid-May. Now, suddenly, it has turned to warmer temperatures. It seems it went from winter to summer overnight! This cool weather treated us with a prolonged season of flowering shrubs and especially the Dogwood. However, more importantly, (to me) the spring song bird migration got extended!

We are very busy with the Hocking Lodge project. Included in the design are over 801 pieces of timber, 11,500 plugs and 243,202 fasteners! The largest timbers supplied were columns, 18x18x42', girder beams, 16x24 30' and rafters, 16x22x34'. The one 30' ridge is made up of 3-6x24 Douglas fir, with two, 1/2" solid steel fitch plates sandwiched in between. So far the project is going rather smoothly in spite of a few Covid-related glitches in procuring material. Our part of the project is mostly the heavy timber and roof decking. There will also be a conventional hotel attached with 80 rooms. The timbered part will house the kitchen, dining and the common areas.

As we move forward, things are looking more favorable than ever in having Log Cabin Days this fall. Our Governor has said in a news conference that starting June 2, in most cases, we won't be required to wear face masks. We look forward to seeing everyone's face again! And, specifically, during Log Cabin Days!



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## Hochstetler Surpasses Air Infiltration Test

- by Nathan Hochstetler

Apprehensively, Eli Haugen caulked the last and final corner of the log home he was building for Larry Warner in Bancroft, MI. In the center of the room, Vance, with Bravo Home Performance, was setting up his equipment to do an Air Infiltration Test, which was required by the local energy code. Since it was the first time Eli had done this on any of his homes, including log homes, he was not quite sure what the end results would be.

The 1625 sq. ft. Hochstetler Log Home was built in strict compliance with the construction manual and he had taken extra care in making sure all corners and joints were tight and well-caulked, along with continuous seal gasket on both tongues of the log. He used 8x8 Square logs with Appalachian style Dovetail joints at the corners and structural Douglas Fir timbers, T&G paneling, and 7-3/8" thick structural insulated panels (SIP) in the roof-with an R-Value of R-38. The logs would have an estimated R-10 but because of the effects of "Thermal Mass" maybe even more.

Log Homes have the misconception of being drafty and not air-tight, so Vance initially thought he would have to use the higher-level setting but instead decided to give it a try at the medium setting. He turned

## LOG CABIN DAYS



Mark your calendar today!



See page 3 for details

continued on page 2

## Better Home Designs, Faster - by Levi Hochstetler

These days, architects and home designers are very busy. Typically, we can put together a concept in two to four weeks. Recently it's been more like six to eight weeks. Often clients are disappointed with the long lead time as they wanted to build perhaps this year, and now they can't have their preliminaries till August!

There are a few things you can do to expedite the process. The three most important are: #1 Do your homework! #2 Do your homework! #3 Do your homework! Being able to give the designer all the required information up front will help speed up the process and not only that, you will probably end up with a better home design as well.

Also start early! As we say, it's never too early to start the planning process once you have secured the property that you are building on. While you can dream and think about what you want before-hand you don't want to get a professional involved until the property is in your name or at least secured. Earlier will only be a waste

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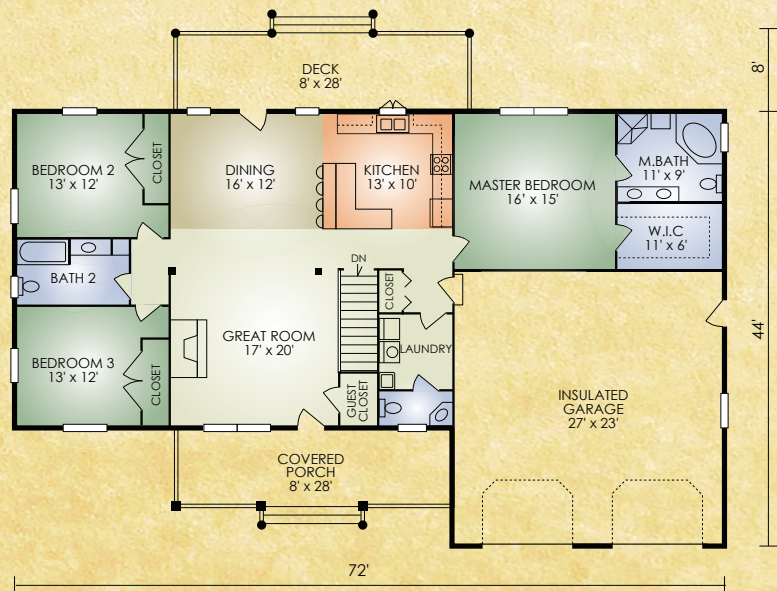
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The Fairhaven features the popular open-concept great room with fireplace and exposed timbered ceiling, large master bedroom with adjoining walk-in closet and master bath, and kitchen with island and raised serving counter. Plus, convenient mudroom off the garage, first-floor laundry, and rear deck off the dining-kitchen area. This dream ranch is both stunningly beautiful and step-saving practical.



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## Air Infiltration Test- *continued from page 1*

his equipment on and waited for the reading. Nothing! Something must be wrong, he thought. But no, he had just used the equipment and it had worked fine, so he tried it once more, this time at the lowest setting. Amazingly, he got a reading of a small air filtration at 0.63 per hour. Michigan Residential Code requires it to be 4.0 and Energy Star Rating needs to be less than 3.0. This just confirms what log home companies have known for a long time. Log Homes are one of the tightest and most efficient homes you can build, if done right.

That's why it's so important you deal with a reliable builder and reputable company you can trust. Rest assured, log homes done right are every bit as energy-efficient as any other home. 

## Cabins and Rustic Furnishings Auction on Saturday, Sept. 18th at Hochstetler Log Homes Selling the following during Log Cabin Days



Actual Products may vary from photos

- **Cabins:** Up to three 12' wide Prebuilt Cabins. Perfect for that weekend getaway or a hunting cabin.
- **Pavilions:** Prebuilt Timber Pavilions. Delivered and erected on your ideal spot, within 50 miles.
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- **Home Decor:** Items that you need to put the finishing touches in your home.

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“Right from the start Hochstetler Log Homes made us feel like part of the family. The sales rep’s patience and willingness to answer questions whenever I called was extra-ordinary. There were no surprises because of Hochstetler’s thorough planning and constant communication. Now I have the home of my dreams. No, my dreams were never this nice! It took me forty years to get here but I couldn’t be happier with the finished product. When visitors walk in the front door, their first word is, Wow!” I feel the same way! Thank-you for everything.”

-- Somers- Glenwood, IA

“Hochstetler Log Home’s staff was friendly, courteous, and prompt in responding, professional, very willing to work with our uncertainties and unfamiliarity with such a process. ”

-- Myers – Newark, OH

“Hochstetler Log Homes, you are very wonderful. It’s taken 25 years to get it here but it’s worth every day of waiting. It is very emotional to see it finally come together.”

-- Franks- Homeworth, OH

“Hochstetler Log Homes was absolutely fabulous to work with in all phases of sales, design and delivery process. All log cabin materials were of very high quality. Our cabin is beautiful and will be in our family for the next 100 plus years.”

-- Rufs – Chillicothe, OH



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# Musical Tranquility

by Nathan Hochstetler



- Photography by Debra Coen

The spectacular exterior features a full-length balcony and towering central gable ... perfect for viewing the great outdoors or star-studded night skies!



The master bedroom features a cathedral ceiling, convenient adjoining master bath, and double doors leading out to the balcony.

It is said that you can tell a person's style by the type of music they like and that seems to be the case for Matt and Deb Coen. Outside of their professions, both are musicians who grew up listening to all types of music, especially Classic Rock and Modern Pop in the 70's and 80's. Much of the music reflected the times... it could be energizing and also relaxing and comforting. Not surprisingly, the Coen's embraced the log home lifestyle which had a similar feeling. Ideally, their home would be located with a scenic view on a wooded hilltop in Tennessee.

In 2007, they purchased a 5-acre lot with plans to build a log home, but the market conditions were unfavorable, so they purchased a spec home. In 2016, they once again tried to pursue their dream and decided to sell the 5-acre lot and look for more acreage. But after an exhaustive, unsuccessful search for the right property, they decided to stay in the spec home a while longer. As soon as they stopped looking for property, a realtor called and had what she thought might be

the perfect fit. It was 30 acres, on a hilltop, with woods, and already had three out-buildings, septic, well, and electricity. What sealed the deal were the two potential building spots for their dream log home.


After a thorough search of log home companies and not being quite satisfied, Matt decided to call his cousin at Hochstetler Log Homes. "They weren't the cheapest, but we felt their package had more value and didn't mind paying extra for a custom designed home exactly the way we wanted." Deb says, "The best advice she can give

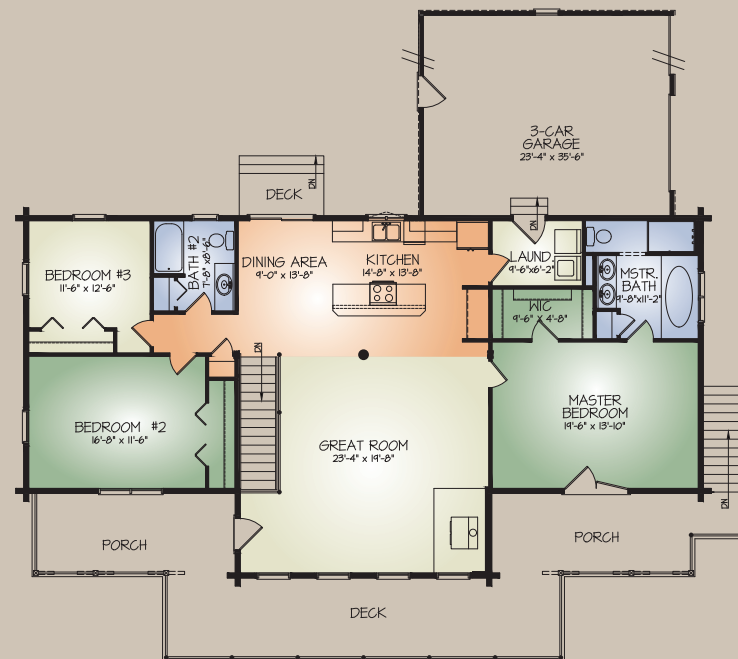
to future buyers is to find a company you can trust. You can let them do what they do best and know that it's going to be done right without having to be there yourself to watch every step."

The Coen's home design is Hochstetler's standard Clearfork floorplan with a few modifications to better suit their lifestyle. "We wanted everything on one level and have the great room and kitchen area open with exposed beams to highlight the cathedral ceilings. We love the open sight lines between the kitchen, dining room and great room," remarked Deb.

The first load of material was delivered in spring of 2017. "We purchased Hochstetler's complete package, which we are very pleased with," mentioned Deb, "All the components are top quality from the Pine 8x6D logs and Douglas Fir timbers to the Andersen windows and Therma Tru doors. It's like a well-built vintage automobile, when you slam the door, you can just hear how solid it was made."

"We waited a year before doing the interior decorating to first feel the vibe of the home. We wanted a modern/farmhouse look: logs are flat on the inside, cabinets stained a rustic gray with no doors on the uppers, and hickory floors. On one wall we had a red barn door built for deco only. We did not want to overpower the home with too much décor, so this feature wall took its place and fits well with the farmhouse style. To get a modern twist we used metal pipe for curtain rods and shelving throughout the house," says Deb.

"The home is so comfortable and inviting. During the winter we can heat the whole main floor with just our Franklin corner wood stove. Furthermore, log home living is even more fascinating than expected. Every time I come in our driveway I have to think, Ok, we're home, and not on a vacation." says Deb. "Our thoughts are if we would win the lottery would we rebuild or do anything different? The answer is no. We love what we have! It's our own little world." 



The red barn door and the charcoal cabinetry compliment the modern/farmhouse "look" the Coen's desired.



The focal point of the spacious great room is the Franklin fireplace ... a favorite gathering spot for the family on a cold winter's night!



A uniquely beautiful blend of modern and rustic with stone walls, a traditional tub and shower stall, and a large window with barn doors.

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

## Better Home Designs, Faster - cont'd from page 1

of your dollars and his time. Depending on the property, the appropriate home plan can vastly change. On the other hand, it is far more pleasant to plan a home when your schedule isn't too tight. This also gives you time to work out the bugs before, rather than after the hammer starts swinging. Too often decisions get made without the needed time to think it through, giving you the "if I'd ever build again dilemma."

Below are a list of things you can do, (your homework) in order to reduce the time it takes to get your plans done.

**Topographical map and surveying map.** These two items can help when doing your elevation drawings. Often the designer has to guess where the grade level is against the home. Having the Topographical helps to take out the guess work. It will also help the estimator and get a more accurate quote in determining the amount of stone to cover your foundation, chimney and the size of the stairs and railing. And, on down the line, it can give the builder a better idea on what to figure for his cost such as the driveway, as an example.

**Placement of the home.** If you have a few acres you will want to determine where on your property to place the home and how to arrange the rooms or spaces to best fulfill your needs and desires, and to get the maximum potential from it. The tools you will need are your survey and topography map, a few stakes, tape measure, perhaps a role of string and lots of paper and time!

You may have tentatively decided where to put your home when you bought your property. In fact, it may be the reason you bought it in the first place. With smaller lots you still want to arrange the rooms or spaces, but the placement of the home is normally pretty much a given. Sometimes, though, moving it 50 feet or turning it 10 degrees can make a difference in the enjoyment of your home, such as giving you a better view, and a safer, more convenient entrance, etc.

Taking advantage of a view is only one of the many considerations of locating your home. Below is a partial list of things to keep in mind when walking your property.

High points, low points, ravine, knoll, lake/pond, swamp, woods, creek, short views, distant views, traffic, roads, fence rows, neighboring houses, sunrise, sunset, solar south, north/south, prevailing winds, safe driveway entrance, driveway, parking, garage, walkways, walkout, outbuildings, garden areas, septic and well.

Take a copy of your survey map and sketch on it any of these applicable features. This can help you in picking out the best place to set your home. Consider camping out on the property a few nights. You might be surprised what you can learn from that experience. On every property there is always the best place to put the home and it's up to you to find it.



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**HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS**, 1392 Enterprise Parkway, Ashland, OH 44805 (Located off the Ashland Ohio I 71 exit on US RT 250) • 419-281-2900

**BEST WESTERN PLUS HOTEL**, 240 East Liberty, Wooster, OH 44691  
Distance 24 minutes East • 330-264-7750

**COMFORT INN & SPLASH HARBOR**, 855 Comfort Plaza Dr. Bellville, OH 44813  
(Located at I 71 & St. Rt. 97 Exit 165) Distance 20 minutes West • 419-886-4000  
www.SplashHarbor.com

**MOHICAN LODGE**, 1098 Co. RD 3006, Perrysville, OH 44864.  
Distance 20 minutes West • 419-938-5411 • www.MohicanStateParkLodge.com

**PLEASANT HILL LAKE PARK CABINS**, 3431 SR 95 Perrysville, OH 44864.  
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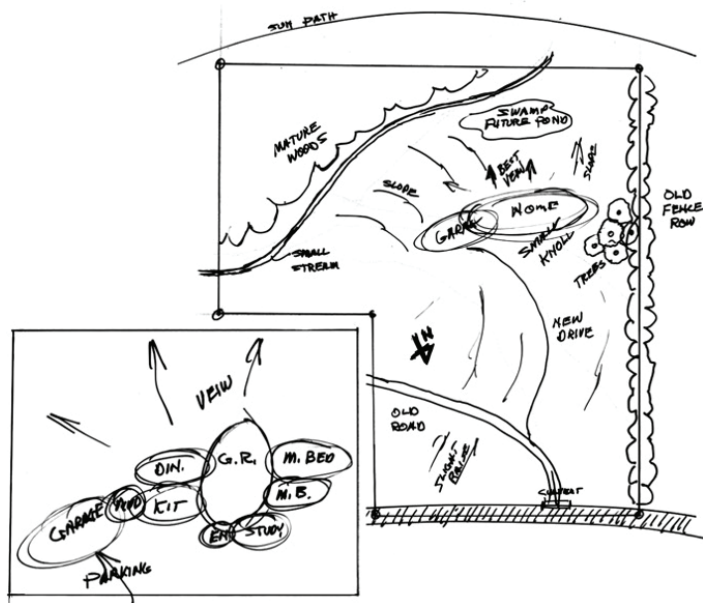
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**Bubble drawing.** Once you're pretty sure where you want to put your home, make what we call a bubble drawing. You do this by standing in the middle of where your



home will be with a piece of paper and draw circles where each room will go. Larger circles for larger areas, such as the great room and smaller circles for smaller areas, like the bathrooms. No need to do them to scale at this point.

Start with the focal point, or most important space first, which might be the family room or great room. Where do you want it? Normally you would want to put it where you can take advantage of the best view. However, there may be other considerations such as passive solar. Perhaps you want the great room facing the front overlooking the drive or road and save the best view for the sunroom. Whichever it may be, make a circle for it and label it accordingly.

Next in importance may be the kitchen and a garage if you're having one. Most people want the kitchen next to the garage or breezeway leading to it, making it convenient for bringing in groceries, etc. You determine the relation of each room to each other like that, making circles for each one. Ask yourself questions like, would I rather read the paper, watch the sunrise and sip my coffee from the bedroom or from the kitchen/dining area? Another question might be, would I rather head for the porch in the evening or curl up on my favorite chair in the sunroom and watch nature go by? Paper is not expensive, keep drawing and redrawing until you're happy with the result. Make sure the rooms flow into each other. As in an extreme example, you don't want to go through the garage to get from the kitchen to the bedroom!

*This story will be continued in the next issue of Mill-Direct News*

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# CABIN FEVER

## "Fishing Buddies"


by Bill Dinkins

For many years, families in northeastern Ohio made an annual fishing trip to Ontario, Canada in search of the tasty walleye, or pickerel as they're known up there, and the knuckle-busting muskie or pike. A favorite destination for my in-laws, Rich and Maybelle, and their two kids, Sandy and Charlene, was Grandview, a camp on Buckhorn lake. Grandview is now a sprawling RV Resort and campground, but back in the 50's most people tent-camped there.

It took years, but my father-in-law, Rich, knew that lake "like the back of his hand." He had perfected a technique for taking walleye when others returned empty-handed. It involved a spinner with a single blade and single hook, with a strip of pork rind dangling off the hook. Armed with his 5' fiberglass rod and Ambassadeur 500 baitcaster, he would deftly cast the secret lure into openings between the weeds. He usually left the dock at 5:00 am and had his limit of 6 chunky walleye by noon... and on a bad day, only 5. When asked back at the dock where he caught them he would nonchalantly point out at the lake.

One year, a couple from Buffalo showed up at a campsite next to them. It was obvious they were "newbies" and were having trouble getting their tent set up as the sun was slowly sinking behind the pines in the west. Rich, noticing their dilemma, decided to help. Little did he know it would be the beginning of a lifelong friendship, with George, Elsie and their three youngsters. One evening, while chatting around the campfire, Elsie had expressed a desire to catch a walleye, so Rich invited her out the very next day. Meanwhile, George was happy to stay back at camp, gathering firewood for the nightly campfires, while Maybelle enjoyed watching the kids.

This became quite a subject of conversation around camp. Rich and Elsie, always fishing together while their spouses enjoyed the relaxing lifestyle back at camp. Occasionally, Rich would catch a large muskie and Elsie would cook it over the glowing coals, wrapped in foil and stuffed with bread cubes, tomatoes, and onions ... and seasoned with herbs and spices. When done, the fish would be laid out on a picnic table, and eagerly devoured by those with forks scooping chunks of the tasty treat. Along with Elsie's German potato salad and homemade apple sauce it was a meal to behold.

Rich passed suddenly in 1990, while awaiting his turn at a local golf course. Calling hours were arranged at the funeral home, and hundreds of his friends and family showed up, filing by the grieving family before finally nodding down to a good friend that would be sorely missed. As the funeral music began, the back doors to the chapel opened, a shaft of sunlight streamed in and Elsie appeared with her walker. She had just been driven over 200 miles, against her doctor's orders after recent surgery, to get there! When we rushed to welcome her, she said, "You don't think I would have missed saying a final 'Goodbye' to my fishing buddy, do you?" 



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