

## VIEW FROM THE MILL

*By Levi Hochstetler*

Wow, spring is here and summer is just around the corner. Being in south Texas for several weeks took a chunk out of winter and enjoying 80 plus degrees there made the winter seem a lot shorter. Hmmm, maybe we should make a habit of this? Unfortunately, my wife does not like to travel or be away from home any length of time. However, I consider that as a blessing in disguise; otherwise I probably would be gone way too often!

Talking of being gone reminds me that next week I'm again keeping up with my tradition by taking off to bird-watch. Generally, I stay within 30 miles from home. One day I might spend most of my time in our back yard. Other days I will go around to several local state parks and lakes including a few swamps. Generally, all total, I will get to see about 150 different species of birds during that week!

The excitement here is that we are nearly done developing several new floor plans. Folks that have purchased our portfolio of plans in the past two years can request the new plans as we finish them over the next several months. Call us and request that we mail or email you a copy and we are happy to do that.

Log Cabin Days is just around the corner. See the ad on page 3 for more details. If you haven't experienced it yet, this might be the time! Hope to see you all!

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## Why Log Homes are Better Than Conventional Construction - by Devin Perry

Beyond a steady stream of visitors seeking to soak up some rustic ambiance and connect with Mother Nature, there are other advantages for owning a log and timber home over more conventional construction. Longtime homeowners say log and timber homes offer rich rewards over the stick and brick homes of their neighbors. The benefits start with the building materials.

### 1. Trees are Renewable Resources

Because trees are a renewable resource, log and timber homes come with a solid green pedigree. When a home is made from solid logs, you are effectively taking the carbon contained in those logs out of environmental circulation over the entire life of the home.

### 2. Long Lasting

Got a know-it-all in the neighborhood who thinks his brick home is durable? Inform him that log and timber homes are still in

*continued on page 10*



## Building a Good “Builder-Homeowner” Relationship (Part V - Continued from Spring 2023 Issue) - by Levi Hochstetler

### #8 Inexperienced

Whether if this was implying that they were inexperienced in the business function of things or in the actual work itself, I'm going to take it as meaning some of both.

A lot of builders have very minimal, formal business experience. Most of their experience is on the job site, swinging a hammer, which is what they love to do. Many disdain paperwork which often ends up being anything but professional. A few lines, barely legible, on a hand-written sheet of paper is all that the contract consists of. This may be better than a hand shake, yet less than what most homeowners would like to see. A small shed might be one thing, but when it is your life dream, you don't want to leave anything to chance.

Still, there are many builders that are highly professional, with office and sales staff, and all the bells and whistles that come with it. However, there is a price attached to that. Accordingly, don't expect the more

*continued on page 4*



**Award Winning!**

# Wilson

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The Wilson is a chalet-style home designed to fit any landscape, from a riverfront to a mountain-top view. The master bedroom and bath are conveniently located on the first floor. Two additional bedrooms and a full bath are located upstairs. In the timbered open-concept greatroom there is plenty of space for guests to gather. Imagine the pleasure of relaxing in this spacious sunroom with its glowing fireplace, and large windows that bring your beautiful surroundings to the inside.

The Wilson home, for the second year in a row, won "Floorplan of the Year," in *Log & Timber Home Living* magazine and was voted 2022 best log home on [LogHomeLiving.com](http://LogHomeLiving.com).

Build your own award-winning log home!  
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Photo and floor plans may differ slightly from actual blueprints.

## THE LIFE OF A LOG HOME OWNER

Are you considering building a log home but getting bombarded by family and friends with all the reasons you shouldn't? Listen to folks that experienced log home living!

### Godfreys

After nine years of living in their log home, Roy and Ruthanne Godfrey still get that special feeling of warmth, whether it's sitting in front of the stone fireplace in the family room or enjoying wildlife from the wooden swinging bench on their front porch.

The Godfreys have discovered an added benefit to their peaceful country home. It has become a vacation retreat for their children and grandkids. Ruthanne happily exclaimed, "Our family just loves to stay here with us."

### Livengood's

The Livengood's love the fact that despite its large size, their log home doesn't lose that homey feel. It's solid and quiet, even in strong winds.

## HOCHSTETLER IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to David and Camille Crago on receiving the honor of having your log home featured in *Log and Timber Home Living*!



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## Building a Good “Builder-Homeowner” Relationship - cont'd from page 1

“professional builder” to be the cheapest one on the block.

Among other advantages, their paperwork will likely be more professional. But probably, more importantly, they would usually have several of their own crews along with several proven sub-contractors that they can pull from and be relied on. Perhaps also, they would have better insurances, warranties and personnel to take care of call backs.

But, as for the actual hands-on building expertise, there probably is no good advantages. Do they have fulltime staff to answer the phone or not?

Here at Hochstetler Log Homes, we put on a three day workshop to train builders to build log homes. Logs are stacked, windows and doors along with exterior and interior trim is installed, and our trade mark timbered loft and roof system is erected. Our aim is to cover most everything that is unique in constructing a log home. I would think that most of the accomplished log home companies out there would provide some sort of formal training for the builders that build the homes for their clients.

Every log home manufacturer does things a little different. Regardless of who you buy from, I would recommend that you as a client, insist that the potential builder you are considering does attend the log home mill’s training workshop. I would say you should, even if the builder has built 100’s of log homes using other manufacturer’s packages. That, along with a construction manual, providing they are competent builders, should not leave any reason they can’t get it right.

Like most other scenarios, doing your homework before you sign on the bottom line is imperative. Talking to several homeowners they have built for is probably the foremost preventive solution. Checking their credentials, who did they build for in the past, or if none, who did they work for before, and what training did they have?

### #9 Not organized

This could be an impression you would get from most builders. Even more so if this is the first time you have had a custom home build. Again, they are out on the job site trying to get the roof on and they don’t have time to get all the “ducks in a row” like most of us would like to see. Their primary interest is to make sure the material is there when they need it.

Also, most will want to keep several projects going at any one time. That way, if they are waiting on their electrician or plumber on your site, they can jump to another project and keep on being productive. This, by itself, will often be perceived by the homeowner as somewhat wishy-washy. However, it is very necessary for them to have several projects going at any one time, in order to stay competitive and keep their employees busy. 🏠

*To be continued in the next issue of Mill-Direct News*

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### The Teton

Everything is luxurious in this 3083 sq. ft. home. What brings this design to the forefront is the curb appeal – no matter how you approach it you will fall in love. This log home's showing will be limited as it is for sale.



### The McKay

This 2007 sq. ft. model features the popular open-concept great room with large fireplace and exposed timber ceiling, inviting sunroom, master bedroom with master bath, plus a large open loft and two additional bedrooms and bath upstairs.



### The Black Fork

The perfect getaway for that wooded or lakefront lot. It offers the timbered front porch, open-concept greatroom with fireplace and adjoining dining area and kitchen, and spacious bedroom. Upstairs, a large loft area provides additional living space and overlooks the great room.



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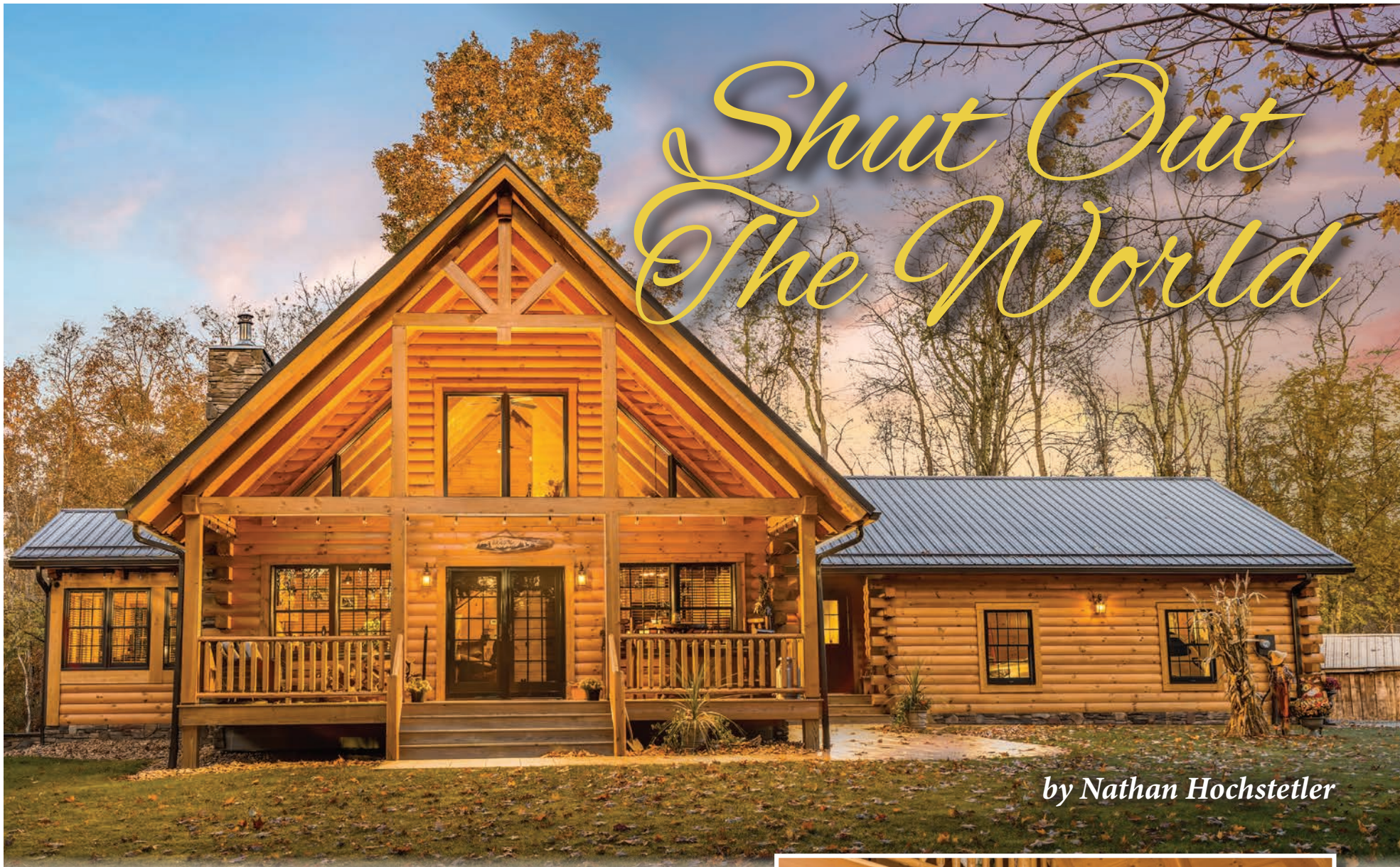
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# Shut Out The World



by Nathan Hochstetler

- Photography by Style Life Photography

As a young boy, Keith's dream for a log home was kindled when he went to his friends hunting cabin. He told his Dad that someday he would own one.

Many years later Keith and his love, "Janet," went on a property search for a quiet secluded place where they could build their own dream log home and get away from it all. Her daughter actually ended up finding property that was coming up for auction. Keith and Janet went to the open house and found that it could be that "diamond in the rough." But it would take some work. It was an old farmstead that had been neglected for years and was overgrown. The house was no longer salvageable and would need to be torn down. But it was in the woods and so... peaceful.

The day of the auction arrived, and with it over 100 people attending. "It will be a slim chance of getting it with so many people," thought Keith. He was pretty nervous and when they started taking bids, he wasn't even close to Janet, and she had no idea who was bidding. It went over their price point and Janet lost all hope of owning this piece of heaven. After the property was sold the auctioneer asked the highest bidder to step up to sign the papers and that is when Janet realized Keith was the winning bidder. Janet couldn't believe it, she was so excited! Later the auctioneer laughingly said, "Her expression was worth a video."

They immediately started the cleanup of the area where they planned to build their log home and began the search for a company they could trust to build the home of their dreams. Keith saw an ad in *Log & Timber Home Living* for Hochstetler Log Homes and scheduled a visit. "We were taken away," exclaimed Keith, "everything was so clean at their milling facility and they had a huge inventory of logs. We were so impressed we didn't even check with other companies."

After touring the log home models they left with a dilemma. Keith liked the McKay





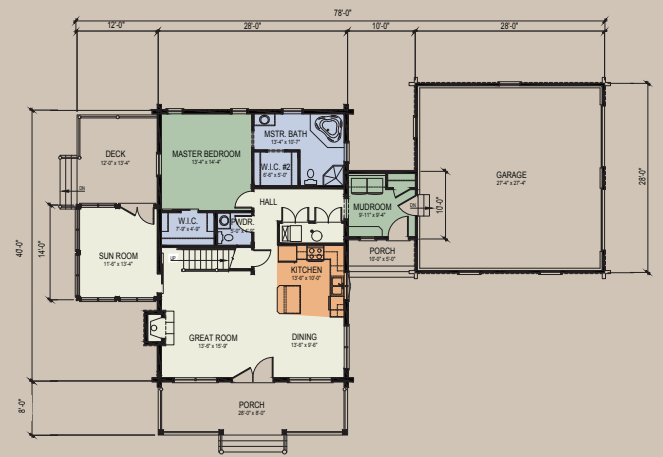
model and Janet liked the Black Fork model. After getting home Janet was browsing thru photos that Hochstetler had given them and came across the Whitney's home. (A modified Black Fork) "This is it," she said, showing it to Keith, who agreed that it was a beautiful home. And, after making a second trip to the Black Fork, he fell in love.

They did modify the plan to fit their lifestyle, adding four feet to the width and length, adding a breezeway and garage, and most importantly the "sunroom". This is where Janet's office is now and she is seeing a lot of four-footed (wildlife) visitors coming daily right outside her window. How great is that, she thought, a workstation in the woods!

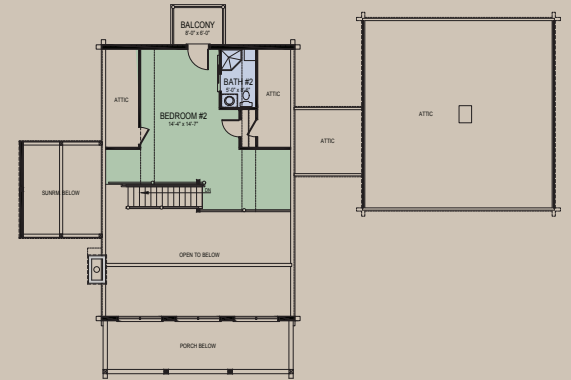
Dave Hostetler was hired to build the home. It was a distance for them to travel, so we agreed to purchase a used camper for them to stay in and this would save Hostetler travel time and cut down on travel expences for us. Some of the guys would stay overnight in a tent. Janet made sure the crew didn't go hungry or thirsty and was soon a favorite. The payoff was that when she needed changes to be made, she got a "yes." "The build process went so smooth," said Keith, "It was just a flow, with everything falling into place. It was truly hard for us to see our dear friends (the crew) leave."

"It's been two years now," reminisced Keith, "and it is still so amazing. A log home just brings the outdoors in and we love it. Other people travel here and there, rent a cabin for the weekend and we get to stay in one every day! We love our log home and we're so proud. You get home from work and it just seems like you can shut the world out." 🏠

*First  
Floor Plan*



*Second  
Floor Plan*



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# Why Log Homes are Better Than Conventional Construction

- cont'd from page 1

use in Europe and routinely date back more than 800 years. And, one log-constructed church in Russia is reportedly more than 1,700 years young!

## 3. Withstand Mother Nature's Wrath

The log and timber home industry has countless stories of these homes successfully weathering the worst weather Mother Nature can dish out, including the 2005 Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. When Rita's winds caused a giant oak tree to crash through the roof of Menlo Klingman and his wife, Mickey's, 1,700-square-foot log and timber home in Eastern Texas, the home's solid log walls withstood the weight of the toppled tree and prevented more damage. "There is no doubt in my mind that this log and timber home saved our lives," says Mickey.

## 4. Fit the Land

Since this organic building material comes from nature, the resulting structures blend into the topography like a 10-point buck on opening day. Log homes naturally integrate right into the landscape, rather than being awkwardly imposed on it.



## 6. Warmth of Wood

Warm to the touch (as opposed to the always chilly sheetrock), wood has "thermal mass," a natural property in the logs that helps keep inside temperatures of homes comfortable in all seasons. This allows log walls to collect and store energy, then radiate it back into the home.

## 7. Super Energy-Efficient

Provided the home is sealed properly (between the foundation and the first course of logs, between log-to-log connections and where the roof system meets the log wall), you can have a super energy-efficient home. Indeed, some builders routinely build log and timber homes to meet the DOE's "Energy Star" standards. This means it will be 30% more efficient than what building codes call for, saving you serious money over the life of the home. "Today we can build a log and timber home to be 15 to 20 percent more energy-efficient than a conventional home," says builder Mike Gingras, owner of Seven North Log Homes in New Haven, Vermont,

who has designed and built Energy Star-rated log and timber homes for the past 18 years.

## 8. A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Hanging a picture in a home with drywall is a big ordeal, involving a stud finder, a hammer or drill and bruised fingers — maybe even a bruised ego, since your spouse may tell you to move the picture, requiring patch work. Homeowners report the simplicity of hanging a picture is one the simple joys of living in a log and timber home.



## 9. Rustic Doesn't Mean It Isn't High Tech

While rugged is appealing, "roughing it" is definitely out. That's why today's log and timber homeowners increasingly want a hideaway that's connected, automated and secure. Many log and timber homeowners are adding backup generators (in case of power outages), security system and a CAT 5 wiring system that can accommodate high speed video, voice and data, as well as a host of new communication technologies on the horizon.


## 10. The Eyes Have It

If you're worried about mold, mildew or insect infestation, then a log and timber home offers clear advantages since you'll be able to see anything untoward, just by taking a stroll around your home and visually inspecting the logs. This quick detection leads to a less costly remedy... in contrast to a conventional home, the sealed wall cavities can be a hidden refuge for mold, mildew and insect infestation, which can cause far more damage before its detected.

## 11. Superior Craftsmanship

Conventional custom homes can have their fare share of beautiful carpentry, but this is typically limited to trim and millwork. In log and timber homes, examples of craftsmanship are at every turn; in the handcrafted staircase with its branch-like spindles and balustrade, in the hand-scribed large timbers overhead in the cathedral ceiling, in the one-of-a-kind light fixtures.

## 12. Peace and Quiet

Log homes are often quieter than stick built homes, thanks to the same thermal mass that provides energy-efficiency and the sound deadening effects of wood walls, according to a white paper produced by the National Association of Home Builders Log and Timber Homes Council. "The acoustical benefits of a log wall, therefore, are the reduced transmission provided by its solid mass and the sound deflection provided by the profile of the log (the angle, shape, and texture of the log surface)," the paper concludes. 

Article from [loghomes.org](http://loghomes.org) used with permission from






## Air Filtration Test passes with Flying Colors

- by *Nathan Hochstetler*

Recently another in-door blower door test was done on a Hochstetler Log Home. In some areas this is required, while others do it just to see how efficient their home is. Raymond & Kathleen Hippeli's 2,869 square foot home, which they built in Virginia, passed with flying colors at 1.43 Air Changes per Hour (ACH). To pass the energy code it needed to be 5 ACH or less. Both the person doing the testing and the builder were surprised at the results, because of the misconception that log homes are drafty and not air-tight

With more and more of our homes getting the ACH done, we are even more convinced than ever that log homes can be the tightest homes available. (If done right!) Recently, while doing an ACH test we noticed that the area where it was stick framed, from the breezeway to the garage, was where we felt the most air leakage during the test. This is one of the reasons we recommend using logs wherever possible throughout the home, including breezeways, gables, and dormers. This, combined with 8" Rigid Insulation System in the roof, standard in all our log homes, creates one of the most efficient homes available.

Another important consideration will be the guys that are going to be stacking the logs, your builder. We believe that it is important to have checks and balances in place with a builder. The best situation is when you purchase the material from the manufacturer and they help you find a builder that is reputable and trained to put together their home packages. This allows the manufacturer to keep tabs on the builder to try and make sure he does things correctly. On the flip side, since the builder is not making part of his profit on the material, he is going to make sure the manufacturer does not send out inferior products, which would cause him to spend more time than necessary when putting the home together. It is so important that you do thorough research on all parties involved. It will make a difference in the energy-efficiency of your home. 

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# CABIN FEVER

## Bob's Bucket List

- by Bill Dinkins

Bob learned the skills of hunting from his grandfather, Louis, as a young lad. First, hunting squirrels on a neighbor's farm back in the 50's. In the pre-dawn hours they would arrive in the old pickup, don their camo jackets and start their hunt. Louis, armed with his old mug of coffee and favorite .410 shotgun, would lead Bob through the woods to his favorite spot - usually a grove of large hickory and chestnut trees. They took their seats on the forest floor and listened intently for the sounds of squirrels chewing on nuts and dropping hulls to the ground. Birds were just waking and chirped loudly at their presence. Nevertheless, they waited ... and waited ... and waited some more. Finally, a squirrel would appear, but invariably scamper to the other side of the tree. Not to be outdone, Louis would throw a stone to the other side and the squirrel would move to their side of the tree...a fatal mistake. Bob was learning the old grandpa's secrets and after several trips he finally got a chance to hunt, and bagged a couple. Later that evening, grandma fixed the succulent meal, and complete with squirrel gravy, was icing on the cake! He was soon hooked on the thrill of hunting and enjoying every season in the great outdoors.

Bob's uncle, Sam, was also a hunter and they often went rabbit hunting with Bob's little beagle, Buckshot. Buckshot would scare up a rabbit, and if neither Bob or Jim had a good shot he would stay on the trail until the rabbit would circle around and usually give them a better shot. Those were good times and those memories often resurfaced later when Bob was on a hunting trip. Good times, great friends, unforgettable memories!

Later, as an adult, Bob became interested in turkey hunting since it seemed to be the ultimate challenge and they were plentiful on nearby farms. That was a completely different challenge though, since it involved both hunting and calling.

The spring season in Ohio is in early April for male turkeys (gobblers), so aside from the usual hunting equipment, he needed to either buy or build himself a call. He made a slate call, which involved striking a disc of slate with a pencil-size dowel, or striker, to duplicate a hen's clucking sound. Gobblers were attracted to that sound and came to investigate. It took skill to learn the exact angle of the striker and the timing of the call. Most hunters rushed their calls and gobblers were not fooled. Patience was a prerequisite and sometimes it took over an hour to bring in one gobbler. It was a strategic game, as he would call...then listen, call again...and listen, 'till finally he heard a reply. A receptive or anxious gobbler would sometimes come in on a dead run to visit the "hen", but wise old gobblers were not so anxious and usually zigzagged their way in, sometimes ending up behind the caller. And, ironically, not only turkeys, but coyotes and bobcats were also drawn to the calls!

As Bob's interest and skill in turkey hunting increased so did his interest in the "Royal Slam," which meant bagging the five species of turkeys in America: Eastern, Rio Grande, Merriam, Osceola, and Gould. It took a few years but Bob accomplished this and now has the mounted turkeys to prove it, along with his certificate.

But his "bucket list" was not complete. A sixth turkey, the rare and colorful Ocellated, was needed for his ultimate goal, the coveted "World Slam". The Ocellated turkey is the most beautiful of all turkeys with a glorious mix of iridescent copper, bronze, red, green and gold feathers. Imagine a hybrid turkey/peacock! It inhabits tropical deciduous and lowland evergreen forests in very remote areas, and is only found in the Yucatan



Peninsula of Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. Only a few hunters have achieved the "World Slam" due to its limited range and the 5-hour trek to get to its range. It almost seemed like an impossible task...and faced with the civil unrest and dangerous situation in that part of the world, Bob had a tough decision.

In the end, Bob reluctantly decided to forego his "bucket list" and stay home with his other love, his wife Bobbie!" 🏠



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