



Mill • Direct News

Living the Log Home Lifestyle

Spring 2010

A VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

Here in North Central Ohio with a foot of snow on the ground and more coming down, it's hard to get excited about planning and ordering seeds for the garden. But I know it would make it easier on myself and everyone else if I'd take the time, plan the garden, and order the seed now. We all know spring is just around the corner.

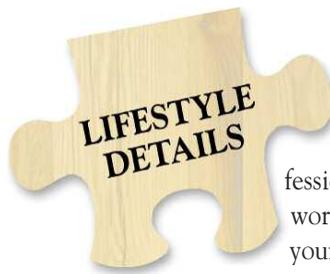
Needless to say, every spring when the weather suddenly turns nice, we haven't ordered our seed yet. So we end up rushing around getting our order in late. Naturally they are already sold out of some of the items and we end up with secondary seeds.

The same scenario applies to planning your home. "It's cold." With the slow economy we don't get excited about ordering our plans. After all it's a long time before "spring," when we want to break ground. Then bingo - "the weather breaks." Our existing home sells and we don't have our blueprints yet. So we rush around to get our plans done and because we are under the gun we end up with secondary plans.

Considering the large investment and the fact that once it's built it's very costly to make a change, it clearly makes sense to plan ahead. Once you have acquired the property **it is never too early to start planning.** The building process goes so much smoother and it can save you a bundle. But most important it's the difference between having a home where if you'd build again you'd change this and move that, versus one that you truly love and wouldn't change a thing.

Designing Your Log Home...

Piece by Piece

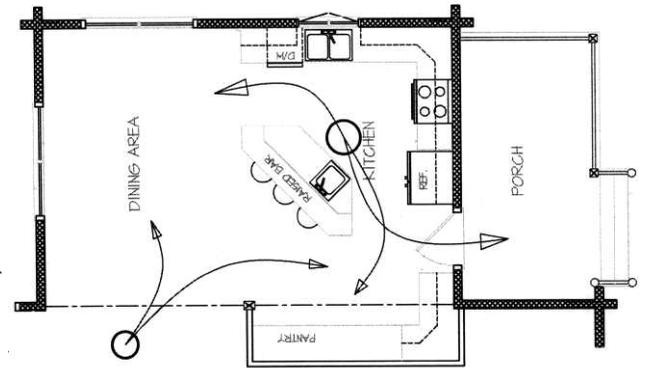


Hiring a design professional or working with your log home representative to develop a log home design that will work for your family's needs and wants for a new home, whether it is a custom design or a standard manufacturer's model plan, will be a custom built home for you. You and your family are the ones who matter when it comes to planning because you are the ones that will be living in your home. Your lifestyle patterns are going to influence your design decisions for your needs and wants that are built into the home plan. When I speak about lifestyle, we are looking at how you will be using the specific spaces that com-

prise your home plan in general - about how you decorate the interior and plan exterior details for your entire property.

With this in mind, let's look at the specifics of lifestyle details that you will want your home to be built around. Questions you will need to address

may be how the floor plan handles traffic flow from room to room or within a living space. How do you use living spaces such as the kitchen, a dressing area in the master bathroom, or any number of living spaces inside and outside of your home? You may even want to be specific enough to work with a kitchen and bath designer or a lighting specialist to work out where



The kitchen and dining areas are the hub of family activity. Traffic flow and use patterns are important design points for comfortable indoor and outdoor living and entertaining.

lighting and electrical outlets are placed to make these spaces functional for how you perform daily tasks. Think about where your toaster and coffee maker will be placed in relation to other appliances in your kitchen; whether you want additional task or ambiance lighting in other areas, where light switches will be placed

continued on page 2

History of Hochstetler Milling - Part 1

By Levi Hochstetler

About halfway between Cleveland and Columbus lies one of the most beautiful countrysides in Ohio called the Mohican area. Resident Louis Bromfield, the renowned author and conservationist who traveled the world over, dubbed it "the Edge of Paradise." This area, named after the "Mohegan Indians," is rich in history with famous area residents such as Johnny Appleseed and Tom Lyons - who is said to have over a hundred scalps to his credit. It is also the site of the Copus Massacre, the last Indian massacre that took place in Ohio.

Today, very appropriately, this is home to Ohio's largest log home manufacturer, Hochstetler Milling, Ltd. This, however, didn't just happen overnight. Besides being greatly blessed with good employees and customers, it took some 24 years of doings.

Like most normal Amish youth, my

formal education ended with 8th grade. While this may seem as a disadvantage, it does also have some advantages. By the time our English friends get through college, we may have had as much as eight years of hands-on experience. This experience is quite often in a field where we remain for most of our lives, while our counterparts will often get in-

involved in a completely different career than what they took in school.

Personally, being an avid reader, and reading any self-help books and magazines that I could get my hands on, including anything from the encyclopedia to the IRS 1040 instructional booklet, helped enhance my education.

continued on page 6

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FEATURED NEW FLOOR PLAN

The Fairhaven



The Fairhaven is one of our newest plans, a large ranch-style with 3 bedrooms and 2-1/2 baths. It 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 L-shaped island and raised serving counter. Plus, convenient mudroom off the double garage, first-floor laundry with adjoining bath and rear deck off the dining-kitchen area. This dream ranch is both stunningly beautiful and step-saving practical, especially if you desire a single floor plan.

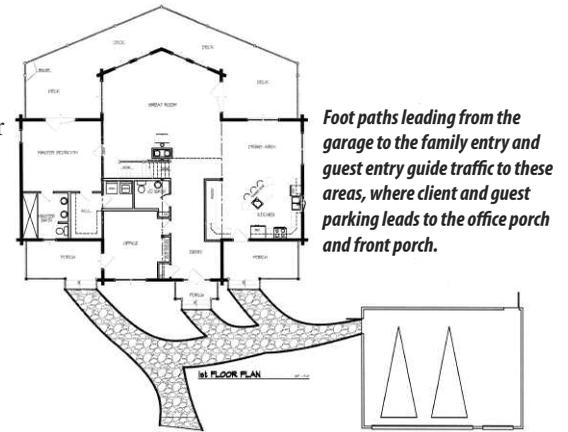


Designing Your Log Home *continued from front page*

and what type. Will you need standard switches, three way or rheostat (dimmer) switches? Consider where you get ready for the day; do you need an electric outlet beside your mirror? Is the mirror just a mirror or is it a built-in medicine cabinet? Where do you store towels, sheets, and blankets? How accessible do you want items you use every day, or the roasting pan that gets used at family reunions or special holiday meal preparation? Do you need areas for canning and preserving food items? Do you want special areas for reading, listening to music or watching movies? Should you plan a space for the computer or use a home office? I recommend that clients walk through these spaces and consider how they will be used and what functions these spaces will serve.

As you can see there can be hundreds of small details that can be considered before you even get to furniture placement and where to use the antique armoire or dinette server you found and refinished for your dream home. The whole idea is to determine what your lifestyle needs will be and how you address them in the design of your new log home. Design professionals, interior decorators, kitchen and bath designers, landscape architects, and a host of other professionals focus on these concerns. You may use one or more of these professional services, or you may choose to work through these questions yourself and with family members.

Thinking about and making preparations for how you will live in your new log home during the planning and design process is essential to the successful completion of your building project and enjoying the home you build. As a log home enthusiast and a residential designer, the lifestyle issue for me can be narrowed down to interior details and exterior details. Interior details as described previ-



ously deal with the essentials of living in your home, the type of interior room functions, furniture placement, interior decorations, etc.

Exterior details will include items such as driveway and parking areas, public and private entries and access, transition areas such as walkways to and from parking, porches, patios, outdoor living and entertaining areas. Other exterior details that will be impacted by lifestyle choices are exterior steps and stairway styles, door and window styles, exterior masonry, exterior trim and decorative treatments, and any detail that will affect the look and feel of the home and the surrounding property. Interior and exterior details of the home will reflect your lifestyle choices that you will be asked to consider throughout the design and building of your log home.

The level of detail planning will differ from person to person. The impact of your lifestyle on these interior and exterior details, how you will live with and utilize your log home and the individual living spaces throughout, begins with how well you can visualize and plan for the small things of your home. Take time to consider the details of your log home. Details are a part of any home, whether you are building a small cabin in the woods, or a primary residence. The small amount of planning effort it takes can pay off in the efficiency of your home's layout. 🏠

Watch for future articles on putting together the log home design puzzle.

The author, Jim Kanagy, works with Hochstetler Milling and has been designing log homes and timber homes for more than 25 years.

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After Visiting Hochstetler, See Mohican's Natural Beauty - Largest Amish Community in the World is Nearby -

Take advantage of your trip to Hochstetler Milling by also seeing what else the Mohican area has to offer. From McKay take State Route 60 into Loudonville, where you'll discover an array of dining options and specialty shops. Then follow State Route 3 south to the Wally Road Scenic Byway area - and you'll see why we are well known as the camp and canoe capital of Ohio.

No visit to the area is complete without touring Mohican State Park and Forest. From Loudonville, take State Route 3 south to State Route 97 and you'll discover 6,000 acres of rugged woodlands that are simply beautiful no matter what season you visit. Don't miss the Gorge Overlook, a Registered National Natural Landmark offering a stunning view of Clearfork Gorge - a spectacular chasm over a thousand feet wide and 300-feet deep.

In the heart of the forest, stop at the scenic Covered Bridge where it spans the Clear Fork River. Enjoy a picnic lunch along its bank, or take the 2-mile hike to Big and Little Lyons Falls. Mohican boasts over 45 miles of hiking trails, ranging from easy to difficult, which wind along its rocky hillsides. You'll also find snowmobile, cross-country skiing, and bridle trails, as well as a challenging 25-mile mountain bike path rated by many as the best in Ohio.

Ohio's Amish Country, one of the state's largest attractions, is just a short drive from Loudonville. Follow State Route 39 east to Holmes County, and spend a day exploring a variety of shops tucked in the rolling hills and inside the small Amish communities. Sample dozens of cheeses and take home your favorites. You'll find hardwood furniture, baked goods, quilts, and crafts. Tour an Amish farm, and dine at one of the fabulous Amish-style restaurants.

Continue your tour to adjacent Wayne County, where a visit to the village of Kidron is a must. It's home to the famous Lehman's, with thousands of items from hardware to non-electric appliances, and much more. Other unique attractions include Smucker's, P. Graham Dunn Gallery, and Pine Tree Barn.

For a complete list of things to see and do in the area, visit the www.Loudonville-Mohican.com, www.VisitAmishCountry.com, and WayneCountyCVB.org.

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At Home in the Woods...

For the Mullins', Building Own Home

When Rick and Kandy Mullins decided to build their own log home, Rick asked himself one question. "How hard could it be?"

As it turns out, the building process was not difficult at all. The challenge for Rick was finding the time to build while working 50-60 hours per week as a quality manager.

"With my job experience in reading blueprints and running power equipment, I was confident I could build our log home myself. Plus, I had helped a neighbor build his log home, so I had a pretty good idea what was involved," Rick recalled. "The process took a little longer than planned, but the satisfaction of stacking our own logs was more than worth the extra time."

For several years Rick and Kandy attended log home shows and read log home magazines, with hopes of one day living in a log home of their own. Their dream became a reality when they sold their home in Mansfield, Ohio and broke ground at the top of a scenic 5-acre lot near Pleasant Hill Lake in Perrysville. That was, Rick

noted, after countless hours of research.

"We chose to buy our logs from nearby Hochstetler Milling, and they were wonderful to work with. We fell in love with their McKay model home, and made so many visits to study its design that they began calling us by name as soon as we walked through the door. We also made several trips to another McKay design that was under construction. We took dozens of pictures and made notes at both locations before we had Hochstetler draw up blueprints of the McKay with our custom revisions."

The Mullins' began building in May of 2006, while living in a camper on the same property. Using the blueprints and construction manual provided by Hochstetler Milling, the entire process went very smoothly. Rick only made a couple minor changes from his original plans - leaving an upstairs bedroom open to create a loft, and making a small design change on a closet.

As Rick says, "Once you get the shell up, you're only limited by your



own imagination!"

Using the primitive living quarters of their camper as incentive, Rick finished a bedroom and bathroom first, and they were able to officially move into their log home in July of 2007 - although it was December of that year when the rest of the home was completed.

Along the way, Rick used several time-saving strategies he highly recommends to others. For instance, he pre-stained all the beams, rafters, and tongue and groove panels before putting them in place. Not only was it quicker and easier to do on the ground, it was also safer than working on ladders and scaffolding.

To avoid trying to carry a heavy claw-footed bathtub upstairs, Mullins simply used a forklift to put it in place before the loft was finished - also reducing the chance of damaging walls in the moving process. He also rec-



ommends waiting to pour the concrete floor of a basement until after it is under roof - to allow water to drain naturally and eliminate clean-up from inevitable rainfall.

The result of Mullins' labor is a beautiful log home accented with their aforementioned imagination. The interior beams and rafters are stained in rich English walnut, which allows them to stand out against white stained tongue and groove ceilings. In the family room sits a Soapstone wood-burning stove purchased at Lehman Hardware in Kidron,



Was a Labor of Love

which combined with Geothermal heating, has produced winter heating bills that Rick describes as "embarrassingly low!"

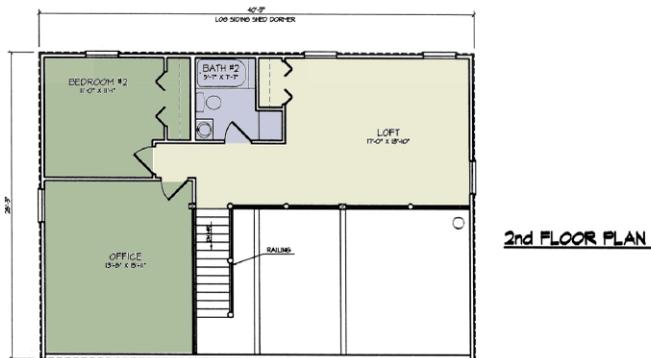
Rick incorporated many items found on their property into the home's decor. He peeled and stained a narrow Hickory limb, and fashioned it into a handrail to the basement.

Similar branches were used for clothing racks throughout the home. Fossils and old electric insulators uncovered while digging have also found their way into the design.

All the home's interior doors were Amish-made by County Line, but the large sliding barn door that separates the master bedroom from the bath is always a favorite feature of visitors. A five-foot stone veneer surrounds the shower, giving it a cave-like

appearance that also draws many compliments.

For anyone interested in building their own log home, Rick and Kandy Mullins would be happy to answer any questions and will even open their home up for a tour. Simply call Hochstetler Milling at 800-368-1015 to make arrangements.



Would you like to have your home featured in a future issue? Please submit pictures and a few words to Hochstetler Milling, 552 St. Rt. 95, Loudonville, OH 44842. If selected, someone will call you for an interview.



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History of Hochstetler Milling

continued from front page

Fortunately, I had the opportunity of working with Roy Teide, owner of American Timber Frames who was a Case Western University grad having 7 years of college under his belt. He graciously shared his wealth of knowledge, thus filling in some of the educational gaps that may have been missed otherwise.

As an Amish youth there were many opportunities to learn the building trade. Barn raisings and house raisings were not uncommon, along with many other smaller projects. When 16, my first real building job was working on an old timber frame barn and renovating it for a home. The next project was helping build a log home. This I greatly enjoyed, which was a primary influence in getting involved in the log home industry in later years.

From there, 5 years were put in at American Timber Frames, a company that designed and built heavy timber framed structures with traditional mortise and tenon joinery held together with wooden pegs instead of bolts or nails. This was a natural fit for me, satisfying a need for excelling in craftsmanship. This also gave me a lot of hands-on design experience. Today Hochstetler Milling's designs are heavily influenced by this experience.

Other areas of experience that impacted the company today was building high end homes in the Columbus area, such as in Muirfield Village - a Jack Nicklaus golfing community. All together it gave me a design builder perspective of a log home producer, rather than from the sawmill perspective. This serves us well when

working with log home-builders.

How a young person with no business experience, no good business plan, and no wealthy father to back me up, could convince the late Ron McMillian from First Knox National Bank to loan me \$15,000 at 18.5% interest to initially buy the planer mill is truly amazing. Somehow he believed in the young man and his planer.

It helped that Roy Teide put in a few good words for me, along with the fact that I was investing an additional \$15,000 of my own money in the project. Another thing that probably convinced him is the fact that I was able to save 80% of my income since coming "of age" - an Amish term for when they can keep their income, which typically is 21 years old in the Amish culture.

Growing up, things were pretty tight on the farm during my teen years. I didn't get any allowances like some of my friends, nor most youth do today. We were allowed to keep our earnings after hours, when the farm work was done.

One of those after hours projects was catching butcher chickens from area farms. After dark we would catch the chickens with our hands and carry them to the truck, where they were put in crates to haul off to the local dressing plant. There were normally enough



The Young Man's Planer: The bulk of Levi's original business loan was invested in this planer.

"catchers" to each do about 1,000, which took 2-3 hours. Normal pay was around \$7.00 for the night. Naturally we thought twice before we spent this hard-earned "spending money" on any petty items.

With these and other projects, I had saved about \$500 when coming "of age" at 21 years old. Looking back, I honestly believe that this saved spending money is probably the most significant "seed money" that ever went into Hochstetler Milling.

Like so many other ventures, the initial \$30,000 capital wasn't enough to get the planer mill running. Working a full time construction job made the payments, but not a lot left over to keep the project moving forward. It still gives me moist eyes to recall the desperate situation and how I lamented my dilemma to Uncle Eli, who had a lumber business, and how he came, helped me, and encouraged me to keep going and not give up. 🏠

to be continued in the next issue

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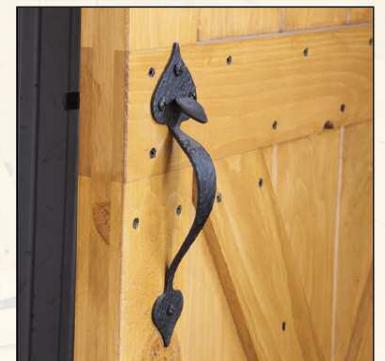
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Q&A **ASK THE EXPERTS**

QUESTION:

Recently we were at a log home show and we were given conflicting viewpoints concerning single versus double tongue and groove. Which do you feel is best?

ANSWER:

Both arguments have very little merit and are often used as a marketing ploy. Go with whatever is standard from the company you are buying from.

What is important though, is that there is a tongue and groove and that there is a cavity for the gasket. Otherwise, if you squeeze the gasket between layers without a cavity, your log home is essentially setting on sponge. This will cause excessive settling once loaded with snow, etc.

A reversed tongue and groove, where the groove is on the bottom, such as in a spline system, is not a good idea as water could enter and cause problems.

If you have a question, please submit to Levi Hochstetler at 1-800-368-1015 or mail to Hochstetler Milling, 552 St. Rt. 95, Loudonville, OH 44842.

Buckeye Log Builders Provides Experience and Knowledge

As partners in Buckeye Log Builders, brothers Mahlon and Elmer Hochstetler have been building high quality log homes since 2003. Headquartered near the small town of Brinkhaven in Knox County, Ohio, the crew of up to 7 employees constructs and remodels log homes primarily in mid-central and north-central Ohio - but have traveled as far as Kelley's Island on Lake Erie for their craft.

Buckeye Log Builders builds homes exclusively for Hochstetler Milling, and enjoy a close working relationship - in part because Mahlon and Elmer happen to be brothers to Levi, Hochstetler Milling's owner. However the companies share something else in common. They can both count on each other when it comes to quality and providing customer satisfaction.

As Mahlon explains, "Once a customer signs with Buckeye Log Builders, we work closely with Hochstetler Milling to handle all scheduling and delivery of materials, which is one less thing a customer has to worry about. Since we use Hochstetler Milling for preparing the blueprints, we can also be confident that they will be up to speed in providing all the necessary materials."



Mahlon went on to say that he can always count on the quality of the materials that Hochstetler provides. And in the very rare occasion that there is a problem, their close relationship allows them to easily get replacement materials quickly if necessary.

Elmer and Mahlon have both taken courses in log home construction, as well as in grading materials. As a double check, they personally inspect all logs when they arrive at the job site. Mahlon notes, "This is an important advantage that would be

continued on page 8

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Buckeye Log Builders *continued from page 7*

missed by a do-it-yourselfer, or a builder who doesn't specialize in log homes."

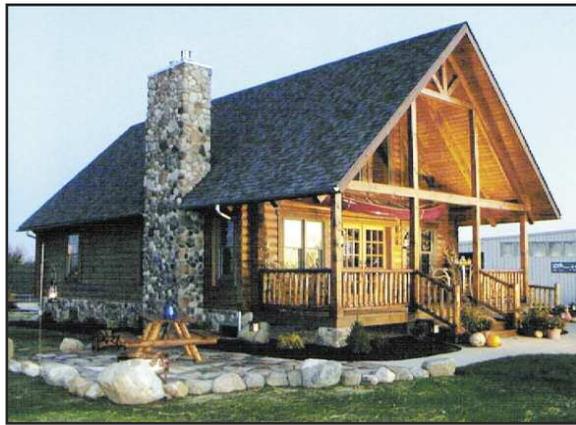
Buckeye Log Builders takes pride in working directly with customers throughout the entire building process. However, Mahlon stresses that it is far better to plan well in advance than to rush into any building project. He recommends that customers know what they want - but to be realistic.

"Have a good idea of your wants and needs, but be sure they will fit within your budget. And make sure your budget is in place before starting to draw up prints."

Mahlon says pre-planning even the smallest details will ensure your project goes smoothly. Everything from the type of flooring and kitchen countertops, to the color of interior stain and the hardware for cabinets is best decided before building begins.

"When details like these are made on the fly in the middle of a project, it results in a rushed decision and more stress for both the homeowner and builder." Mahlon goes on to say, "We are happy to draw on our years of experience to guide customers through these or any other decisions they may have."

Another tip that he wished to share



was that in today's tough economy, one could save on their budget by adding some kinds of details to a log home at a later time. Things such as a garage, fireplace, back deck, or finishing the basement can all be added later when they better fit your budget.

The crew at Buckeye Log Builders enjoys working closely with clients whether the project is big or small. They've also established a good relationship with banks that don't mind dealing with log home-builders, which is sometimes hard to find.

Mahlon concluded with, "We simply enjoy using our experience in building log homes to guide our customers through the building experience. The result is a better product and a happier customer."

For more information about Buckeye Log Builders, please contact Mahlon Hochstetler at 419-566-8368. 

CABIN FEVER

Groundhog Day *As told by Levi Hochstetler*

Early one Spring day my brother, Mahlon, and two of his adventurous friends decided to go back to our little cabin in the woods and basically live off the land for the weekend. Since they took no food, this would be a good test to see if they could, in fact, not only survive but actually enjoy living in the great outdoors off what nature had provided. Although

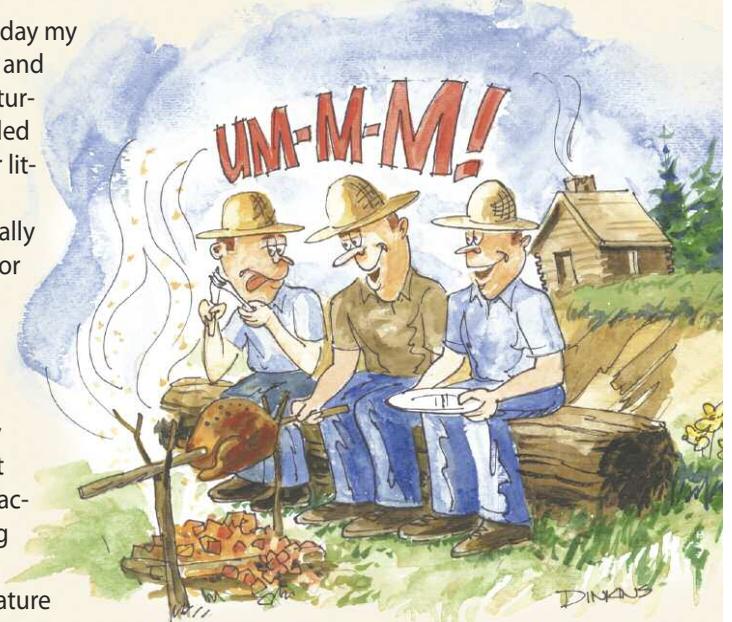
they were young teenagers at the time, each had considerable experience in camping and hunting, so the idea seemed especially appealing.

As they walked along, they talked about hunting the "back 40", a unique blend of pastures, meadows, and mature woods literally teeming with game. They'd sampled venison, pheasant, quail, rabbit, and squirrel before - but never groundhog, which their friends had assured them, "tasted like chicken!" The winding trail led through a canopy of Hickory, Oak, and Maple trees to a beautiful clearing where the meadow started. The lush green grass of the meadow seemed a likely spot to bag their supper, so they quietly walked along the tree-line, scanning the meadow below.

Suddenly, a small brown object caught their eye about 150 yards away. A groundhog to be sure, but too far away to risk a shot. As they began their stalk, stopping each time their quarry looked up, they were amazed at his size. He was, indeed, a trophy! And, after feeding several weeks on the tender grass, this groundhog would be delicious, they theorized. Finally, after patiently walking half-crouched to within 75 yards, the boys decided they were close enough. Mahlon carefully raised the .22 to his shoulder, centered the crosshairs on the prize, and squeezed the trigger. A clean hit.

The boys quickly retrieved their prize and proudly headed back to camp with their dinner. In no time, a circle of glowing embers crackled in the stone fire ring outside the little log cabin. After skinning and skewering the "hog" and placing it about a foot above the coals on the makeshift rotisserie, they settled back to watch in great anticipation. Mahlon, the head chef, turned the spit every 5 minutes or so, reminding his friends that timing was critical to locking in the delicate flavor.

Finally, after what seemed an eternity, Mahlon announced their meal was ready. He grabbed his hunting knife and sliced off a hearty chunk. It seemed a little tough, but the mouth-watering taste would, no doubt be good enough to satisfy even the most discriminating gourmet. Well, one bite erased that thought. The meat had the pungent odor of week-old roadkill and tasted even worse! It was unanimously decided no amount of seasoning could make this old groundhog, freshly out of hibernation, "taste like chicken" and their "gourmet" meal was hurled back into the woods for the critters to eat...if they dared!



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Please mail your submission to Hochstetler Milling, 552 St. Rt. 95, Loudonville, OH 44842. Hope to read about your log home adventure in a future issue!