



Mill • Direct News

Living the Log Home Lifestyle

Spring 2015

VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

I believe we are on the right side of winter. Spring is on it's way. It won't be long, and we will again be treated to the Wood Thrush's reverberating melodies. Already the Great Horned Owls are sitting on their eggs and the Red Tailed Hawks are getting excited and building their nests. In another month the ducks will be making a big push to all points north in anticipation of finding a good, safe place to raise their families.

Not a lot different then us humans looking for property in order to build a home to raise our family. We too want a safe place. Is there any type of home that gives us a more safe, "snug as a bug" feeling then inside a log home with the family encircled around a crackling fire in front of the fireplace or wood stove, eating popcorn? Outside come what may, wind storm, hail storm or blizzard, you barely notice.

Consider taking advantage of our, 2-day, "Do-it-yourself" Building Seminar. This is an excellent opportunity to learn how to construct your own log home. If it doesn't do anything else it should give you an idea if you are up to doing it or if you should hire a builder. We are also doing a 3-day Professional Building Seminar for the builder that would like to get into building log homes. Both seminars will be held at our shop. See page 3 for details.

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Savings You Can Count On

- By Bill Dinkins

Energy efficiency and "building green" seem to be among the most important considerations in building a home today - especially a log home. And, the cost savings that are the result of careful planning can be substantial. A vital factor in energy costs is how well a home is insulated. Unfortunately, logs were commonly thought to be poor insulators when, in reality, the opposite is true. R-value is the common index for measuring energy-efficiency, especially in a stick-built home, but a better indicator is actual performance in an existing home. R-values for logs typically range from R-.75 to R-1.42 per inch, depending on wood species. So an 8" thick Eastern White Pine log with an R-1.32 should be about R-10.48. However, this is inaccurate since logs utilize "thermal mass." **Thermal mass is simply the wood's ability to store energy and release it later.** What this "delayed" reaction means is a log home stays warmer longer in the winter and cooler longer in the summer. It's no wonder that log homes are popular where temperatures reach the extremes, like in Alaska or the mountain states. The best of both worlds - or seasons!

The actual effect of thermal mass was illustrated several years ago in a year-long test of ten structures - eight were conventional stick-built and two were log. The well-publicized test was conducted by the National Bureau of Standards in response to growing concerns about the perceived ineffectiveness of logs as a building material. After a year's time, energy costs were tabulated - and the results were startling. The two log structures consumed 46% less energy in the spring and fall, 24% less in the summer, and virtually the same amount in the winter! The wide variance of temperatures



The sunroom offers a relaxing place to enjoy nature in every season.

continued on page 2

Kiln-Dried vs. Air-Dried - by Levi Hochstetler

Frequently, we are asked which is best: air-dried or kiln-dried logs? And the debate has been ongoing for a long time. Actually, each drying process has its advantages.

Air-dried logs are usually dried naturally by being left outside and exposed to the weather. An ideal location would be where logs are subjected to the sun and wind, usually high on a hill. This generally takes a minimum of 12 months under optimum conditions. The goal is to reduce the moisture content (M.C.) to about 25% or less. This will vary somewhat depending on the species. For instance, Northern White Cedar dries faster than Eastern White Pine. The manufacture is also at the mercy of the weather and the climate that they may be in.

The slower the wood dries the less checking normally occurs. Thus, the assumption that air-dried will have less checking. However, in a controlled environment like inside today's new modern kilns where automatic "misting" can add moisture as needed (providing the operator is competent), little difference should be noticed. Air-dried may settle more, depending on the moisture content, then kiln-dried though since it usually has a higher M.C. Air-dried logs are less

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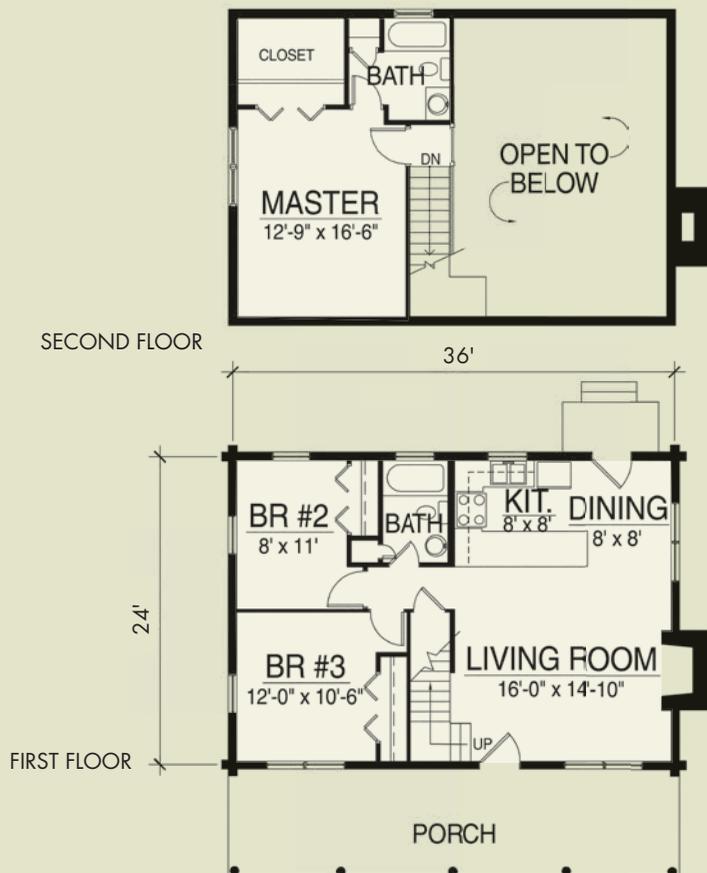


Welcome to the charming, 3-bedroom Greenbriar, which looks much larger than it appears from the outside due to the open-concept great room with fully-timbered roof system and large stone fireplace.

It features the spacious master bedroom with private master bath on the second floor - a quiet, relaxing respite from the downstairs. The first floor includes two additional bedrooms and bath.

The full-length covered front porch offers a comfortable place to relax and enjoy the outdoors, along with your guests.

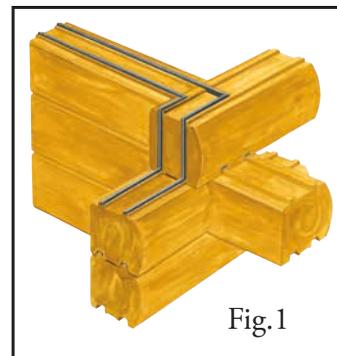
The popular Greenbriar offers a lot in a small package and is affordably priced.



in the spring and fall, with accompanying benefit of thermal mass, accounts for the substantial energy savings during those seasons. Conversely, the more stable temperatures in the winter reduce the thermal mass affect. This comprehensive study substantiated what log home manufactures and homeowners have known for a long time - log homes are every bit as energy-efficient as conventional, and more often than not, more so.

The log homes of today are much more energy-efficient than those of the past for two major reasons. No. 1: the systems utilize superior technology and No. 2: improved construction techniques. Hochstetler Milling has always been at the forefront in developing energy-efficient systems and the current system is the result of over 28 years in the log and timber business. The evolution of this system is based on practical applications and dedication to the continued pursuit of the ultimate energy-efficient system.

Recently, a Hochstetler log home was tested by an independent heating and air conditioning specialist to determine the size of furnace needed for that specific home. The sophisticated “blower door” test involves a fan which measures the precise amount of air escaping from a specific location. After the home is “pressurized”, escaping air is monitored with the most resistance being the goal - since a substantial amount of air loss would indicate a poorly insulated home. The specialist was shocked to see the first test results and tried again, but the results were about the same. In fact, he even tried a third time but the results remained the same. The actual figure (normalized leakage) was Ln 0.13, which is significantly lower than most conventional, stick-framed homes. Armed with this information, the builder was able to install a smaller furnace and save the homeowner several thousand dollars over the years.



Hochstetler Milling recently unveiled its latest log profile and energy-efficient system. Fig.1 illustrates this innovative thinking. You’ve no doubt heard the frequent real estate saying about the importance of location, location, location. A similar saying about the effectiveness of an energy-efficient system would be gasket, gasket, gasket. As you can see in the illustration, ALL areas where logs are joined are effectively sealed. Proper installation and placement of the gasket is of utmost importance and a key reason why an experienced, competent log home builder is so important. Also, notice the features and benefits of the log profile itself:

- 1) The drip edge, which helps direct water down the wall
- 2) The position of the outside tongue moved close to the outside edge to block water from penetrating between the logs
- 3) The exclusive tapered sides of each tongue to help the builder stack logs faster
- 4) The “boxed heart” which helps to eliminate through checking

There are many more considerations in planning and building an energy-efficient home and we can assist you. For instance, you can take advantage of a southern exposure by using large roof overhangs, at least 2’, and plenty of windows to lower energy bills. In the summer, when the sun is traveling at its highest arc, the overhang will block the penetrating warm rays; while in the winter, when the sun is lower, the rays will provide comforting warm rays through the windows and help heat your home. An added benefit is the larger overhangs also shield the log’s finish from harmful UV rays, extending the life of the finish. Incidentally, always buy a quality finish. Make sure it is waterproof, yet allows the log to “breathe”, and has a UV inhibitor such as Sikken’s Log & Siding.

Much of the heat loss in a home is, literally, through the roof. So it just makes good sense to pay particular attention to that area. Infrared studies have shown the greatest heat loss to be around the rafters where fiberglass or blown-in insulation butts to the wood. Although each is acceptable and less costly than SIPS panels, they are not nearly as effective. Our standard 7-3/8” nailbase insulation panels are rated at R-33 and the 9-1/4” panels are R-42. The panels are 4’x8’ and form a continuous “solid blanket” of protection with the seams between the panels positioned directly above the rafters.

The last major energy consideration is your heat source - and the choices are practically endless. Many of today’s homeowners are extremely environmentally-conscious and want to take advantage of nature. In addition, power generated by the sun, wind, and geothermal systems cost much less than that supplied by utilities and fossil fuels, regardless of how efficient they are. By building “green” you are not only being a good neighbor and conserving our resources, you are saving money in the process. 



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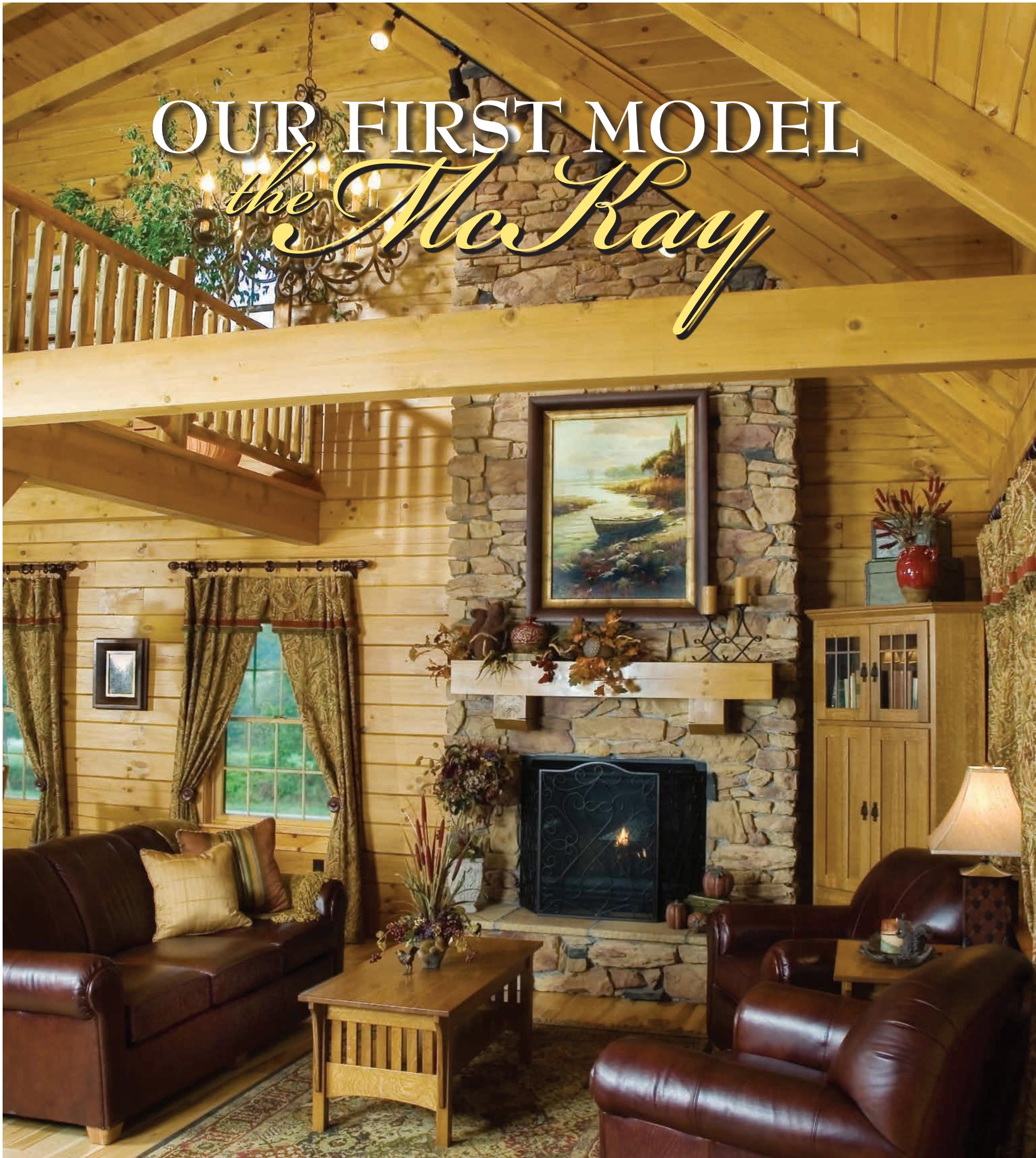
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OUR FIRST MODEL

the MacRay



The idea for our McKay model originated several years before it was actually built. When Hochstetler Milling's planer was moved from Howard, OH to our present location north of Loudonville, we built a small 12x24 log cabin which would serve as our office. There was no electricity or inside facilities and it was heated with a propane heater. For Levi, myself and our secretary this was our second home for several years and, although rustic, served its purpose.

As time went on and more customers asked to see our model we realized a model was necessary to take the next step in growing our business. After looking at several building sites we found a small lot in an ideal location - at the intersection of St. Rt.'s 95 & 60. It was only 1/2 mile from our mill and would attract visitors drawn to the Mohican area attractions. The triangle-shaped lot was also across the street from the historic McKay General Store, a frequent stop for campers and outdoorsmen in route to Loudonville and Wally Rd. campgrounds.

After considering several floor plans, we broke ground in 2003 for the 2000 sq. ft., 3 bedroom, 2-1/2 bath, McKay model. This was built with the idea that it would be suitable for a typical family with 2-3 children. The model included the popular open-concept great room with large exposed ceiling beams, a floor-to-ceiling fireplace, a large master bath with a shower and garden tub, and sunroom with a cathedral ceiling and windows on three sides for a panoramic view of the surrounding landscape. As the warm weather of summer faded and was replaced by the crisp temperatures of fall, our model added a new shape to the rural landscape. The 1-1/2 story log model with twin doghouse dormers and full-length covered front porch was almost finished.

The next step was working on the inside, so an interior decorator was hired to put on the finishing touches. Her "touches" are evident in just about every room. As you enter the great room you are drawn to the large stone fireplace with massive mantle and oil

painting of a row boat on the shore of a picturesque winding river. The warmth of the flickering fire seems to welcome you and the leather sofa seems a likely spot to curl up with your favorite novel.

The dining area has a solid wood harvest table and bouquet of colorful flowers and place mats which are changed periodically to coordinate with the seasons. A raised serving counter divides the dining area from the kitchen, which features custom hickory cabinets and tile floor. A colorful wrap-around counter, baskets and vases with plants and a stylish wall clock add charm to the decor.

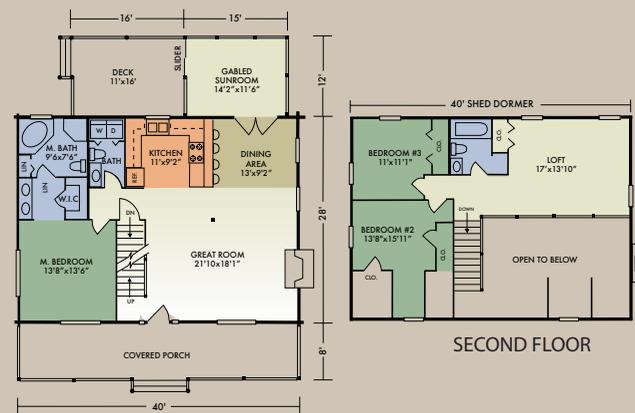
The inviting master bedroom features large exposed timbers, an antique bureau, and a tray placed on the bed with decorative rolls and coffee mug to complete the "lived in" look. This leads into the impressive master bath with small matching tiles on the sink and garden tub, shelf with baskets and bric-a-brac and color-coordinated towels.

The stairs leading to the second floor loft has hand-peeled railing and heavy timber treads and provides a dramatic view of the great room below. Although the rooms on the main floor are furnished and decorated like a residence might be, the second floor bedrooms are offices and equipped accordingly. They're attractively decorated like your home office might be. The upstairs bath, like the downstairs bath, has a beautiful faux finish on the walls along with coordinating towels, curtains, and paintings.

The basement continues our office area with a design studio, sales office and conference room. Steve Lykins, our head designer, has his computer and CAD (computer aided design) system here. The CAD system allows him to design and print out your blueprints - from floor plans, to elevations, to detailed cutaways.

Hochstetler prides itself on providing its customers with the most complete packages available. It's

FIRST FLOOR



called our "no-shop" package and includes all logs, siding, timbers, railing, doors, windows for the exterior shell plus all timbers, tongue-and-groove, sub-floor materials and insulation panels for the interior. Our state-of-the-art mill includes the planer, inventory space, and three dry kilns. Certified graders ensure your logs and timbers are premium quality and are kiln-dried to strict industry standards as specified by the Log Home Council.

A second model, the Black Fork is also at the mill location. It is approximately 1100 sq. ft. and more of a starter or vacation home. It also has the popular open-concept great room with exposed timbered ceiling, large stone fireplace, adjoining dining area, galley kitchen and single bedroom on the main floor. It has an open loft upstairs where a second bedroom and bath could be added.

Words do not accurately describe the true "log home lifestyle" that our customers often mention but you can get a feel for that relaxing, welcoming ambience by visiting our models. They are open M-F from 9-5 pm and Sat., 9-2 pm. Closed Sun. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 800-368-1015. You can also visit hochstetlerloghomes.com 



Kiln-Dried vs. Air-Dried - continued from page 1

expensive, up to 20% less, than kiln-dried since the substantial investment and the high cost of running the kiln is eliminated.

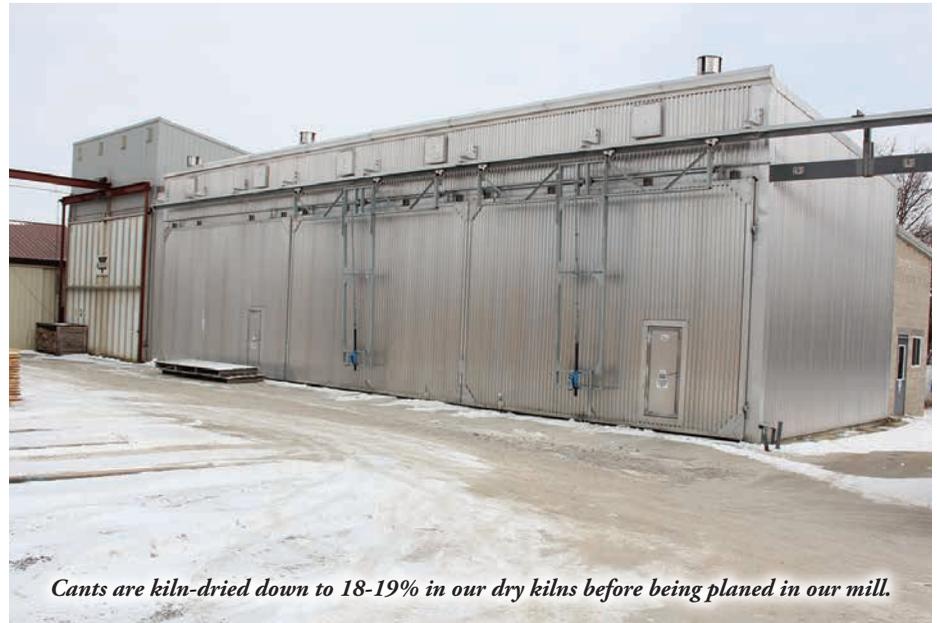
Kiln-drying is the most effective way of ridding logs and timbers of mold, mildew and insect infestation. The kiln is turned up to 150 degrees on the final days of drying, which kills larvae and insects. Kiln-drying also "sets the pitch," which means the sap is crystallized and will not seep out later. Kiln-dried material is periodically checked during the drying process until the M.C. reaches the desired level. When the manufacture kiln-dries the logs down to an average of 18%-19%, they will settle very little, as low as 1/2" for a 8' wall.

Dr. Gene Wengerd, Ph.D of Wood Doctor's Rx, LLC, says, "kiln-dried logs and timber are better than air-dried products as the moisture content is lower in kiln dried material which means, in turn, that most of the natural shrinkage that will occur in wood as it dries will occur during the drying process rather than after installation. As a result they will be more stable - requiring less caulking and less problems, like doors and windows sticking." Other benefits he says is "the material is 10 to 20% lighter than air-dried and 50% lighter than green logs and that the logs are sanitized from mold, mildew, stain fungi and decay fungi (which cause rot), plus insects, their larvae and

eggs, are all killed when temperatures exceed 130°F. Furthermore, as these pathogens require water for their daily activity, the drying also eliminates the required moisture." He also stated that "when wood is heated over 150°F in the kiln, the sap, pitch or resin in the wood that would be liquid at room temperatures is evaporated. The likelihood of seepage of sap after installation is virtually eliminated."

Another point he made, is that "kiln dried wood is ready for the application of the finish, and that in many cases, the finish itself will penetrate deeper with kiln-dried wood, providing longer lasting finishes."

Hochstetler has a unique, 2-step method of drying. Cants (square timbers which will be milled into logs) are air-dried for up to 9 months and then taken to our kiln to be "finished off." This normally takes an additional 10 days or so (depending on the



Cants are kiln-dried down to 18-19% in our dry kilns before being planed in our mill.

moisture content), until cants reach an average of 18%-19%. Having our own modern kilns (verses in the old days where we depended on others to kiln-dry our wood) has given us the quality control that is so important in proper kiln drying.

Using this 2-step method gives our clients the best of both worlds. First, with the slow drying of air-drying you get minimum checking. Plus, with the kiln-drying you get the benefit of a dryer, sanitized, stable log that doesn't seep sap. 🏠

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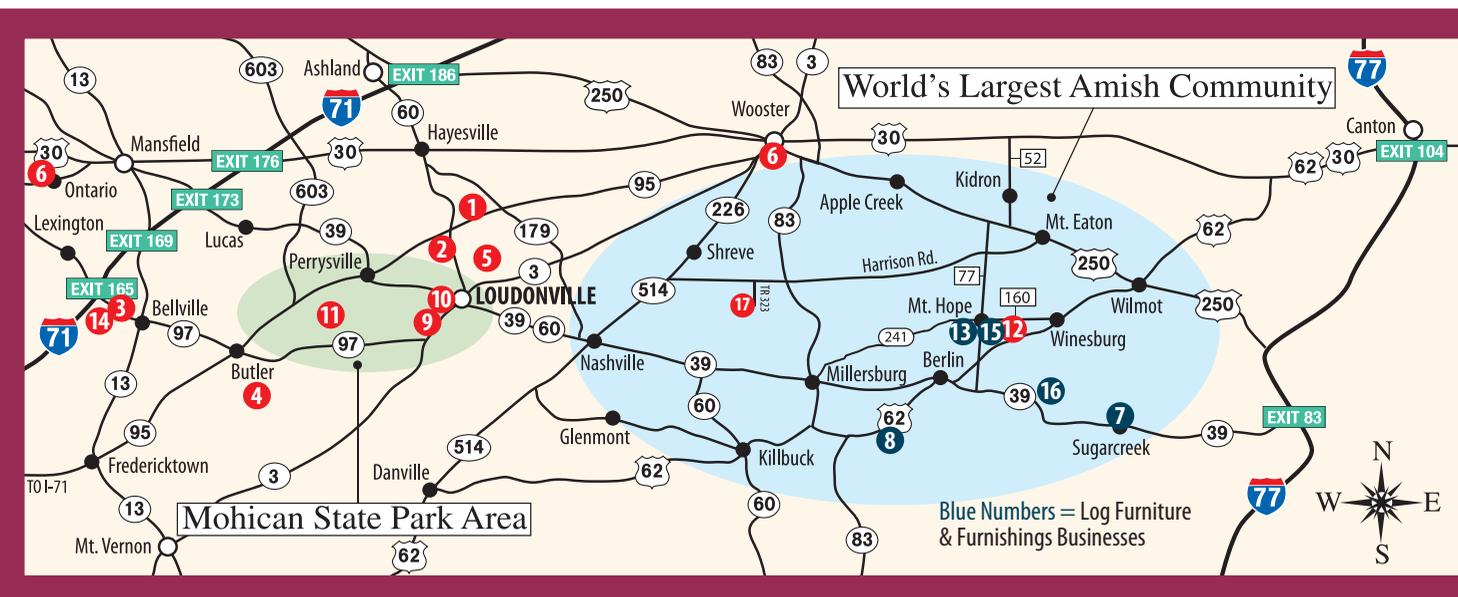
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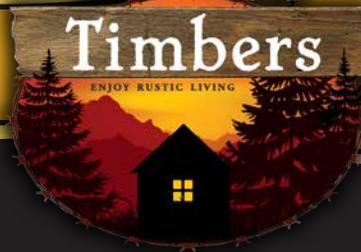
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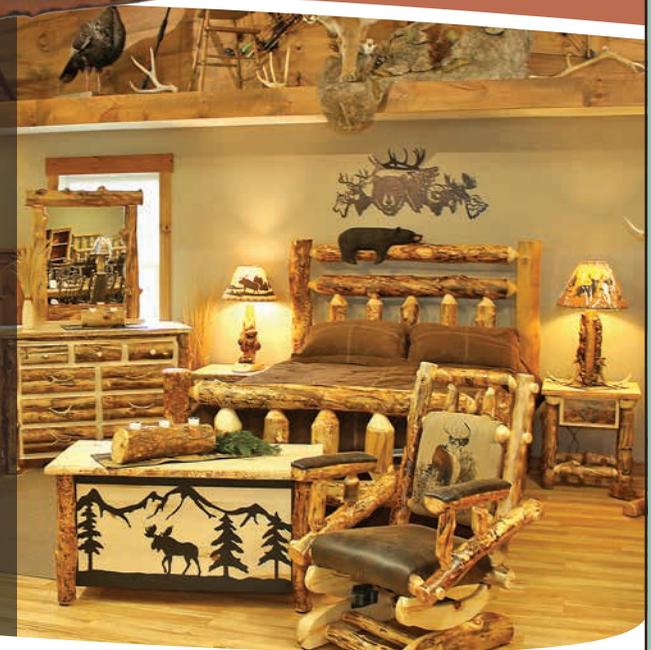
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CABIN FEVER

“BEARLY BELIEVABLE”

by Bill Dinkins

For the serious hunter, few hunts are as exciting as a bear hunt. There is the extensive year-log planning and preparation, and finally the long-awaited trip - often to the remotest reaches of the United States or Canada.

Aaron, an experienced hunter, had talked his buddy, Jeremy, into one such trip to Happy Day Lodge in northern Ontario - a place Aaron had had success before and felt confident would be successful again. The camp was a popular destination for fishermen and hunters - especially bear and moose hunters. In fact, they planned to do just that - hunt in the mornings and evenings and fish in the afternoons. An outdoorsman's dream vacation!

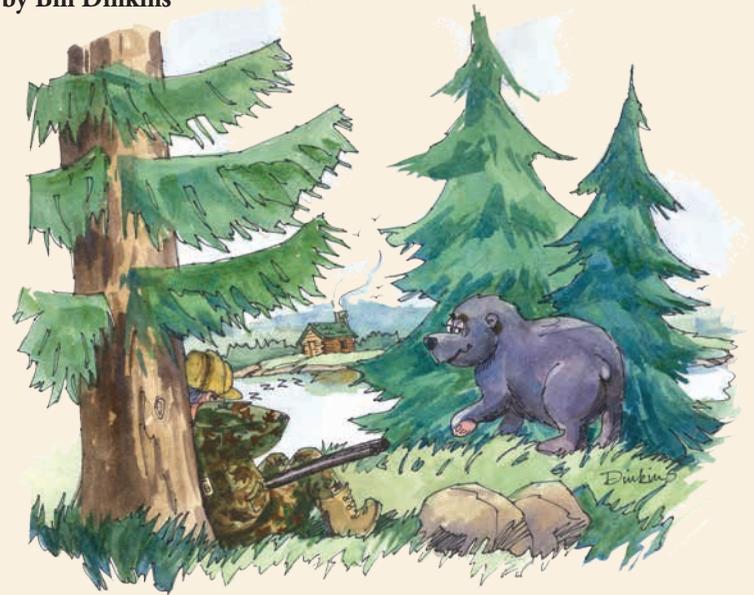
Aaron and Jeremy live near the small town of Delta - a stone's throw from Toledo, in northwestern Ohio. Although Aaron had hunted bear before, this would be a first for Jeremy. But he still knew that preparation was essential and often the difference between bagging a bear or going home empty-handed. Fall black bear season opened in August in Ontario so he had most of the summer to practice and prepare.

He had purchased a 12-gauge shotgun, slugs, a green-grey camo infused with the latest “no-smell” technology and matching Rocky boots. A tar-like black substance was used to hide his jovial face. Make no mistake, he was “loaded for bear.”

The third week in August they headed north to Wawa, Ontario, then east towards Chapleau. After the grueling 12-hour trip they were exhausted and hit the sack early. They arose early next morning, and after a hearty northwoods breakfast Jeremy met Ethan, the camp owner's son, at the dock for the 5-mile boat ride to the bear stand. Soon Jeremy was sitting comfortably on the ground with his back propped against a large pine tree - proceeding to take in all the sights and sounds around him. There was the nervous chatter of the red squirrels, the occasional squawk of the raven and the non-stop, melodic symphony of numerous song birds. A short time later, Aaron decided to check on his friend - only to find him snoring away and fast asleep. The previous day's trip had induced a “backwoods coma.”

Next day, Jeremy met Ethan at the dock and both had a hearty laugh over Jeremy's “sleepover” as they cruised down the lake. Ethan reminded him how difficult it would be to shoot a bear while sleeping. “Almost impossible,” he exclaimed. Once again Jeremy trudged up the hillside and took up his familiar position under the tree. And, once again, Aaron went to check on him - only to find him snoozing away with his firearm laying harmlessly across his lap! They both returned to camp where Jeremy announced, “Well, this is the second day and I haven't seen a single bear, yet.”

Unbeknownst to him a video cam had been set up on a nearby tree and, sure enough, a large bear had passed barely 30 yards in front of Jeremy. So, he was right - he hadn't seen a bear, but I'll bet the bear saw him! 🏠



Do you have an interesting short story about a favorite memory of a log home? Maybe it's a childhood vacation, a weekend at the lake, or a day visiting a friend. Whatever you remember and love to tell others qualifies. Don't forget - a picture to go with your story makes it even more interesting. Please mail your submission to Hochstetler Milling, 552 Hwy. 95, Loudonville, OH 44842. **Hope to read about your log home adventure in a future issue!**

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