



Mill • Direct News

Living the Log Home Lifestyle

Fall 2019

VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

We are back! On August 2&3 the Timber Framers Guild had a conference in Manchester, NH. We wanted to have a display at the conference so we decided to make it part of a mini-family vacation. We left July 30th and came home August 9th. In addition to the two days at the show we toured some of the New England states. Probably the highlight of the trip was going out on the ocean with a boat at Bar Harbor, Maine for a bird and whale watch tour. We got to see a few dolphins, sharks, sea lions and puffins. However, the best was getting to see two hump-back whale's blow! They were about 50' long and weighed an estimated 75,000 100,000 pounds!

The weather here in north central Ohio, while stabilized, continues to be on the wet side. We are still struggling in keeping an ample amount of raw logs in the yards. Fortunately, our cants used in the stacking logs are inventoried for a year in advance in order to air-dry them before they go in the kiln. This gives us plenty of cushion when we run into bad logging weather.

With no Log Cabin Days this year we will miss seeing you all. But, do save the date for next year, which is tentatively scheduled for September 18th & 19th 2020.

For your satisfaction, and our sanity, order blue prints now if you're building in 2020! So Long, Levi

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Pleasant Hill Rental Cabins: Part I - *by Bill Dinkins*



One of the ten rental cabins under construction at Pleasant Hill State Park

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District has state-owned land that it leases out to oil and gas companies. In 2015, the District decided to put those funds to work and build log cabins to rent at Pleasant Hill Lake Park. The park is comprised of 1345 scenic acres surrounding the popular lake. A natural setting for rustic log cabins. The District members visited the nearby Hochstetler log models and facilities, were duly impressed, and arranged a meeting to discuss their future plans.

Their "bucket list" included building (10) 2-bedroom rentals in a beautiful, secluded area just off St. Rt. 95 - surrounded by towering pines. They spelled out the requirements in a 100+ page document and

solicited bidding on the ambitious project. There would be two designs, one of which would be handicap-accessible. The "Hochstetler team" of Levi and Joseph Hochstetler and designer, Steve Lykins, then met with the District "team", concepts were discussed and floor plans were soon drawn up.

The lowest bid for general contracting was submitted by Classical Construction in Millersburg, Ohio. It was further agreed

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Log Basics 101 - *by Levi Hochstetler*

The log home industry has a lot of confusing terminology used in the industry. This article is based on a workshop called Log Basics 101 that Bill Dinkins got together several years ago and has presented at log home shows throughout the Midwest. It is designed to help clarify some of the terminology that gets used within the industry. It doesn't help that generally people in the industry are often inclined to focus on the technical side of things. I hope to help you dig through some of this jargon and expose only what's important.

In the 1700's and early 1800's the settlers built very rustic cabins. The logs varied in size, so they chinked in between the logs. Sometimes the chinking was wider than the logs themselves. Constant temperature changes and log settling cracked the chinking and led to early, "air conditioning" systems. Today, kiln-dried logs with tongue-and-groove (T&G) profiles, along with special gaskets, seal off air and moisture to make log homes very

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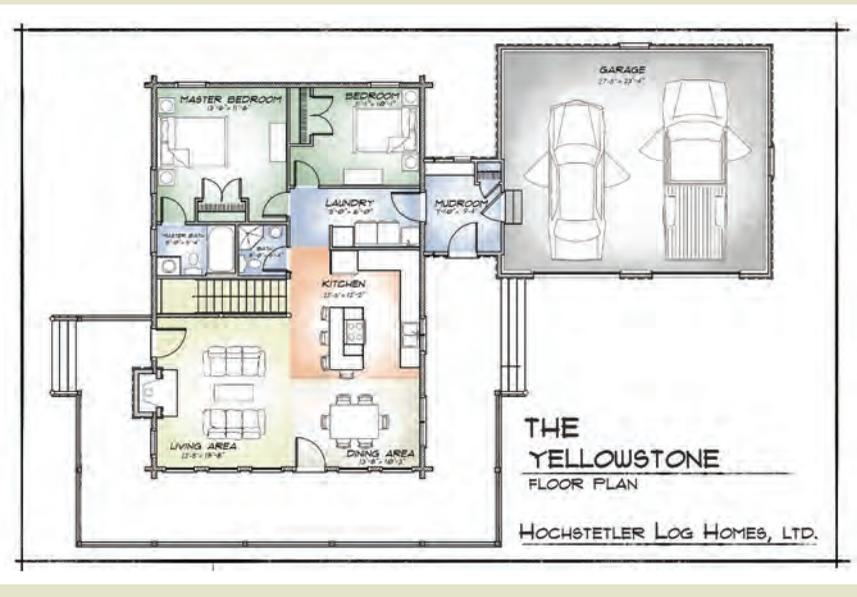
THE YELLOWSTONE

Sq. ft. 1095

2 BR / 2 BA



The Yellowstone features the convenience of single floor living. Having extensive glass makes this the popular choice for a lake or mountain view. This plan has an open-concept great room tying into the dining area and kitchen that keeps everyone together. The large master bedroom includes a walk-in closet and master bath. A second bedroom makes it convenient when the grandchildren or extra guests come with an additional bath close by. Laundry and mudroom tie the house and the garage together. For those searching for a home that has the convenience of a single floor and allows you to enjoy the sunset each evening, "look no further."



that Hochstetler Log Homes would provide materials, including logs, timbers, tongue-and-groove, windows and doors, and Mahlon Hochstetler, owner of Buckeye Log Builders, would do the actual dry in.

The Black Fork seemed to be the ideal size and, with a few changes, would suffice for one plan, Cabin A. The Mountain Laurel was the starting point for a second plan, Cabin B.

Cabin A would have steps leading up to the front door with an impressive timbered-gable above and flanked by a cedar railing. Inside, there would be an L-shaped kitchen counter with an open-concept, dining/great room area. The first-floor bedroom and bath are off the kitchen. In the loft, there is a second bedroom and bath, and sitting room overlooking the great room. An inviting stone fireplace is flanked by windows at one end. Double doors lead out to a covered full-length, 12' deep porch - perfect for viewing nature. This cozy cabin is 26' wide x 36' deep, plus the handicap-accessible rear porch.

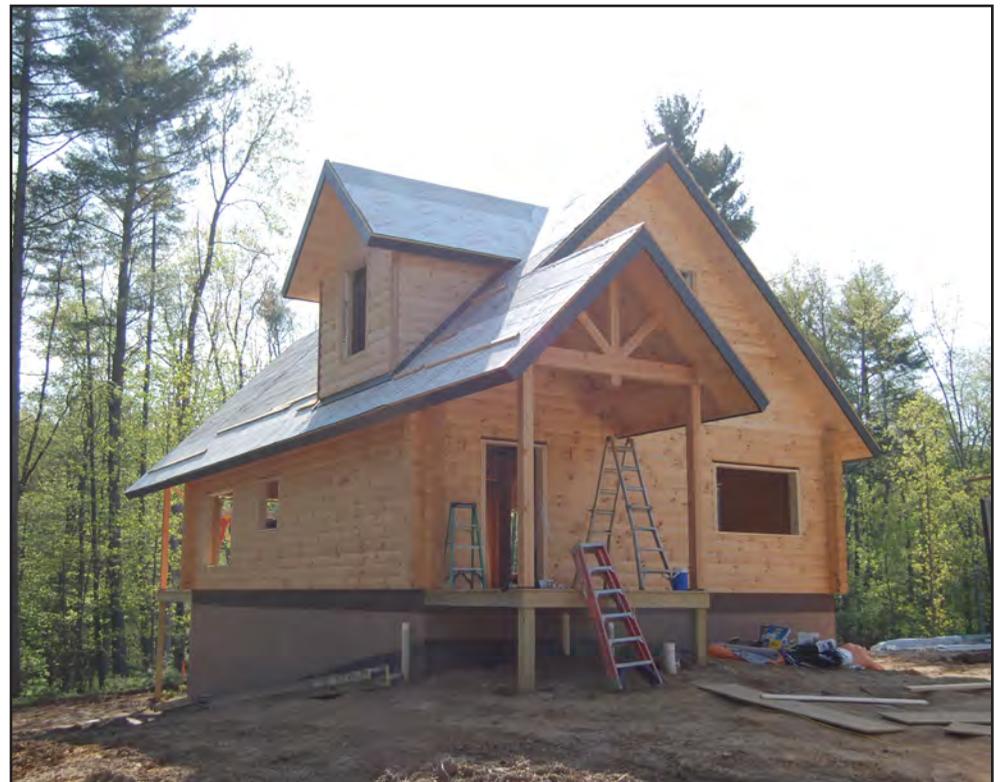
You can tour our Black Fork model at our mill location on St. Rt. 95, north of Loudonville.

Cabin B is also a 2-bedroom cabin and is slightly larger - 38' wide x 26' deep. It looks like the Mountain Laurel from the outside but is quite different inside. Like Cabin A, it also has the timbered-gable entry with cedar railing and 12' deep, rear covered porch, as well as the large stone fireplace. It also features the popular open-concept kitchen/great room area. Stairs lead up to a 12'x12' open loft and a second bedroom and bath.

Both plans are rustic, cozy and comfortable - perfect for a week or weekend! They are strategically-located to offer outstanding views of the wooded terrain, especially from the large, covered rear porches. All ten cabins are scheduled to be completed early next year and available to rent shortly thereafter.

Hochstetler Log Homes is proud to be involved in this very exciting and rewarding venture and look forward to creating many happy memories for those visiting these wonderful (with most of the comforts of home) cabins. 🏠

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



Both versions of the rental cabins will feature gabled entries, open-concept great rooms, and front and rear covered porches to take advantage of the beautiful wooded surroundings. The ten cabins will be available early next year. A great way to experience the log home lifestyle and a setting the entire family will enjoy.

Log Basics 101 - *continued from page 1*

energy-efficient.

Several years ago, the National Institute of Standards did a real life study on the energy-efficiency of different types of homes. Among the homes they tested was a log home and a stick-framed home with fiberglass insulation. The results were astounding. In the summer, the log home took 32% less energy, and in the spring and fall there was even more difference, taking 82% less. During the cold months in the winter they performed about the same. Bottom line, the log home overall used 38% less energy than a typical stick home. Remember that the actual R-value was far less in the log home as in the stick home. The stick home walls were rated at R-11, whereas the log wall was only R-7.

The reason for the difference is what engineers call **thermal mass**. This acts like a sponge; when the room warms up, the log wall absorbs the heat. As the room cools down, the heat that was absorbed into the wood gets released back into the room. This benefit is most noticeable in the spring and fall when the temperatures fluctuate in and out of the desired temperature. Whereas, with a stick home the insulation resists the heat from going through the wall—yet when it does it's gone. Wood is the only material known to man that has both thermal mass and R-value. Blocks and stone have thermal mass but no R-value and fiberglass insulation has R-value but no thermal mass!

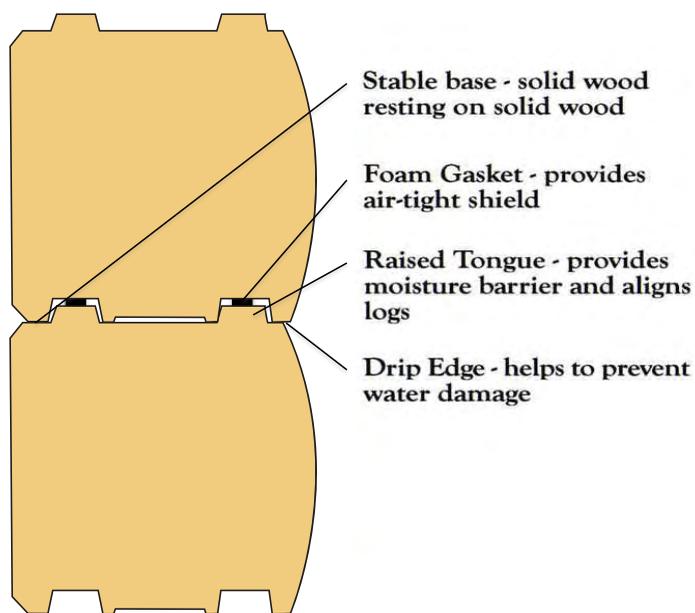
There are basically two types of log homes—handcrafted and milled. However, often there is a mixture. It's not uncommon to have milled logs with handcrafted poles for joists and rafters.

Handcrafted logs are usually hand-peeled and not tongue & grooved but Swedish coped, or sometimes flat-sawn top and bottom to allow stacking them. The logs may range from 12 to 24 inches in diameter and because of the increased labor costs, tend to cost substantially more than milled logs. Handcrafted log homes account of about 15% of log package sold.

Milled logs, unlike handcrafted, are uniform in size and shape and are usually shaped with a planer. And, since they are milled with a machine they are less expensive. Most log manufacturers do milled logs and account for about 85% of all log homes sold in the US.

Hybrids are basically a stick home with rustic siding and interior paneling; while not a true log home they are a valid consideration. They can be all drywall on the inside with the outside covered with log siding. The inside can also be covered with wood and timbers to give someone the impression that it's a log home. You can have the look of a log home, however it's not the real thing!

Hochstetler's Energy-Efficient System



Most milled logs come with a tongue & groove profile, *like the illustration above*. This profile is a well thought-out system. The two gaskets give you an assured seal. If

CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

“We have enjoyed working with everyone at Hochstetler Log Homes. Great customer service and employees take time to answer questions. Highly Recommended.”

-- Adam and Katie Harbaugh

“We are completely satisfied with Hochstetler Log Homes and our entire building process. We respect the honesty and professionalism your company demonstrates. Our overall experience was excellent and something we would do all over again.”

-- Stoker, Burgettstown, PA

We can't say enough good things about Hochstetler Log Homes. Every question we had, every phone call we made was patiently answered. The material was top grade, the delivery was good. I would recommend Hochstetler Log Homes to anyone. Their staff is so kind and knowledgeable, their business is professional but you still have that down home feeling.

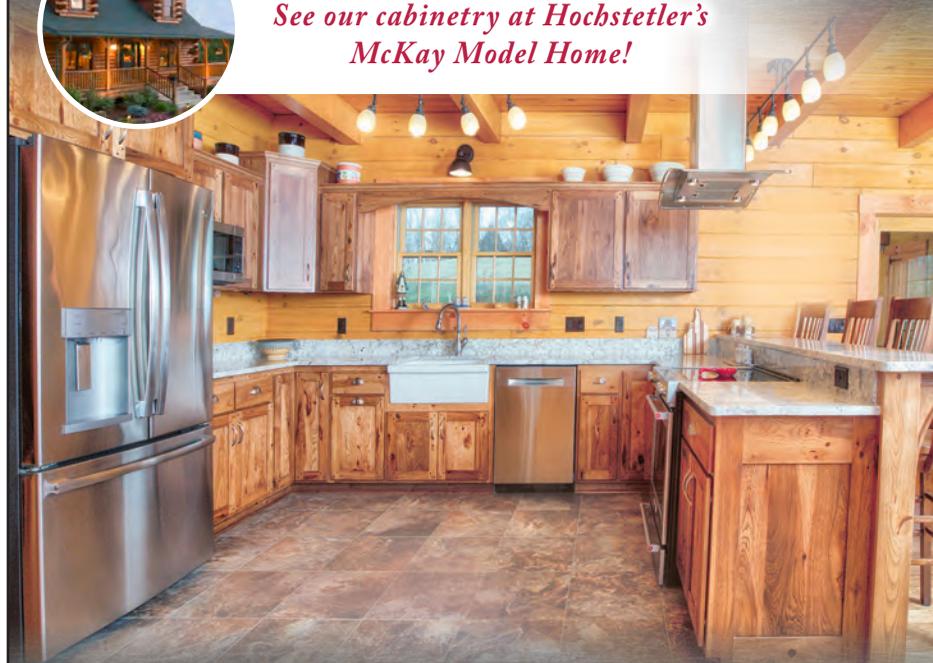
-- Larry and Angela Townsend, KY

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See Mill-Direct News back issues at www.HochstetlerLogHomes.com • 3



WHAT *Dreams* ARE MADE OF

by Bill Dinkins

For Joe Wise, the opportunity to build a log home in the woods where he once roamed was a dream come true. His father, Calvin, had purchased the secluded land many years ago at auction and built a small A-frame cabin on it. It was a rustic hunting cabin, nothing fancy, but perfect for him and the boys to hone their hunting skills and return from the day's hunt to the warmth of the pot-bellied stove and whatever vittles they could round up. Calvin's wife, Grandma Marilyn wanted the place to be presentable and was persistent in adding her own decorative touches, such as curtains. But Grandpa Calvin complained that it was a hunting cabin and they should be removed, but to no avail. After he passed, the old cabin was abandoned and fell into disrepair.

When Grandma died, a decision had to be made. The four brothers met to decide what should be done with the property. Joe's daughter, Jennifer, would

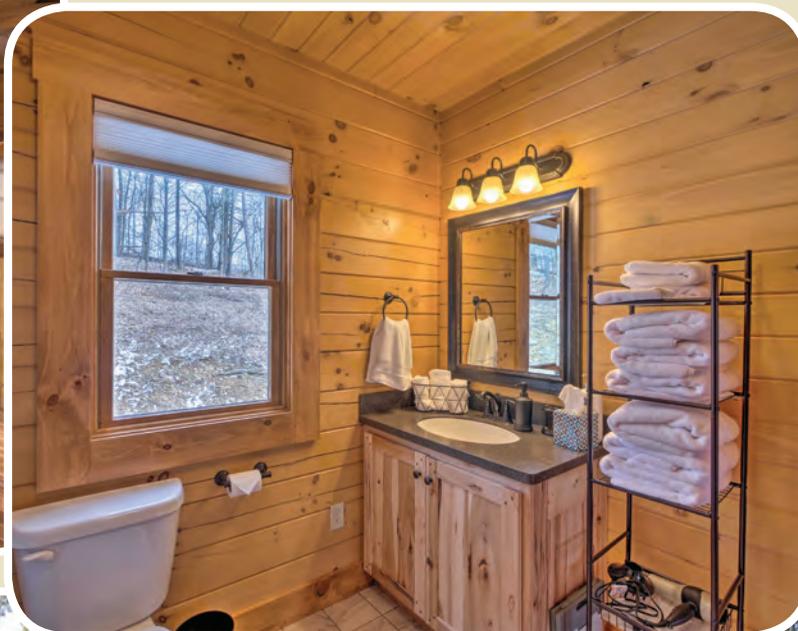
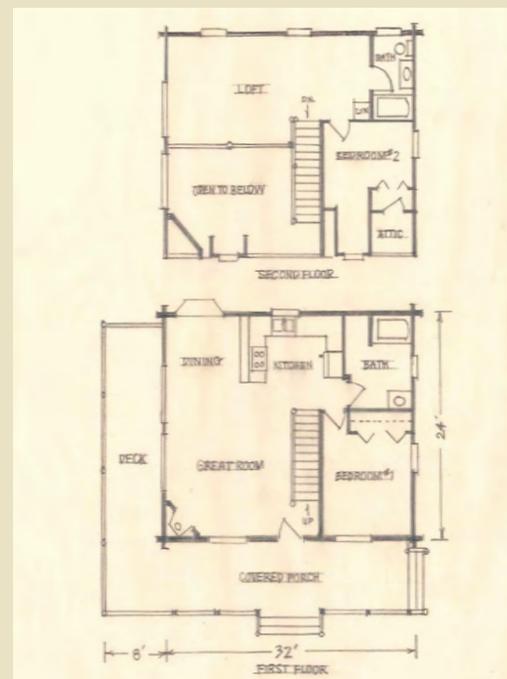
never think of selling this treasured piece of the family's history. It would be like tossing away her childhood memories; so it was agreed that Joe, his wife LaDonna, their daughter, Jennifer, and her husband Patrick, would purchase the land. The family heirloom, fondly referred to as "Wise Achers" by Calvin, had provided many happy times with cousins, aunts and uncles. Joe's son, Sean, had shot his first deer there. So Joe, LaDonna, Jennifer, and Patrick formulated a plan - let's keep the secluded land, tear down the old cabin and put up a new cabin where the entire family could come, along with the grandchildren, and rekindle those treasured memories.

Just one problem - they lived in California and the cabin would be built in central Ohio. But they were determined to keep this tradition alive and began searching log home builders on the internet. Fortunately, Hochstetler Log Homes

was “just up the road,” north of Loudonville. Initially, they thought of selling the timber on the land to help finance the project but changed their minds after talking to Joseph Hochstetler, who invited them up to tour the McKay model and the manufacturing facilities. They were sold on the quality and trusted Joseph to coordinate the building process, since most of the conversations would be by phone. They met the builder, Mahlon Hochstetler, owner of Buckeye Log Homes, and broke ground for their home in the spring of 2018. The house was near completion when they had all their furniture delivered. In a day and a half they arranged all the furniture and it was ready to move in - just in time for the Christmas holidays and a full-fledged family gathering!

Their home is a modified version of the Cambridge, a scaled-down McKay, but with a finished basement. It includes 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, and a rec room in the basement. Outside, there is a full-length front porch and wrap-around deck on the side for just relaxing and viewing the beautiful surroundings. And, a fire pit was added for those quiet family times around the camp fire. Since the Wise’s would only be able to visit occasionally, they planned to rent the cabin the rest of the time and designed it with ample bedrooms for large families. So far, it has been booked most weeks during the summer, but they have reserved the Christmas holidays for the family and the many happy memories to come! 🏠

To rent this cabin, go to: [evolvevacationrental.com/travelers](https://www.evolvevacationrental.com/travelers), Listing #426945 (enter where it says “Where do you want to go”)



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

Log Basics 101 - continued from page 3

one fails the other will be there to keep the air out. There is a cavity for the gasket which allows the wood to sit on wood. Otherwise, the log would be sitting on the gasket, which increases the settling. Notice how the tongue-and-groove are tapered, this makes so that the logs self-align when stacking them and makes life for the builder much easier. The one tongue is on the outside edge, which stops water from coming in between logs and reduces the chances of decaying. The other tongue is clear to the inside; the reason for that is, if the log happens to twist towards the inside, it will stay tightly-sealed, and if it twists towards the outside the outside gasket will stay in contact. If you look close enough there is a relief space between the logs. The reason for this is to keep the logs from lifting in the middle, thus keeping the edges tighter. The entire configuration is designed to be air-tight and as energy-efficient as possible.

You will also notice the outside edge of the top log overlaps the bottom log. This works as a drip edge designed to divert water.

Log Profiles

The most common log profile is the **D log**, shaped like the letter "D". The D log is most popular because it offers the round look on the exterior and the convenience of the flat wall on the inside. This may be a good compromise between the husband and wife; the interior looks like paneling and can be less rustic and yet the outside can be round and look like any log home.

The **Double Round log**, round on

the exterior and interior, is the popular choice of folks that like a little more western flavor. If your decor choices are western saddles and round wagon wheel lights you might consider a double round log.

Square logs, actually rectangle, are popular, especially in areas of Tennessee, Kentucky and the east. This log gives your home an Appalachian-style look with an antique flavor, especially if the logs are hand-hewn. If you are into antique décor you should consider the square log as a possibility.

The **Swedish Cope** is a round log with a half-moon undercut. This gives it a Scandinavian flavor and is often used with handcrafted log homes. While this is a good profile it is prone to more settling and is usually more expensive.

Drying

Logs are normally either **air-dried** or **kiln-dried**. For air-drying, the cants are set outside for a period of time, ideally in a windy area. This can be as long as two years 'til they are finally ready to be milled. Air-drying is a common practice for startups as kilns are very expensive.

With kiln-drying, on the other hand, the logs are put in a controlled environment (imagine a huge bake oven) where the logs are taken down to the desired moisture content, normally 18 to 19% for stacking logs. Sometimes the logs, when completely green going in, can take as long as 45 days in the kiln to dry them. Kiln-drying, when taken to a high temperature such as 150 degrees, will assure you that all insects and their larva are killed. Also, it crystallizes the



Our on-site dry kiln will kiln-dry material down to the required MC (moisture content) of 18 to 19%. To accomplish this, the kiln is turned up to about 150 degrees.

pitch which helps eliminate sap or pine tar seepage called, "setting the pitch", and kills all mildew and mold. Most lumber used in flooring, furniture and cabinets are kiln-dried.

While some log home manufacturers air-dry and others kiln-dry, we do a combination of both. We start by air-drying outside for about 12 month. Then as we

get orders they are put inside a dry-kiln to finish drying them to 18 to 19% average moisture content (the industry standard). Depending how dry they go in the kiln they may be in the kiln for only 10 days. With this method, you get the advantage of the slow drying by air-drying and the elimination of insects and "setting the pitch" and killing the mold and mildew by

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Our air-drying yard is stacked with cants (square timbers) and “stickers” which allow air to circulate between the cants. When they reach a moisture content level of about 22%, they are moved into the dry-kiln to be finished off.

kiln-drying. In other words, the best of both worlds!

Dead-standing can also be an option. These are trees that died in the forest from fire, insect infestation or lightning strike. We have used dead-standing as a dry log before, but they too should be put in a kiln to make sure that all the insects and larva are dead. Otherwise, you could introduce insects into your new home!

Non-dried or green logs we do not recommend. Although they are initially more economical, the big disadvantage of green logs are the settling issues down the road. They may settle 1 1/2 to 2” in an 8’ wall or even more! When using green you will need to use thru-bolt systems and settling jacks.

After the logs are sufficiently dried they are taken to the mill..... 🏠

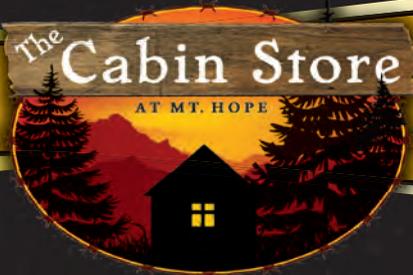
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CABIN FEVER “No-See-Ums” by Bill Dinkins

On a recent fishing trip to northern Ontario, my brother, Neil, and I were anxiously anticipating a week of relaxation, good-natured kidding, and, of course, a boat-load of tasty fish. Lake Weslemkoon was our destination and is widely regarded as one of the top ten lakes in Ontario for bass - both largemouth and smallmouth. What we weren't prepared for was no-see-ums, a tiny biting insect that enjoys sucking your blood while injecting an anti-coagulant. The result is a painful bite that can last for a couple weeks, thus limiting your time outdoors and spoiling your much-anticipated vacation.

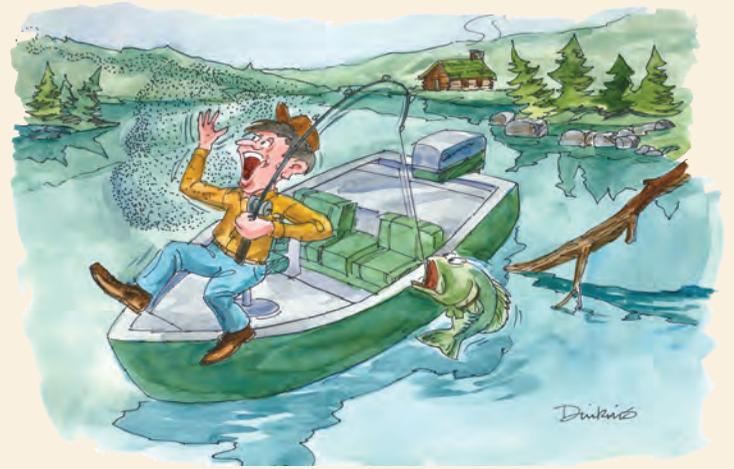
Upon arrival at Longmuir's Hidden Cove Cottages that evening, we started taking our supplies into the cabin while under attack by these merciless little bugs. Not as big as mosquitoes but every bit as annoying and painful. That night we noticed red welts all over our bodies, accompanied by persistent itching. Next day, we tried insect repellent, but these little “vampires” still found a way to bite our unprotected areas. After consulting with the camp owners, they suggested a repellent containing “Deet.” I had tried Deet before on a wilderness trip to the “Boundary Waters” of Minnesota and Canada and remember my rod handle literally melting in my hand - so I wasn't too keen on that idea. But our repellent only had 30% Deet, so maybe it was worth a try.

The best solution seemed to be: liberally spray underclothes and all exposed skin with repellent, put on long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and a head net. After that thorough preparation you were ready for those little bloodsuckers. I've heard from more than one old-timer, “when the bugs are worse, the fishing's the best.” I was about to find out!

The first morning I caught two nice bass - a 20” smallmouth and his 20” largemouth “cousin.” Next day, we caught four, about 16” each, perfect eating size, which I filleted and we had for supper. Coated with “Shore Lunch” (zesty) breading, they were melt-in-your-mouth delicious.

Neil, unfortunately, was not as crazy about fishing as eating, so I fished by myself the last three days. I didn't drive 550 miles to stay back in the cabin, but instead chose to spend my days swatting those biting midges and trying to catch a fish or two. The next-to-last day I did just that. While casting my “go-to” blue-speckled, plastic worm I had a little tap. I reared back and felt a sudden tug on the end of my line. As the line peeled off and my drag “squealed”, I knew I was into something big. Suddenly, the fish exploded from the water, sending a “halo” of spray in every direction, and “touched down” a mere foot away from a precarious deadfall. I steered her away and brought her towards the boat, but not before she dove under it, the 6 lb. test line missing my engine prop by inches. I was finally able to reel the lunker up, scoop her into the net and place her in the live well as the sun fell below the horizon.

Back at the dock, it was time to make it official. Just how big was that fish. Mike, the camp owner, measured her - 21” and 5.3 lbs. Definitely worth my last trip out - even with a few no-see-um encounters. This may not be my last trip “up North” but it will be my last trip up in early June! 🏠





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