

VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

On February 11th, 12th and 13th, we conducted our 25th annual log home building work shop. So far we have trained over 400 builders and homeowners from various parts of the US and Canada. Most have built conventional homes before but never a log home. On the other hand, a few have built log homes but not a Hochstetler Log Home — accordingly, we focus on training builders the unique techniques of building log homes and what's distinctive to the Hochstetler way. Generally, we limit the three-day workshop to 20 students and build a small cabin from start to finish — including the timbered roof system. Each participant gets to take home a complete construction manual. Most experienced builders, combined with this additional training, are now qualified and ready to build high-quality log homes for our clients.

Our three sales people have 15 appointments with clients over the next 2 weeks. They are all in various stages of designing their building projects. I interpret this as meaning we are in for a relatively busy year. If you want to build yet this year, you may want to give one of the sales people a call to set up an appointment in order to get the design process started. In the spring our design department normally experiences a substantial backlog, but even more importantly the construction crews are fast filling up their building slots. Like we have always said, once you own the property it's never too early to start designing your home.

— Levi

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Why Use Wood in Your Home – *by Rob McCarthy*

I love working in the wood business because it utilizes a renewable resource created by God. A resource that blesses this country, my community, my family and me personally. Wood is incredibly interconnected with the life cycle of the natural environment.

This interconnection relies on responsible management, which involves healthy tree harvesting practices that keep our forests young and viable. The beauty of this kind of management is that it transforms trees as a natural resource into a valuable, beautiful, and useful product: Wood!

Forest management also directly and indirectly supports thousands of jobs and produces billions of dollars in revenue for America. I've been fortunate enough to work in this industry for decades.

From the Ground Up

Fresh out of high school, I left the city for the mountains of Northwestern Pennsylvania and a selective tree harvesting job on a friend's family farm. My friends and I could sell the harvested logs to a local sawmill to support our operation, as long as we worked sustainably and with horses. An experienced forester marked mature trees for removal; ones that needed harvesting to give younger trees more sunlight, nutrients, and moisture.

Everything was carefully managed with minimal damage to the environment and other trees. What a blessing it was to start in this business literally from "the ground up" or should I say "the tree trunk up"?

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Which Foundation is Right for You? – *by Levi Hochstetler*

Pros and Cons on the five most common foundation types. Full basement, crawl space, slabs, piles and poles.

Full Basement: In the Midwest, this is the most common and practical foundation. Compared to a crawl space, investing a few more dollars in a full basement will give you a lot of additional usable space. It will likely be the least expensive living space of your entire home. Besides providing you with a nice space for the furnace, utilities, and storage, other options can include bedrooms, bathroom, family room, man cave, game room, media room, wet bar, and even garage space.

A basement can also double as a storm shelter. Helpful in particular if you build in tornado alley. Certain areas of the basement are often used as a root cellar for food storage. This is generally under a porch, breezeway or sunroom wing.

If your site is in a low-lying or level area most likely a sump-pump would be required to ensure a dry basement. If where you are building frequently loses power a backup generator is recommended to ensure your pump works during power outages. This also applies for crawl spaces.

In times past, foundation walls were difficult to keep dry. Today with additional reinforcement, better sealers and proper drainage they can be very dry. Consider ICF's (insulated concrete forms) for the ultimate comfort in basement living, especially if you're

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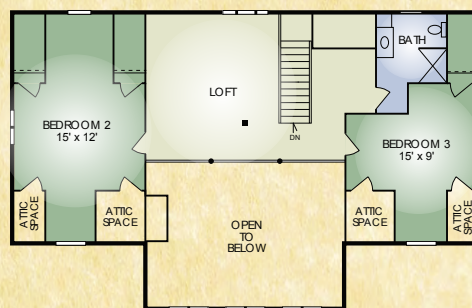
Teton

3,083 sq. ft.
3 BR / 2-1/2 BA

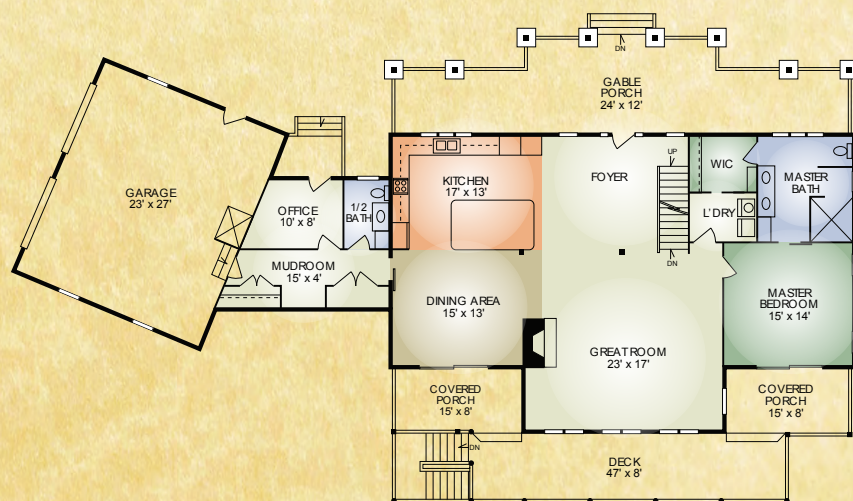


Everything is luxurious in this 3083 sq. ft. home called the Teton, the architects have left nothing a-miss. What brings this design to the front, is the curb appeal, no matter how you approach it you will fall in love. As you enter the foyer area your eyes will be drawn to the huge timbers that soar above the great-room along with the extralarge glass windows. To your right is the chef style kitchen that offers plenty of room to cook your thanksgiving dinner. Spacing is not limited in the Master Bedroom and Bathroom along with the walk-in closet. Upstairs there is an open loft area that offers a grand view of the great room with the large stone fireplace. Two additional bedrooms and a bathroom offer ample sleeping area for family or guests.

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SECOND FLOOR



24' 20' 56'

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Why Use Wood in Your Home *(continued from page 1)*

I fell in love with the work and with the mountains of Pennsylvania, and stayed there for 12 years. When the logging job was over, I progressed to working in the local sawmill. In my small community, there were very few options outside of the wood industry for jobs, which is still the case in many rural areas of America.

At the sawmill, I worked my way up, learning the entire process of turning logs into lumber. This hands-on experience taught me the value of hard work, common sense, teamwork, and a sense of accomplishment. I was helping to produce something people needed.

Sustainability and Stewardship

At this point, I began to recognize the value of stewardship. The U.S. Forest Service says our hardwood forests are growing at 2.38 times the rate of harvest and naturally reseed themselves. At that rate, the forests would never run out, meaning trees truly are America's only renewable resource.

Throughout my career, sustainability has always been a priority because of wood's value, but with the emergence of the global focus on the environment, sustainability suddenly became critical.

Consider the importance of the amount of carbon versus oxygen in our atmosphere. Through research, I saw the vital relationship between living things: How God created marine, animal, and human life to inhale oxygen and exhale carbon, while at the same time covering the Earth and the seas with vegetation that inhales carbon and exhales oxygen. Healthy forests are nature's best air filters!

Did you know carbon molecules make up 40 percent of wood fibers? These molecules are stored in the wood that is turned into lumber and will stay out of the atmosphere for the life of the product. You can still go to Mount Vernon and see George Washington's homestead filled with wood products such as flooring, cabinets, and furniture that have been in use for over 250 years. (You might even see his wooden false teeth!)

Carbon is trapped in the wood product as long as it's in use, not active in the atmosphere, and wood products can last a long time when cared for.

In the Forest

Did you also know that when a tree reaches maturity, it begins dying, inhaling less carbon and exhaling less oxygen? Ultimately it dies, but not until it has captured the sunlight, nutrients, and rain necessary for younger trees to grow, thus stunting their growth. At some point, an old tree makes room for younger trees by falling to the ground. But many times, it's too late: The younger trees have withered and died.

Dead trees can become fire hazards. It's not true that cutting a tree is bad for the environment. Fires caused by lightning strikes in areas full of dead trees are nature's way of rejuvenating forests. The problem with this rejuvenation is that it immediately releases trapped carbons into the atmosphere. This is why on the West Coast they can no longer see the sun for three to four months of the year. They have eradicated the sustainable wood harvesting and manufacturing businesses that once supported their communities.

Wouldn't you rather choose the other alternative to rejuvenation? I'm referring to sustainable logging, the work that took a young man out into the woods; the one that taught him the value of hard work, common sense, teamwork, family and community; along with the responsibility of stewardship; the one that provides thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in revenue to communities throughout America? According to the Ohio Department of National Resources, the yearly revenue from the state's hardwood industry is \$300 billion. I'm talking about our only renewable resource and the sustainable industry that supports it. And this is why you should use wood in your home.



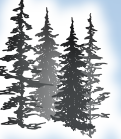
The contents in this article were covered in Rob's presentation during Log Cabin Days. Rob McCarthy has been involved in the hardwood industry for 50 years and currently works for Northwest Hardwoods, the largest North American international hardwood exporter.



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Which Foundation is Right for You? *(continued from page 1)*

planning a bedroom or family room there.

Crawl Space: Second to a full basement, crawl spaces are the most common system used in the Midwest. They aren't as expensive as a full basement but yet allow space for utilities, and most importantly, access to your water, electrical and HVAC runs.

Today's crawl spaces have come a long ways from what was considered a crawl space in the old days. As any experienced plumber can testify, they traditionally were a dark, filthy space where there was hardly enough room to scoot around in. Many crawl spaces now have a ceiling height of four feet or more. It's not unusual to be able to stand up in them. Most have a gravel floor on top of a moisture barrier and some even have concrete floors. This gives you a nice space for the furnace and for storage if needed. However, the question remains: why not add a few more courses of block and have a nice full basement?

Personally, we chose a crawl space for our log cabin next to the pond. We now wish we would have gone to the extra trouble and expense to put in a full basement. It would have been a nice place to store the fishing tackle, life jackets, and oars, and in the winter, skates and hockey sticks. All that wet and snowy gear you don't want inside the cabin.

Slab: Other than pole or the pile system a slab is the least expensive. They are popular in some areas of the country where it is hard to obtain natural drainage away from the basement or crawl space, such as in parts of Florida. Locally, they are recently becoming more popular, perhaps mostly because they are less expensive than a full basement or crawl space.

Often, retirees prefer a slab, wanting to avoid stairs by having everything on ground level. The key disadvantage is plumbing, heating and electrical placement and having no access to maintain them in the future. Yet, with a lot of planning and thought some of those concerns can be overcome.

Often, homeowners complain that their feet hurt walking on concrete. To correct that, designers and builders put in "sleepers" with a subfloor and

finally the finish floor on it. If you do this you are back to the cost of a crawl space.

Slabs are somewhat easier to design for seismic resistance when building in earthquake-prone areas.

Piles: This is a viable solution where there is potential flooding. Concrete pile foundations are constructed with a regular boxed subfloor system and normally enclosed with insulation and soffit underneath. These are most common in coastal areas where flooding can occur. Occasionally, piles are used for the construction of log homes.

Poles: This system gets mostly utilized in the construction of pole barns and utility sheds. When used in residential construction they are often called "Barn-dominiums." Except for small cabins, poles with their short life span and depreciative value are not practical to support log homes.

Recently, manufacturers have started to make what they call Perma Columns, (wooden poles that have concrete ends attached). Accordingly, only the concrete and not the treated wood is exposed to the ground. That has substantially increased the useful life of poles. Unfortunately, with no deep foundation as a barrier around the perimeter, rodents are known to dig under the concrete slab of pole structures.

Conclusion: It's not unusual to have a mixture of foundation types in the construction of a log home. Typically, the main home might be on a full basement, the breezeway and the three season room on a crawl space, and the garage on a slab.

Like everything else in building a home, give it a lot of thought during the design process. The key is to imagine yourself living in the home doing your day-to-day chores. Always give your daily routines priority over things that happen once or twice a year. This helps prevent a lot of "should-a-have's." It is very expensive to put a basement under a home that is already built, though people sometimes do exactly that! 🏠

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Built to Last With Beauty and Craftsmanship: Eicher Woodworking

— By Janice Brewster Weiser

Brothers Ben and Norman Eicher say they have woodworking in their blood. The two head up Eicher Woodworking, an Amish company that their father, Robert, started in 1992. “We grew up in the shop, playing in it, and eventually doing actual work in it,” Ben says.

Eicher’s shop and showroom, located near Hochstetler Log Homes in Loudonville, Ohio, specializes in custom kitchen and bath cabinetry, as well as cabinets for use all around the house. The cabinets feature all-hardwood construction and are custom-designed and built on site by Eicher’s staff of six.



Eicher cabinets in Hochstetler’s McKay Model

From Drawing to Installation

Customers who are building new homes or remodeling a current home can begin working with Eicher Woodworking by visiting their website or their showroom, where two different full kitchens are on display, along with other cabinets that highlight various wood species and paint options.

“After the consultation, we do the design and 3D drawings,” Ben explains. The drawings help people visualize just how the cabinets will look in their home. Initial drawings can be revised until they’re exactly what the homeowners imagined.

From there, the Eicher team goes to work custom crafting the cabinetry, which usually has a lead time of about three months.

At every touchpoint with homeowners, the Eicher team prioritizes customer service and leans into their mission to lead their lives in a manner pleasing to God and valuable to others, both personally and professionally.

Timeless to Trendy

“Custom cabinetry brings a personal touch to the home,” Ben says. “You have your own design, your vision that you can incorporate into your home, and they make spaces more usable.” Top-quality materials mean the cabinets will last longer, as well. Like log homes, custom cabinetry offers character that just can’t be found in something off-the-shelf.

Beyond the kitchen, Eicher Woodworking’s cabinets are found all over their customers’ homes: They handcraft vanities, fireplace surrounds, custom range

hoods, window seats, bookshelves and cabinets for mudrooms, laundry rooms and even closets.

Rooted in the long tradition of Amish craftsmanship, the company is adept at building what today’s homeowners want. “At one point, we were doing 80 percent white painted cabinets,” Ben notes. “At this point, a lot of stain is coming back, and a lot of accent pieces, like an island in a different color or even a different stain.” Most log home owners, Ben notes, prefer hickory. “It has lots of character and grain movement. It can be stained different colors.” The wood’s rustic feel complements the log home’s aesthetic appeal. In terms of door style, “Simple shaker style is what most people go with.”

Behind Eicher cabinets’ soft-close doors and drawers, you’ll find all the extras custom homeowners are looking for: lift shelves for stand mixers, roll-out shelves, utensil organizers, pull-out recycling bins and much more. These upgrades become even more helpful as homeowners get older. “You want functional accessories that are easy to access,” Ben explains. “You don’t want to reach all the way back into the cabinet.”

Promises Kept

Eicher Woodworking works directly with homeowners and custom home builders, including local builder Cedar Creek Cabins. “I enjoy getting to meet new people, helping them realize their vision and create a space that is both functional and beautiful,” Ben says. Norman, who works on drawings and design for the company, always looks forward to seeing the final products, as well.

“We’re dedicated to bringing your vision to life, creating custom cabinets that exceed your expectations,” Ben says. It’s all part of their promise to always use high-quality materials, never take shortcuts and only make agreements they are willing, capable and fully intend to keep. 🏠

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At Home on the Hill

by Janice Brewster Weiser
Photography by Style Life Photography

The scene seemed to come straight out of a holiday movie: Tracy and Mike Oppenheimer were enjoying their first Christmas season in their new log home and invited their home's builder, Jerry Hochstetler, and his family to come by. They arrived with home-baked goodies and gathered around to sing Christmas carols. "It was very heartwarming," Tracy remembers.

The Oppenheimers' home began when the couple decided to downsize after Mike retired from a 30-year career in construction. Although their home would be smaller, as their "forever home," they weren't going to settle for anything less than a dream.

The couple had been living in a gated community but wanted "something more rustic, more out in the woods," Mike says. They searched for the perfect spot for months and finally discovered a 10-acre wooded lot in Perry County, Ohio, near the scenic Hocking Hills area. There, the couple's dream home could sit up on a hill and look out on trees all around.

The Design Details

Going from 2,500 square feet down to 1,600 required some configuring. The couple sharpened their pencils and Mike meticulously plotted out a plan for a one-bedroom, two-and-a-half bath home with a large loft.

The choice of logs was easy. "I've always wanted a log home since I was a kid," Mike says. The floor plan he designed worked perfectly for log construction. The couple's search for a log home provider took them to a log home show in Columbus, Ohio, where they discovered Hochstetler Log Homes.

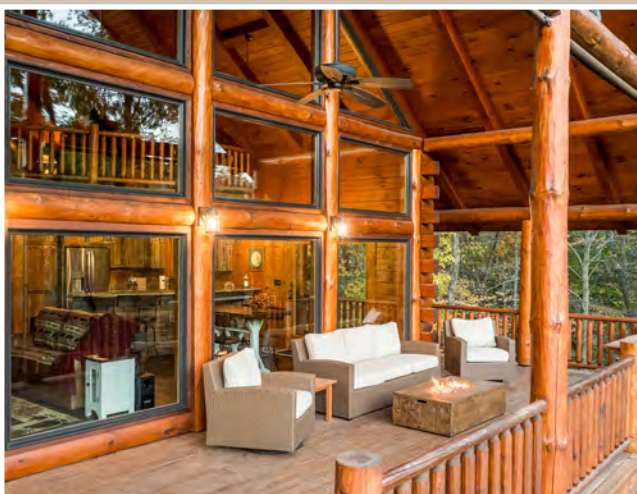
"We went to one of Hochstetler's Log Cabin Days," Tracy says. "We got to tour the mill and just to see the whole process. Then we went to see some model homes."

For Mike, craftsmanship was key. "I could tell their quality was very good," he says.

Tracy and Mike chose Precision Builders, led by Jerry Hochstetler, to build the home. While Jerry is no relation to Hochstetler Log Homes, his Amish crew shares the same commitment to quality. They met with Dan Reeves to perfect the design of the home, which would feature a central kitchen, a wall of windows in the great room and a wraparound porch.

Dan notes that a wraparound porch is helpful in keeping log walls from being exposed to the elements and provides extra space, especially for smaller homes. "We usually design porches to be 8 feet deep, so they're more of an extension of the living area," he says.

Construction began and quickly became a family affair: "My father is elderly," Tracy says. "During the construction process, he was out here every day. He was amazed at the quality of construction and how they set the logs. He really enjoyed seeing how a log cabin was built." Mike was on hand, too, running errands and marveling at how all the details came together. "It's not something a lot of people get to do," he notes.



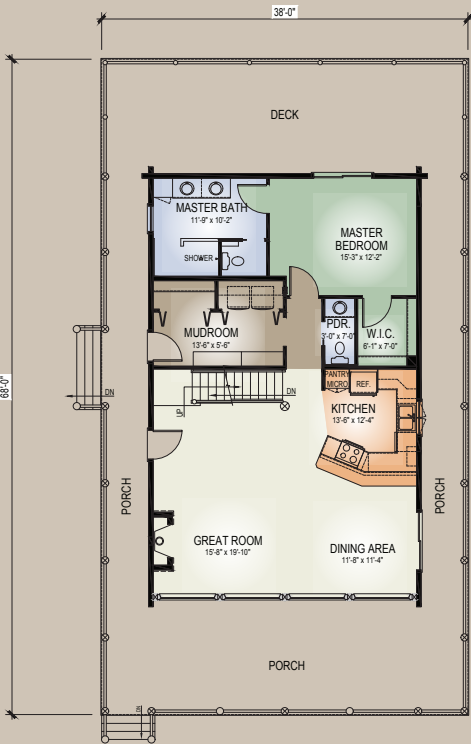
Everyday Getaway

Now that they've settled into their home, Mike and Tracy have discovered their favorite aspects of log home life. "In the springtime, when the weather starts to change, I can go outside with a cup of coffee and a book," Tracy says. "It's calming, relaxing and just peaceful to go out there and feel like I'm a million miles away from anything." She also enjoys spending time in the loft, where big windows look out on a field that's a favorite with local deer.

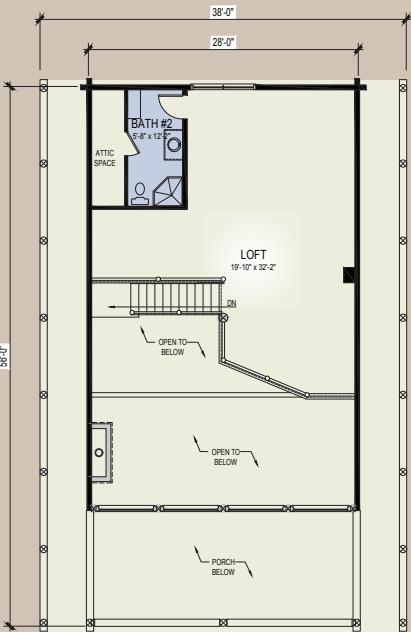
The great room with its fireplace is a special spot for Mike. "It's like you're on vacation every day," he says.

The couple also spends a lot of time outdoors with their dogs, exploring their acreage in their side-by-side. They also enjoy seeing the raccoons, bobcats, coyotes and foxes that appear on their trail cam.

The Hocking Hills area, with its waterfalls, caves and hiking trails, is a perennial draw for visitors. The lucky ones are able to reserve a rustic rental for their getaway. "People pay a lot of money to stay in a log cabin around here," Mike says. "We get to stay here every day."



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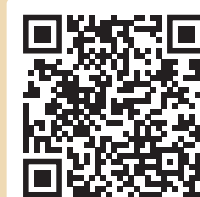
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Log Home Fire Performance

– By Steve Lykins, Professional Engineer at Hochstetler Log Homes

My own design philosophy is that we design homes and other structures for the worst conditions that we expect they might encounter during their lifespan. In fact, these extreme conditions are the reason that we need shelter. Our shelters would look very different if every day was 72 degrees and sunny with just enough breeze to keep us cool. We must anticipate events such as floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, blizzards and fires. Of these events, fire is universal. Fire can happen anywhere, anytime, whether it's cold or warm outside, whether you're on a mountain or on the coast. Here's a brief look at why a log home is a top choice for endurance and integrity in a fire.

There are a number of technical resources out there that support the idea of a log home as a fire-resistant shelter, including: "Fire Performance of Log Walls" prepared by the Log Homes Council Technical Committee, "2018 National Design Specification for Wood Construction" published by the AF&PA American Wood Council and "Structural Fire Design: Wood" published by the Forest Products Laboratory. This article is meant to provide a practical interpretation of the technical topics covered in such resources. As a practical experiment, next time you are enjoying a nice campfire or you're warming your bones next to your fireplace or wood stove, toss a handful of sawdust into the fire. Observe how the sawdust combusts in a flash. Next, take a piece of a 2x4 and toss it in the fire. Observe how it burns much slower than the sawdust, but still burns almost completely within about 30 minutes. Finally, toss a large 10-inch diameter piece of a log into the fire. Observe how it takes hours and hours for this piece to burn completely (depending upon species and moisture content). This is a practical and cozy way to understand how log homes perform in a fire. When a large piece of timber (i.e. log) is subjected to fire it begins to char. This layer of char on the outside of the log forms an insulating layer that protects the rest of the log from the effects of the fire. This char layer on a burning log works very much like some high-tech intumescent paints and coatings used to protect steel and other building materials from fire, except wood has been doing it well for thousands of years.

This experiment uses only a single log. Now imagine an entire wall of logs stacked on top of one another where each log helps protect its neighbor. This wall of stacked logs will perform even better in a fire than a single log or timber. Some credible log wall fire resistance tests have been performed showing that the wall might stay structurally intact for 2½ hours or more, allowing plenty of time for occupants to escape! It is no surprise then that a stacked log wall will perform better in a fire than a post and beam or especially a stick-framed wall, in which the wood is exposed to the fire on all sides. In post-and-beam and conventional stick-framed construction the walls generally have cavities, which feed the fire in the wall with oxygen allowing it to grow hotter, faster. This type of wall construction may burn to the point of collapse in as little as 20 minutes. It is for these reasons that solid log walls (at least 6" thick) are afforded a 1-hour fire resistance rating by current building codes, with even greater fire resistance ratings for thicker log walls. Independent, third party testing agency Underwriters Laboratories, Inc. has listed a log wall assembly as a 1-hour fire resistance-rated wall construction assembly for use in not only homes, but structures of all types.

Log walls do not always need to have a fire resistance rating. Residential building codes only require an exterior wall of a home to be fire resistance rated when there is a neighboring structure (i.e., shed, garage, barn, etc.) within 30 feet. However, where a garage is attached to a home, the separating wall between them must have an equivalent 1-hour fire resistance rating. These requirements are meant to contain a fire after it has already started. It is wise to also take measures to try to prevent the fire from starting in the first place.

Fire prevention is first priority. On the interior of the home fires may be prevented by design (i.e., maintaining clearances around fireplaces, stoves, etc.) and by lifestyle. Simple choices such as not burning candles, not smoking and carefully checking cooking appliances after use can go a long way to prevent fires from starting. On the exterior of the home, fires may also be prevented by design (keep distance to neighboring structures) and also by choosing to clear an area about 30-feet from the structure of vegetation and combustible materials, keeping trees pruned 6-feet from the ground, regularly removing limbs and leaves, cleaning gutters, storing firewood at least 20-feet from the structure and using a spark arrestor for wood burning appliances. Consider that a metal roof is afforded a better fire classification (usually Class B) than an asphalt shingle roof (Class C) because the metal ignites at a much higher temperature and because a burning shingle may break off and blow to the neighbor's house to start another fire.

Fire detection is the second priority. A simple installation of a smoke detector (or preferably a series of smoke detectors) is commonly known as the single most important factor in surviving a fire in a home. Locate smoke detectors immediately inside and outside each bedroom or group of bedrooms and be sure there is at least one smoke detector on each level or story in the home. Many automatic fire suppression systems ("sprinkler systems") are initiated by detection of smoke or heat from a fire, or both. An automatic fire suppression system is an important consideration, especially near cooking appliances. While they are costly (ranging from about 1%-7% of the cost of the home for a whole-house system) they are proven to save lives. How much is a life worth? Especially when it comes to your family? Keep in mind that fire suppression systems do not have to be a traditional automatic sprinkler system that sprays water on the fire. Some automatic systems use foam and some use an inert gas to smother the fire and starve it of oxygen. There are also manual fire extinguishers, which are not automatic but still provide added safety. The best places in a home for manual fire extinguishers are near cooking appliances, in bedrooms and in garages. Some building codes are beginning to require automatic fire suppression systems in new residential construction, but there is much resistance due to cost. My professional opinion is that exterior fire prevention as described previously in this article combined with heavy timber roof post & beam framing, solid log walls, smoke alarms and a fire suppression system at cooking appliances is a reasonable and effective fire safety strategy.

Fire containment, prevention and detection all add cost to a home, but in the case of a fire in your home they prove their worth! In fact, some features (like fire suppression) are given a credit by homeowners' insurance providers. Some homeowners' insurance policies for log homes have a higher premium than that of a comparable conventionally built home, but it's not for the reasons you might expect. As we now know, a log home will contain and withstand fire much better than a comparable conventionally built home, but the log homes are typically built in rural areas (further away from fire stations and fire hydrants), are sometimes second homes or vacation homes where the Owner does not live year-round and are generally costlier to replace because of the amount of labor involved in their construction. We must consider that a conventional home with the same criteria will likely have a higher insurance premium, too. So, it's not necessarily the fact that the home is constructed of logs that makes the premium higher, it's more a factor of the location and use of the structure.

A dear family member of mine once said to me "I think log homes are beautiful, but I wouldn't want to live in a pile of kindling". My response was "A log home is more like an insulated fire safe than a pile of kindling, but that stick-built house that you live in is like a pile of kindling wrapped in highly flammable and toxic plastic". She was partially correct though, because log homes certainly are beautiful! 



Tech Section

Educational and Interesting Facts.

Question:

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 - All Assets owned listing market value. For real estate owned, please include real estate tax and insurance premiums. Documentation of these amounts are not required on non-collateral property.
 - All Liabilities with creditor name, balance due and minimum required payment. If mortgage payments include real estate taxes and insurance in escrow, please indicated. Please also include: 401k loans, alimony/ child support and deferred student loans if applicable.
- Two (2) Most Recent Federal Income Tax Returns with all schedules and K-1s(if applicable)
 - *Business Tax Returns also required when Applicable
- Two (2) Most Recent W-2's / 1099's
 - 1099's for Social Security, Pension, Unemployment
- Most Recent Financial/Bank Statements – Full Statement– All Pages
 - Checking, Savings, Money Markets, Stocks and Retirement
 - Must Include account holders name, account number and financial institution name and 30 days of transaction history.
 - Personal and *Business (if applicable)
- Most Recent Pay Stubs (if applicable)
 - Must include year-to-date income
- Current Year Social Security and Pension Annual Award Letters
- Documentation of Child Support & Alimony
- 2024 Year to Date Profit & Loss for *businesses
- Copy of your driver's license, a photo from your phone is acceptable.
- Land: survey / plot map & Builder contract: signed by all parties & Elevations with floor plan / blueprints

*required when customer owns 25% or more of a business

PLEASE NOTE : ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION MAY BE REQUESTED DEPENDING ON YOUR LENDER.

– By Hochstetler Log Homes

If you are looking for property, try these websites:

LandandFarm.com • Zillow.com • Loopnet.com • Landwatch.com
Realtor.com • LandsofAmerica.com • Trulia.com
HomesandLand.com • Landflip.com • Craigslist.com

Conclusion

There's no shortage of resources when it comes to ways to search for land on the internet. With land and real estate prices as high as they are at the moment, it can be imperative that a person search for land at the right price. And by searching in each nook and cranny, it may still be possible to find a good deal.

We hope this was an informative and helpful list for your land search.

Question:

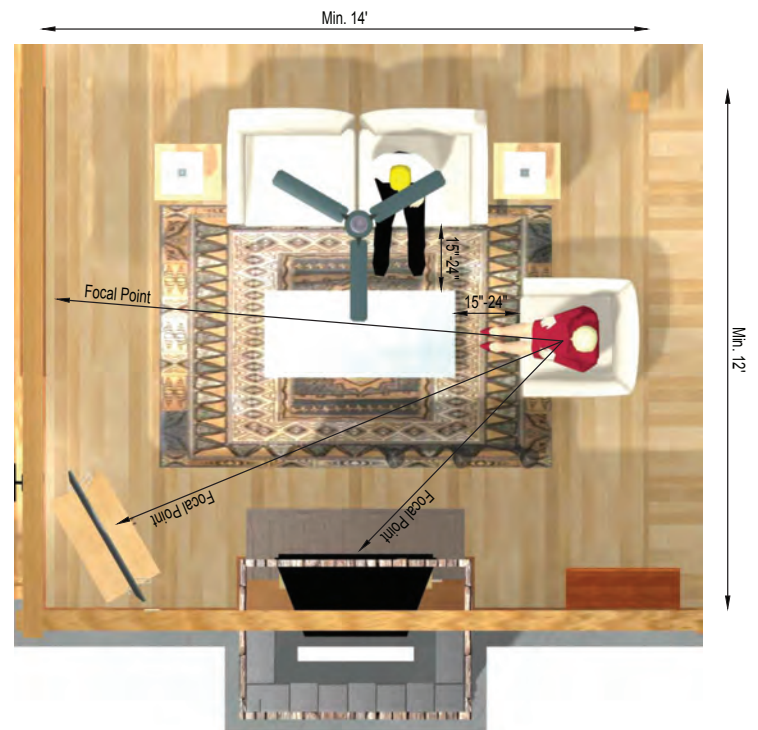
Can you give me insight on designing my great room?

Answer:

Here are thing to consider when designing your great room.

- Minimum Size: 12'x14'
- Provide 15"-24" between furniture pieces to allow for circulation while maintaining proximity.
- Square shaped spaces are generally more flexible in their arrangement than rectangular or trapezoidal spaces.
- Usually arranged around one or more focal points (i.e., fireplace, view to exterior, television).
- A flush fireplace hearth extension can save floor space in a compact design.
- Create a more formal design by aligning the furniture arrangement about the centerline of the fireplace.
- L-shaped furniture arrangement allows for taking advantage of multiple focal points.
- U-shaped or parallel furniture arrangement allows for conversation across the arrangement.
- Allow for at least two points of entry/exit from a furniture arrangement for ease of circulation.

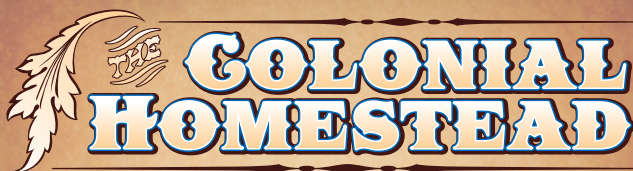
– Steve Lykins, Log Home Engineer and Design



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CABIN FEVER

Alaska Nellie – by Bill Dinkins

Nellie Neal Lawing, aka “Alaska Nellie,” was a pioneer in every sense of the word. She was born in 1874 in Missouri; her mother called her “half domestic, half wild.” Being the adventurous sort, she left her farm home in 1901 and wandered westward, working in railroad restaurants and managing hotels along the way. In 1915, single and 42 years old, she boarded a steamer bound for Alaska and ended up in Seward, where she worked as a cook and at the mine.

An avid outdoorswoman, Nellie also hunted and trapped, especially in the winter, in addition to managing the Roosevelt roadhouse on Kenai lake. She met and married Billie Lawing in 1923. They bought the roadhouse and hosted sportsmen and tourists. It became so popular that they converted it into a museum, full of Nellie’s mounted animals. Trophy bears, wolves, deer and moose stared down from the walls, and Nellie loved to tell stories about each and every one. The Lawings later added a kitchen and dining room to the roadhouse. The kitchen window was only yards from the lake so Nellie could toss a baited hook out the window into the lake. She attached a small bell to the line so when it rang there was a fish on! The ultimate multitasker!

A photo in the museum shows her standing beside a boat on shore, with a large black bear she had killed inside. Since the bear may have weighed over 400 lbs. there are several theories about how she was able to lift it into the boat. Most believed she had a little MANpower. But others think, being the resourceful person she was, she could have somehow done it herself. Too bad we couldn’t ask the bear!



One winter, in a furious blizzard, her postman was late. Worried, she went out looking for him and found him, miles away, on the ground and freezing. She brought him back to the roadhouse and warmed him up before venturing out again to find his dog team. Luckily, she found them and saved their lives in the process. She would later say, “All in a day’s work.” It has often been said of folks up in Alaska, a place where “Men are men, and so are women.”

So, “Alaska Nellie” was certainly one of a kind with many skills: roadhouse operator, cook, miner, hunter, trapper and even author. Alaska Nellie documents her adventuresome life and is a classic among outdoorswomen. 🏠

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