



# Mill-Direct News

*Living the Log Home Lifestyle*

Spring 2020

## VIEW FROM THE MILL

**By Levi Hochstetler**

2020! It's hard to fathom that we are already over two month into 2020! It seems like only yesterday when everyone was concerned about the approaching new century, Y-2-K and everyone's computers crashing. That was 20 years ago!

As a log home manufacturer, these 20 years has been a mixed bag but a lot to be thankful for. In 2003, we had the McKay model built. Then, in 2007, we built the Blackfork. Both have been proven to be very popular models. Then, in 2008, the great recession hit. Fortunately for us, other than the two models and a kiln, we had not made any major investment since 2002. Thus, we didn't have a heavy debt load like many of our competitors did. Companies, like Heritage, as an example. They did a major expansion going right in the recession and, unfortunately, couldn't handle the debt and lost everything. We did buy some of their assets at their liquidation auction.

Hochstetler Log Homes went from 126 units sold in 2006 to 40 in 2011, which was our worst year during the recession. Today, our sales are more than what they were in 2006, though our unit count is still not what it was then.

We ended up renting 9 of the log cabins at Pleasant Hill Lake from the state for use during Log Cabin Days. Two of the cabins will be kept open for tours but the rest we will rent out. This way, we are assured that people wanting to come to Log Cabin Days have the first option to rent them. If you are interested in renting one do call us at 1-800-368-1015, we have a few left.

**Hochstetler Log Homes, LTD**

552 State Route 95, Loudonville, OH

**800-368-1015**

## Hochstetler Log Homes Today - *by Levi Hochstetler*

By now you may have noticed our new logo and artwork. We are in the process of making some changes in our marketing pieces. However, we are the same company, the same owners, (though several of my sons have become partners) and with the same experienced people and service. Four of my oldest sons have bought into the company over the last 8 years and are now partners with me. Since then, we are cautiously expanding and upgrading in order to achieve even better quality and service. Let me share and point out a few of these improvements.

Perhaps the biggest improvement we have made is our new Dry Kilns. We had three kilns, but two of them were outdated and inefficient. So in 2013, we had the two older ones tore down and

built two, brand new, state-of-the-art SII Dry Kilns. These kilns allows us to better monitor the moisture contend as they are being dried, giving our clients a dryer log with less checking. The new kilns also allow us to set the pitch at a higher temperature (150 degrees), which means the sap in the logs will be more stable and less likely to bleed once installed.

Another improvement that comes high on the list is the added warehouse space. Often, during the summer, framing lumber and OSB sheathing will escalate in price, sometimes doubling from what they were in January. Besides when major hurricanes hit it can spike even more. In 2018, we had an 8448 square



*Our first ad featuring our new identity*

*continued on page 6*

## Log Basics 101: Part III

*(continued from Winter 2019/20 Issue)- by Levi Hochstetler*

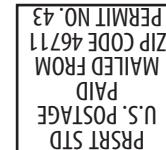
*This story will be continued in the next issue of Mill-Direct News*

**The Package:** Some of the more common, "the package" terminology you may hear other than complete is, weather tight, dry-in, shell and logs packages. And then there are numerous others that marketers have come up with through the years. Here is a rundown on what they could mean.

**The log package** is the most basic package. Besides the log siding & stacking logs it would generally also include fasteners, caulking and gasket for the logs.

**The shell package** may include the logs & roof only or it may also include doors and windows. Generally, it does not include railing, insulation, or the subfloor.

*continued on page 2*



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## FEATURED FLOOR PLAN

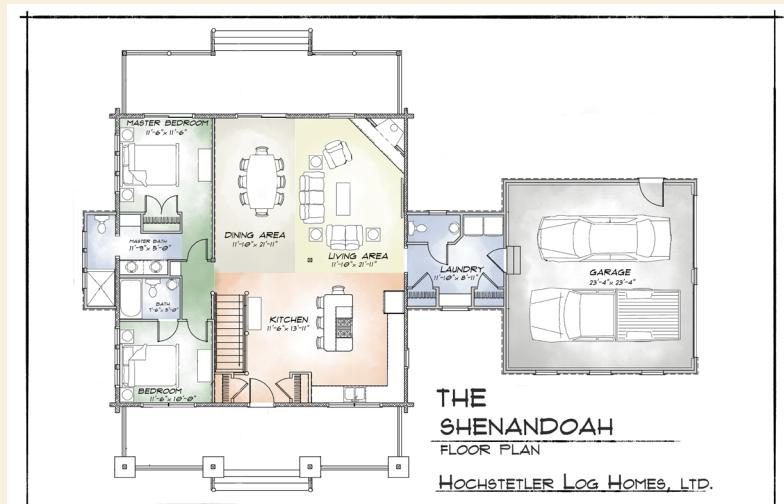
# Shenandoah

Sq. ft. 1492

2 BR / 2 1/2 BA



The 1492 sq. ft. Shenandoah offers 2 bedrooms and 2 1/2 baths in a popular, open-concept design with everything on one level. The entry leads into an unobstructed view of the great room, kitchen and dining area. The impressive view is also highlighted by the large, corner fireplace and towering timbers in the cathedral ceiling. Picture your family gathered around this warm, inviting fireplace on a cold winter evening! The kitchen has an island with serving counter and is only steps away from the laundry/mudroom and dining area. The master bedroom includes a built-in closet and full bath with double-sink vanity, and separate toilet and shower. Outside, family and guests will enjoy the views from the full length covered porches – front and rear. If a single story log home with an arresting appeal of design is what you're after, look no further!



## Log Basics 101: Part III - *continued from page 1*

**The weather-tight package** generally means about the same as dry-in. These usually include, besides what is included in the shell packages, the doors and windows and sometimes the subfloor. Also, at times, the insulation and second floor loft with railing and stairs is included.

**The complete package** is the most complete but may still have a few things missing. Generally, it is everything that is practical to ship from the foundation up. This includes everything that's in the other packages **plus** additional material like basement posts, finish floors, and interior trim & doors. However, normally it would not include cabinets, electrical, plumbing, heating and cooling, and the exterior gutters.

Then, besides having these various package of completeness, manufacturers also vary in the quality of their components.

Some may have a post & beam heavy structural timbered roof system and others may supply you with a much more economical 2x conventional roof. Some packages may include solid log gables while others may only do log siding gables. Most do kiln-dried logs but some, in order to save money, still do only air-dried.

All these variations make it very difficult for you, the consumer, to figure out what gives you the best value and next to impossible to compare apples-to-apples.

First you will have to figure out what the level of quality or type of components you want in your log home. Then, ask for that from your potential supplier. If they can't supply it, you may want to move on. Once you've found several manufacturers that can fill your needs, get a quote for the package you want. Take the quote, preferably with preliminary plans, to several builders they recommend making sure they know what's included and compare their bottom line turn-key price for your home. 



*The Log Package*



*The Complete Package*

# September 18 & 19, 2020

# LOG CABIN DAYS

## at Hochstetler Log Homes



- Sample mouth-watering barbecue chicken, pastries, homemade apple cider and delicious kettle popcorn.



- Exhibits and seminars that will guide you through the log building process and help you make your dream log home a reality.



- Self-guided tour of several beautiful log homes, including our McKay and Black Fork models (shown to the right).

## TWO FUN-FILLED DAYS OF EVENTS THAT THE WHOLE FAMILY WILL ENJOY!

Nominal Admission - plus donation for Log Home Tour

## CUSTOMER TESTIMONIALS

"From start to finish we had an excellent experience with Hochstetler! Their response to added material was quick and complete . Quality of material was outstanding and many of my other trade contractors have mentioned this."

-- Paulson's – Butler, TN

"Everyone was very responsive & timely. We achieved our home design very easily. Due to the knowledge of the staff. We love our log home and the quality. We will retire and live here for a very long time."

-- Woerner's – Meridian, TX

"Overall my experience was outstanding! Material was exceptional and our builder cared deeply about providing the best Log Home he could."

-- Pimpo's – Millersport, OH

"Great Company, Great People, Very, Very knowledgeable and helpful!"

-- Juhan's – Mount Gilead, NC

*The Black Fork*



*The McKay*



## VISIT OUR MODELS

Hours: Mon-Fri 9-5, Saturday 9-2, Closed Sunday. Other hours by appointment.

DIRECTIONS: Take SR 60 5 miles north of Loudonville to SR 95.

Turn left on SR 95 to the McKay model. Turn right on SR 95 to the Black Fork model.

Hochstetler Log Homes, Ltd.

552 St. Rt. 95 • Loudonville, OH • 419-368-0004 • 800-368-1015

[www.HochstetlerLogHomes.com](http://www.HochstetlerLogHomes.com)

See Mill-Direct News back issues at [www.HochstetlerLogHomes.com](http://www.HochstetlerLogHomes.com) • 3

# Welcome TO THE PORCUPINE SALOON

by Bill Dinkins



The beautiful view above the Allegheny River

Ron and Debbie Miller were welcomed to their beautiful home in the rugged western Pennsylvania mountains by a family of critters they didn't know existed there - porcupines, or more commonly, porcupines. These destructive critters chewed on their logs like beavers! After trying several so-called remedies to no avail, Ron installed an electric "fence" along the foundation of the house. Finally, problem solved, but not before Ron's battle with the porcupines became a touchy topic in the neighborhood! They soon moved on to feast on neighboring homes. In honor of the battle, Ron commissioned a "Porcupine Saloon" sign, which he proudly displays above the bar downstairs.

Ron and Debbie bought the mountaintop property back in 2008 with the

intention of building a log home retreat on it someday. Ron's dad, Pete, loved helping Ron clear part of the 13 acres perched several hundred feet above a bend in the Allegheny river. Pete loved the view so much he bathed in the tub for hours while looking at the scenic valley below. A nostalgic photo of him looking at the sunset (dressed, of course) hangs in the great room and serves as a daily reminder of cherished memories of the times spent there.

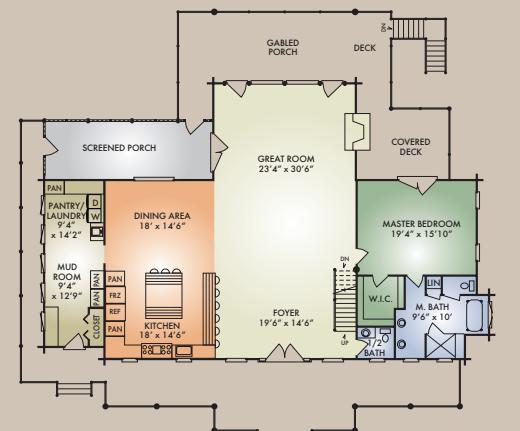
The Miller's selected Hochstetler to build their dream home in the fall of 2012. They wanted a home that was rustic but with all the comforts of home. And, above all, a place where family and friends would feel welcome. Debbie mentioned having 25 guests for Thanksgiving. And, not just for the weekend, some stayed a week! She

loves the get-togethers and how the family and friends seemed to become closer without the non-stop interruptions of city life. The great room has two conversation areas: one, in front of the large stone fireplace with a game table and a panoramic window view of the valley; and two, a cluster of chairs and sectionals for about 10 people.

The exterior of the Miller's home is reminiscent of the lavish Appalachian lodges built back in the early 1900's. For instance, a huge, timber-framed, gabled entry with a full-length porch flanked by gabled roof dormers greets the visitor. No welcome mat needed! Inside, the exposed hand-peeled timbers and 8' logs create an ambience of calmness and security.

The custom plan was the result of Ron and Debbie's imagination with an assist from Hochstetler's designer, Steve Lykins, and the builder, Sam Yoder. It features the popular open-concept great room and entry, and adjoining kitchen and dining area. The spacious kitchen has a large island and the dining area has a harvest table with bench seating for 16. The main floor also features a mud room, laundry room, and master bath with walk-in closet and master bath. The spacious rear deck can be reached through the great room or bedroom. Upstairs, a central loft overlooks the great room and fireplace and is flanked by two bedrooms with baths. The walk-out basement includes the popular "Porcupine Saloon" and TV room for guests to just sit back and relax.

Although the home may appear to resemble a lodge, the Millers worked hard to maintain the intimacy of a small camp. With the help of Hochstetler's designers, builders, and the Miller's imagination they feel their home is exactly the way they wanted. 



Pete's inside perch of the Allegheny Valley.



Ron's "Porcupine Saloon" is a popular spot for guests.



Friends and guests love the welcome ambience.



Large timbers add a comforting sense of strength and security throughout.

## Hochstetler Log Homes Today - *continued from page 1*

feet building built for added space to allow us to “winter buy” enough 2x framing lumber and OSB sheathing to last us for most of the summer. Besides being able to buy more competitively, initially, it also allows us to hold and stabilize our price. This can add up to a substantial savings that we can pass on to our clients.

The above added warehouse space became more necessary as we do more complete packages. In the past, we supplied only the logs and timbers. Today, we supply everything from the foundation up – except the cabinets, electrical, plumbing, HVAC and gutters. This is a convenience that both builders and our clients have learned to appreciate. Builders don't have to figure out what additional material it takes to finish the home and add 10% just to make sure they are covered for material cost overruns. In turn, the client doesn't have to pay for that 10% – plus they don't have to worry that they will be asked to come up with additional money if there happens to be material shortages. Hochstetler Log Homes guarantees enough material if the home gets built according to the blue prints.

We have an ongoing program “builder’s workshop” to train builders to build log homes using our system. In turn, we can recommend these builders to our clients with confidence that they have the knowledge to do it right. Thus, our new tag line **“Log Homes Done Right.”** This network of several hundred builders are scattered throughout the country, giving our clients quality building solutions in most areas of the U.S.

From our own professionally-trained forester looking for the highest quality logs along with our harvesters, sawmill, dry-kilns, top quality log home milling capability's and the ability to provide complete packages, all the way to our in-house licensed architectural Engineer; add that to a goodly network of highly-trained builders scattered throughout the country – and we can truly say we are vertically integrated. And, what's more, with our highly competent people I believe we can honestly say "Log Homes Done Right" is uniquely Hochstetler Log Homes! 

# LODGING DIRECTORY



**Cabins available for 3 nights at Pleasant Hill Lake Park,  
Thursday, September 18 - Sunday, September 20.**

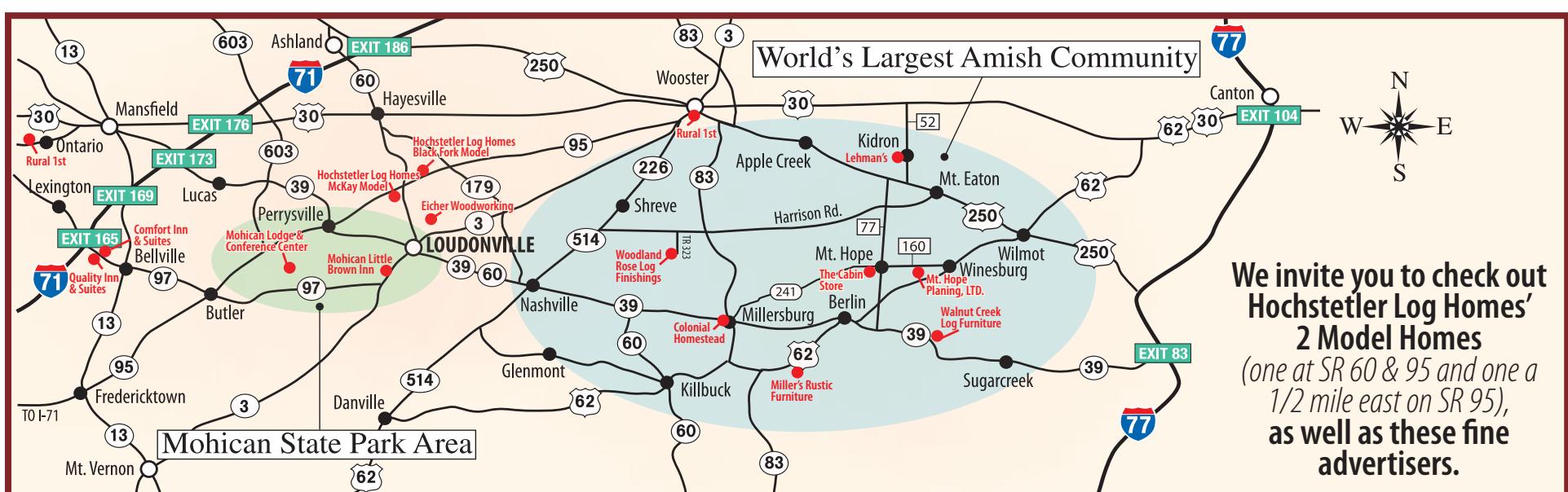


You can experience the casual, relaxing lifestyle that has made the log home so popular. Choose from the standard plan, (up to 6 people), or the Deluxe plan, (up to 8 people). Fully furnished.

**Call Hochstetler Log Homes to reserve 800-368-1015**



*We are prepared for a busy summer*





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# CABIN FEVER

## “Family Vacation” by Bill Dinkins

Way back in the '50s, our family vacations usually consisted of a week-long trip to visit our grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in and around Ripley, West Virginia, where my mother was born and where Grandpa Holly and Grandma Mabel resided. They lived on a dirt road, named Straight Street, which was a side street off Main, but still in town, which was good since they had indoor plumbing. The town's founders must have really taxed their brains to come up with the street's name, but it seemed appropriate since all the "tree" names were already taken - and the street was straight!

We usually left our house in Akron right after Dad got off work, and drove the 5-hour trip down Route 21 through southern Ohio, crossed the river at Marietta, and continued on the serpentine, 2-lane road to Ripley. So many of our Akron neighbors used to say, "What are the three R's they teach kids in the schools? Reading, Rittin', and Route 21 to West Virginia! It was a grueling trip with lots of switchbacks and mountains. Plus, we couldn't really enjoy the scenery since it was usually dark by the time we finally arrived. When we did arrive Grandma greeted us with open arms while Grandpa usually peered over his newspaper and asked, "What took you so long?" That certainly started our trip off on the right foot!

After being in the car all evening it was time to hit the sack - and no bed was as comforting as Grandma's feather bed. It literally swallowed you up when you settled into it - a full 6". In fact, you could barely see who you were sleeping beside.

Grandma usually had some chores for my brother and me to do: weeding the garden, feeding the hogs, and shucking corn. The corn cobs were hard and your hands got sore after an hour or so, but it provided food for the chickens and ultimately, fried chicken for us. It was always a tradition to have fried chicken with all the trimmin's on Sunday so that meant one of those chickens would be making the supreme sacrifice that morning. One day, Mom chose me to help her with this task and gave me a choice, "Billy, do you want to hold the chicken or swing the hatchet." I replied, "I think I'll hold the chicken."

The chicken was placed over an old stump and Mom took a quick swing. I released the chicken and saw it run in circles for what seemed like 5 minutes before it finally stopped. This was my introduction to life on the farm.

Monday's were a much anticipated day at Grandma's as stock trucks started rolling by the house about 7 a.m., accompanied by the moos, whinnies, and ba-a-hs of animals going to the auction. My brother and I quickly dressed, had breakfast, and ran to the stockyard down the street. Inside, farmers and buyers would nod their bids as horses, cattle, sheep and goats were goaded (sorry, couldn't resist that one) across the floor. Occasionally, a rambunctious bull would be led in, intent on showing the handlers a seat in the upper deck. But they were discouraged when a quick snap of a bull whip caught them between the eyes.

Those family vacations to Grandma's were always fun, but I have to admit the trip out to my cousin's farm, was even "funner"! P.S. You'll here about that next issue. 



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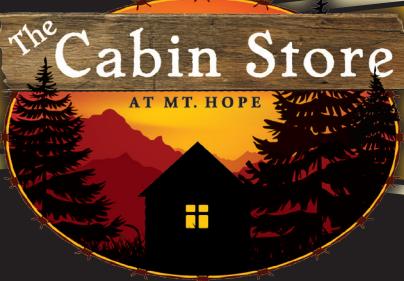
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