



Promoting The Simple Life

Winter 2023/2024

# Log Home Life

## VIEW FROM THE MILL

*By Levi Hochstetler*

We are having some of the nicest fall weather I have ever experienced. The leaves are very beautiful and much later than most years. Generally, here in Ohio, the peak foliage is around the 15th of October. This year, it probably peaked at about now, which is October the 25th. We had our first killing frost only two days ago. That, too, is unusually late.

The excitement around the mill is our newly developed log style. It will be ready for the spring building season. With it, we are trying to replicate the authentic, traditional, handcrafted Appalachian log style that had been so popular in the early frontier days. However, it still comes with the advantage of the Hochstetler tapered tongue-and-groove interlocking continuous gasket system—giving you the authentic look you want yet with the energy efficiencies of the modern log home. It will be available in various textures including hand-hewn inside and out, if you so desire. Next, we media blast them to give it a worn-weathered look.

Log Cabin Days is now behind us. We hope all that attended had a good, enjoyable and educational experience again this year. We look forward to seeing you all here at next year's event, which we have scheduled for the 13th & 14th of September.

We are always looking to improve and/or add things that are helpful and of interest to our attendees. One thought someone had is to add a homesteading tent. We like that idea. So long!

—Levi

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## Are Interest Rates Too High to Build?

— by Levi Hochstetler

Historically speaking, no!

Dave Ramsey, the personal financial “guru,” says build now and then refinance when rates come back down. I agree.

When securing my first business loan back in 1985, I felt lucky in being able to get it, paying 18½% interest! An acquaintance says, “that back in the 80’s when they had their first mortgage loan the rates came down to the unbelievable low rate of 11½%! His uncle insisted he lock them in now, warning him that they will never be this low again!” This makes the 7.49% rate look like a bargain.

Not claiming to be an economist but let me give you my five cents worth anyway.

In recent years, the 4% or even less has spoiled us. Now we think 7 or 8% is way over the top.

The central bank purposely increased interest rates to rein in the runaway inflation and it did its intended job. However, it also is stifling the economy, which is almost always the case. One thing it didn’t do though is: erase the pent-up-demand for housing.

During the early 2000’s more homes were built (with easy credit) than what the market could carry, resulting in a major housing bust in 2008. In 2006 alone there were about 1.6 million housing units built. About 500,000 more than what was needed! Listening to one of the top economist (someone that advised congress) we were told that by the last part of 2008 the housing market will have started to recover. Wrong!

*continued on page 3*



## Building Your Own Rental Cabin That Pays

Are you considering building rental cabins, a development, or your own getaway to rent out while you’re not there? Now is the time to move ahead with this endeavor. You can build your own getaway and have it pay for itself while you’re not using it. Who doesn’t want his own getaway for free!

Mary Marsh with Marsh Hollow Cabins is going to give you some helpful hints on building and managing your rental. She owns and operates her own rental cabins in Hocking Hills State Park. [www.marshhollow.com](http://www.marshhollow.com).

For cabin rentals, a true Log Cabin is almost an expectation. “I wouldn’t build anything else. If you’re going to use the word cabin in your advertising, it’s got to be a true log structure.”

“There is only one ‘disadvantage,’ which is that the electrical has to be planned very carefully. We thought we were being careful but we missed a few things we should have planned for. Outdoor electrical outlets were one of the things we overlooked! Get a professional to do lighting and power plans for you.”

*continued on page 2*

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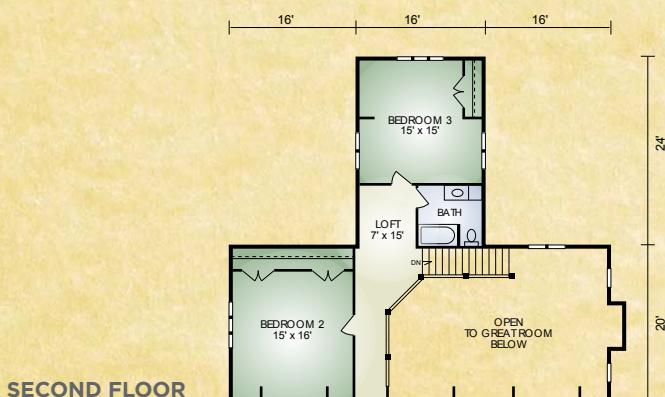
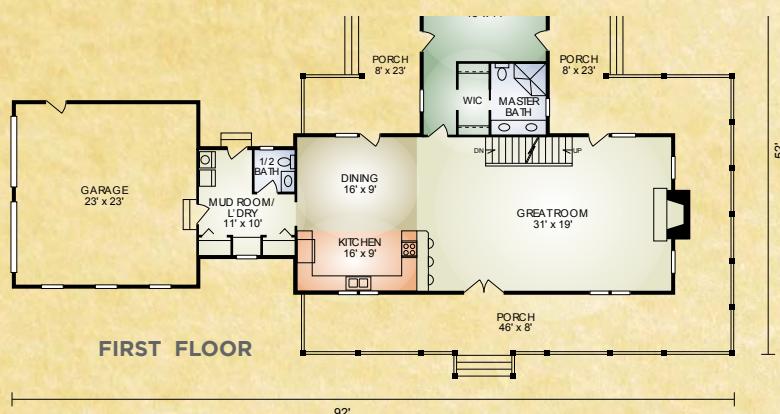
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All our plans can be modified to fit your lifestyle. Call 800-368-1015 to get your new log home started.



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2 • Call 800.368.1015 to order back issues or for the complete article.

## Building Your Own Rental Cabin That Pays

(continued from page 1)



Offer as much privacy as you can. Guests enjoy having space in the woods, country or beach area on a lakefront that is all their own.

Cleanliness is at the top of every traveler's list. Design your cabin so it easy to clean. A log cabin does not need a lot of knickknacks sitting around. The beauty of the wood is what is valued. Also, choose a log profile that does not collect dust.

In a rural setting, guests want a hot tub. Be sure to let your architect know where you plan to put it, so he can engineer the deck for the extensive weight.

Pet friendly. Yes, there is bit more maintenance at times but travelers with pets want to be invited back and usually clean up after themselves. Avoid carpet if accepting pets.

Free Wi-Fi. It's getting to be a must, especially in an area that does not have widespread, reliable phone service.

Always remember that your best customer is the one you already have. Do something special for returning guests. We pay their lodging tax of 6% if they come back. Be responsive to special requests. Do not feel that you have to charge for every little thing you do for a guest.

Ask guests to write online reviews for you, if you know they enjoyed their stay. Ask them to let you know personally if something wasn't quite right. It's better to hear it directly from them, than to read it in an online review that will never go away.

Ready to build your own cabin? Call Hochstetler Log Homes! They have built one for us and our guests give us rave reviews on it. The curb appeal is outstanding, which is important to cabin renters.

A note from Hochstetler Log Homes: We have seen lots of rental homes being built in the past year. Keep the future in mind. You may be able to rent out a little bit of anything in this hot market. But when the demand goes down the true cabins that have special features are the ones that will be getting the bookings! 🏠

  
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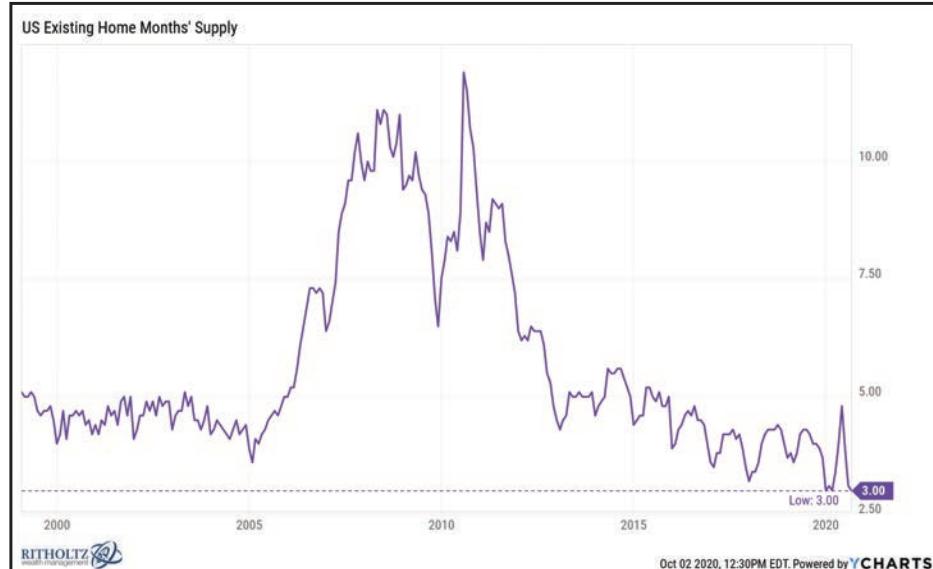
  
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## Are Interest Rates too High to Build?

(continued from page 1)

It took several years to get through those extra homes, literally devastating the housing industry. One log home manufacturer went from 100 homes per year down to one! Other suppliers and many builders, and trades people, went out of business. Some took early retirement, but most went off doing something else.

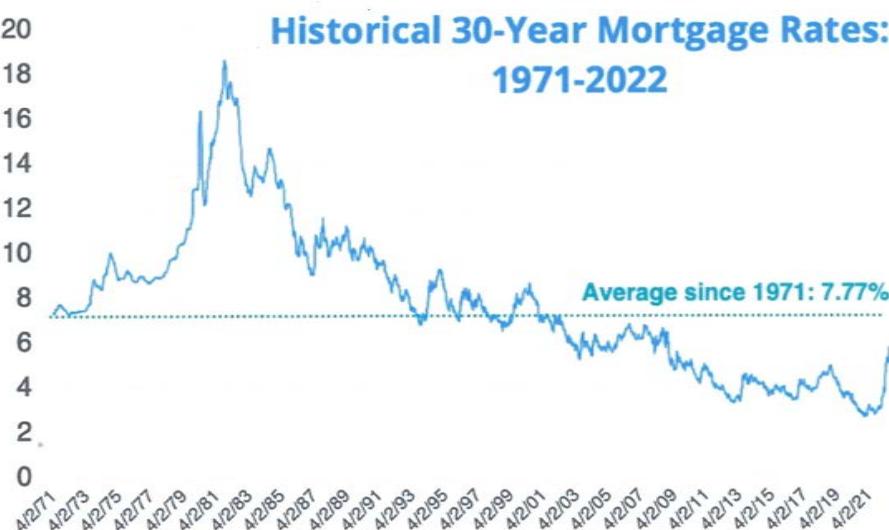


2021 rolls around. Suddenly, many couples moved out of their parent's basement or rental units to buy their own place. As we know, there weren't enough homes to buy. This caused a scramble or nearly a stampede, for existing homes with some selling minutes after being offered for sale, and often far above the asking price. This was followed by people wanting new homes from too few builders and material manufacturers that had too few employees. This instigated price increases for building material, trades people and builders as hardly anyone experienced before.

My take is that, after the economy has corrected itself and interest rates have stabilized, there will be another scrambling for homes. Like I said, higher interest rates have not erased the pent-up-demand! They have only postponed the buying frenzy. Note that the single family home supply is in its lowest level in nearly 40 years.

What does this mean to those of you in need of a home? In the near future, expect escalating lumber/material and labor costs. Good builders will be very busy and hard to come by. As they struggle to find good construction workers they will have to pay enough to entice them to swing a hammer. If they can find any!

Again I don't know of any better advice as Dave Ramsey's. Build now when you can and refinance when the rates come back down. And, if they don't soon, you at least will have gotten ahead of the next price increase.



## THE LIFE OF A LOG HOME OWNER

Are you considering building a log home but getting bombarded by family and friends with all the reasons you shouldn't? Listen to folks that experienced log home living!

### Mike

While the process to get there was a long one, after 5 years of living in their log home, Mike stressed that the outcome made it worthwhile. "I just want to encourage people who have always wanted to build a log home to never give up on that dream. We really owe a lot to Hochstetler Log Homes. Their help is what made all of this possible."

### Steve & Adie

Steve and Adie spent their first night in the cabin one year to the day after construction began. "Tears came to my eyes as we sat in the great room and realized my log home dream had come true," Steve recounted. "It was better than I ever imagined." His wife, once less enthusiastic to experience the log home lifestyle, quickly fell in love.

## HOCHSTETLER IN THE NEWS



Congratulations to **Tim & Debbie Werner** on receiving the honor of having your log home featured on the cover of Log & Timber Home Living.

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Closed on December 23, 24, 25 and January 1. We hope to see you!

# *Sticking to the Dream*



Photography by Style Life Photography



by Nathan Hochstetler

*W*hen Phil & Ashley DeAngelo met they decided they wanted to build in seven years. Four years later they were found looking at property in waist-deep snow trying to find the line pins. Deciding this was it, they left town that weekend with plans to call the realtor on Monday. During that time a gentleman purchased the property as a wedding gift to his daughter. The DeAngelos were heartbroken; they had been so close to their dream.

As if a godsend, the property was back on the market a month later. The daughter wanted the cash more than the property. The DeAngelos acted quickly, and soon they were the new owners of a beautiful piece of paradise. And, in addition they got 3 more acres to go with it at only \$1000 more. Blessing in disguise!

"Now was crunch time," said Phil. "We started whacking a clearing and picking up trash. The property had been used as a dump station and it needed a lot of cleaning up."

Napkin drawings, internet searches, visiting log homes and talking with log home companies was their norm for a while. Phil says, "We visited every log home in the county, knocked on doors, and everything kept leading us to Hochstetler Log Homes. One time we had an appointment with another log home company and we got there a little early and we went on a drive and stumbled on a Hochstetler log home. It was the McKay style home and was in line with what we were looking for."

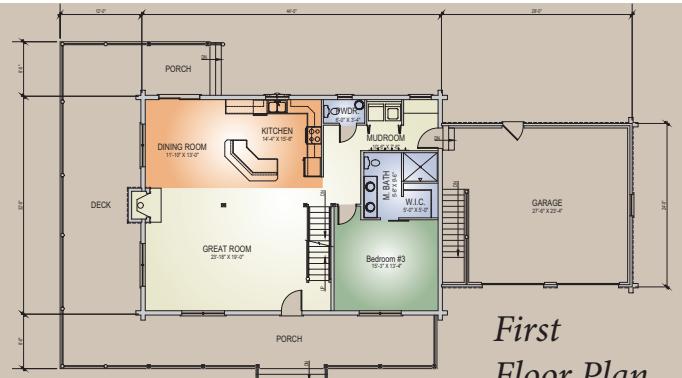
Phil says: "Listen to all the non-negotiables with everyone involved when designing your home." Phil wanted an open cathedral ceiling, Master Bedroom upstairs, 8x8 logs with butt & pass corners, Ashley wanted a loft area and flat logs on the inside, for ease of cleaning. Working together, and with the help from Hochstetler Log Homes, they were able to come up with a design that they both love.

Seven years to the month they were at the bank ready to order their dream log home. There were a few hiccups along the way in the build process but W&W Yoder Construction did a phenomenal job in putting it together. If it wasn't for them, this would have never happened! Phil and Ashley want to thank both the builder and Hochstetler Log Homes from the bottom of their hearts. "They made things black and white and that's the way I am," said Phil.

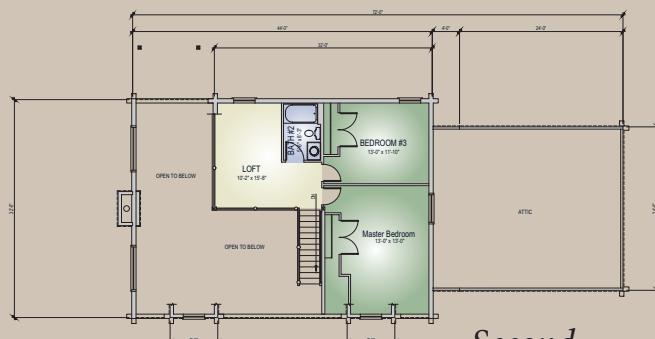
"Everything is great about this log home, the whole experience, love the wood, its God-made material. When I turn the lights off at night and walk thru the home you can just feel the solidness of the home. It takes less to heat this home than it does for a smaller conventional home, it is so efficient!"

Here is Phil and Ashley's advice for others looking to build a log home: "Work together, plan, plan, plan, but know that no matter how much you plan there are still going to be some surprises. We thought we would prove everybody wrong about surprises in building a home, so we planned and planned and in the end we forgot to figure in the utility to the property. Don't wait to build 'till you're old, we are still young and we hope to enjoy many years in our dream log home."

"Finally, if you want to build a log home, stick with it! Don't be taken out by what some people say. Do like we did, stick to your dream and make it happen!" 



First  
Floor Plan



Second  
Floor Plan



*For additional information about this home, please contact Hochstetler Log Homes at 800-368-1015.*



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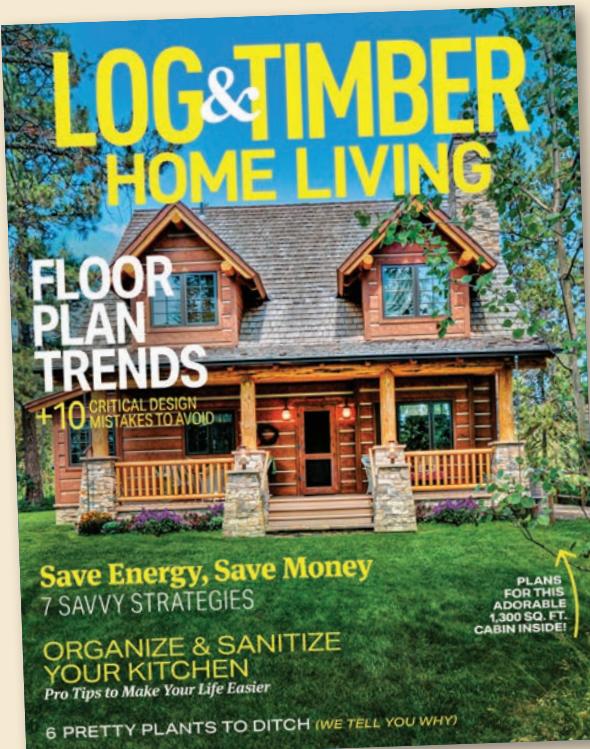
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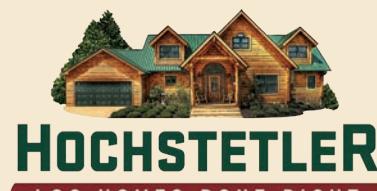
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# Log Cabin Days: A Trip Back in Time – by Bill Dinkins

Hochstetler celebrated its 12th annual Log Cabin Days, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 15 & 16. Under “Bluebird” skies and 70 degree temps, the event drew approximately 4,000 visitors from Ohio and 15 other states.

The 2-day event features activities for the whole family to enjoy. There were horse-drawn covered wagon rides and games for the kids, hay ride forestry tour, a lumberjack show, lots of booths with log home furniture and related decor, a demonstration with an old steam engine making shingles, log peeling and hand-hewing demos, plus craftsmen showing 19th century trades like broom making, wool spinning, blacksmithing and horse shoeing. Daniel Miller demonstrated painting on wood planks, skilled craftsmen carved figures and bowls out of wood, a chainsaw carver made eagles and bears out of logs, and a lady showed how to make yarn on a spinning wheel. Definitely, an exciting and informative look back in time.

An auction was held where furniture of all sizes and home furnishings was available at very reasonable prices. At 5:00 pm, 3 log cabins were auctioned off. These were 12'x24' cabins, large enough for a bedroom, bath and kitchen, and perfect for the weekend in the woods or a hunting getaway.

Of course, food was at the top of everyone's list with mouth-watering barbecued chicken, burgers, noodles, potato salad, baked beans, and pies highlighting the menu. Outside, vendors made homemade ice cream, kettle-cooked baked beans, and apple butter. A humongous, 1lb. hamburger with sides was even available for those daring to try it!

Guests were surprised at the number of vendors making food and craftsmen plying their various skills. A lady from Cincinnati remarked, “I was pleasantly surprised at the variety of homemade food offered...from ice cream to kettle-cooked baked beans. All were delicious.” Bob, from Maineville, Ohio, was interested in the chainsaw demonstration. “I saw a 4' owl he was working on



and he made me a great deal on it. I plan to display it on my front porch so all can see.” His wife was really impressed by the overall quality of the furniture and furnishings.

If you were interested in the relaxing log home lifestyle, the self-guided Log Home Tour was a “must see”. Guests were able to visit up to 8 area log homes and talk to owners about the complete log home planning and building process. Proceeds from the event went to the American Cancer Society and a local parochial school.

We hope to see you and your family next year at Log Cabin Days, September 13th and 14th, 2024 and help us celebrate our 13th year for the event! 



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# CABIN FEVER

## Piscatorial Pursuit - by Bill Dinkins

Keith Smith, a young fishing guide on Lake St. Claire in Michigan, has spent practically his whole life on the water and has had his share of unpredictable experiences and was willing to retell them while we fished with him. His Grandpa Tony started teaching him "the ropes" at the tender age of 5!

As he grew, his love for fishing also grew, and after getting his marketing degree at Michigan State, Keith applied his vast knowledge of fishing to a career as a St. Claire fishing guide. He kept extensive data on every trip: dates, conditions, temperatures, way points and fish caught. I joked that he probably had a birth certificate for every fish in the lake! Fact is, he's caught several fish, several times, so he knows their growth rate and probably how far they like to go on vacation!

One May evening he set out alone to do some walleye fishing, armed with his trusty 6" crankbait in a perch finish. It was tough conditions though; 10-15 mph wind gusts, mixed with 40 degree temps and 2' waves. Definitely, not for the faint of heart. This didn't seem to bother the walleye though and he sensed a succulent dinner coming up. At 1:30 am, in total darkness, he had 3 planer boards out with glow sticks when a big fish hit. This was no walleye! A huge muskie had attacked his bait and was headed upstream, peeling line off furiously while the drag of his reel screamed out in agony! It jumped a couple times, and shook his head violently in an effort to break away. Undeterred, Keith followed in hot pursuit. After an exhausting 15-minute struggle, the muskie was in netting range. But the net was too small! So he had to go to "Plan B", which meant landing it by hand! As the fish thrashed alongside the boat, Keith grabbed his gloves and was able to grab its tail with one hand and place his other hand under the belly to hoist it aboard, all the while avoiding



the razor-sharp, 1/2" long teeth. He carefully straightened it out and could hardly believe his eyes — 51" long, with a 23" girth. This was the "Top of the Food Chain" at Lake St. Claire!

Keith's life revolves around fishing and keeps his family with a ready food supply. He barter "piles of fish for piles of vegetables", he says. And with the high cost of vegetables these days that seems to be a logical plan. As long as he is catching fish, the family is not going to go hungry!

We had a great time fishing with Keith, not just catching fish but hearing his fascinating stories. If interested you can find out more about him on his website: [Keith@fishinwisdom.com](mailto:Keith@fishinwisdom.com)

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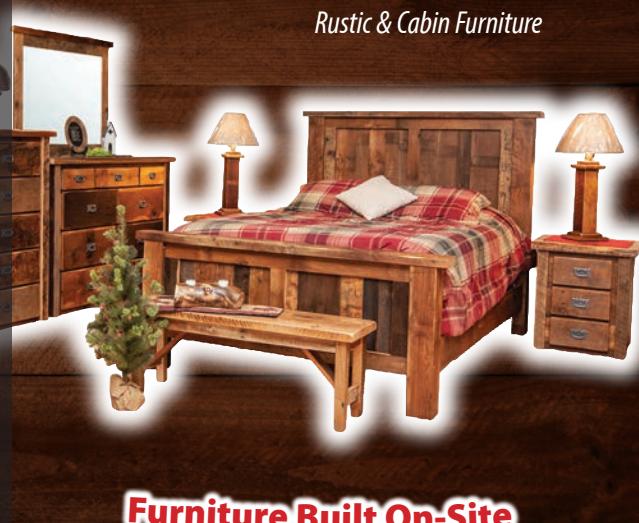
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