

Promoting The Simple Life

Winter 2024/2025

Log Home Life

VIEW FROM THE MILL

By Levi Hochstetler

Recently, I finally got to see a Yellow Rail Bird. To see one has been on my bucket list for many years. It's not that Yellow Rails are all that beautiful, in fact they are rather drab, with a yellowish body and brown streaks. Even its call, which most bird watchers never get to hear, isn't impressive. It sounds like someone tapping two stones together. But the challenge to get to see one is what gets a birder's adrenaline pumping. Being small "Robin size" with a stubby tail, the Yellow Rail normally sulks and hides in swampy tall grass making it almost impossible to see unless flushed. Plus, it doesn't flush easily. With the help of about 40 other birdwatchers we all got to see "the bird."

The pressure is on. Our blueprint sales are up. 2025 could be a repeat of 2022. The pent-up demand for housing has never been fully satisfied since the downturn clear back in 2008. With interest rates going down, some of that demand may cut loose, which in turn will cause escalating home prices and many scrambling for builders.

The US lost a lot of builders during the housing downturn of 2008. And now we simply don't have enough residential builders to reach around. If you are looking to build in 2025 you may want to get your builder lined up early! And as we say, "it's never too early to start with the design process once you have your property." You may want to take advantage of our design team this fall when we aren't so busy and not wait till the spring when they are overwhelmed.

So long,

— Levi

Come Visit Us!

Hochstetler Log Homes, LTD

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800-368-1015

continued on page 4

A Politically Correct Home?

— by Levi Hochstetler

What type of homes are ozone friendly, ecologically sound, non-polluting, sustainable, recyclable, renewable, healthy and green all over? Log Homes!

On the other hand;

What type of homes are All-American, traditional, solid, historical, faithful, rural, our heritage, orthodox, and Red, White and Blue all over? Log Homes!

Unlike steel, concrete, glass or plastic, log homes are the perfect home for you, no matter which side of the political aisle you identify with. So much so, that you would think every politician would live in a log home wanting to make sure they don't offend any of their constituents!

If you are concerned about the environment, as we all should be, special interest, industrial groups have been spreading their propaganda trying to get us to think that using steel, concrete, glass or plastic is better for the environment than using wood to build. If we study each alternate we soon conclude that we the American public may have been misled. Using wood to build is still far better for the environment than any of these alternatives.

For one let us compare wood with steel.

Steel is recyclable but so is wood. Wood is a renewable resource, steel is not. When depleted, there won't be any more. Wood on the other hand is growing faster than what's being harvested. According to the US Forest Service, American hardwoods are growing at the rate of 2.38 times faster and plus naturally reseed itself. Wood takes very little energy to

continued on page 2

Log Cabin Days Recap

— by Nathan Hochstetler

The 13th annual Log Cabin Days had a record breaking attendance. Approximately 5000 people travelled to rural Mohican country to attend. Everyone was able to go home feeling it had been well worth the drive. As Kathy Sigler portrayed, "It is a wonderful fall festival! The air smells of wood smoke, barbecue chicken and kettle corn."

The favorite attraction was the opportunity to tour up to 6 log homes, and discover the casual, relaxing lifestyle that characterizes log homes. We want to thank the homeowners in opening up their homes and patiently answering the questions. We received a lot of thanks from the ones that saw your beautiful home.

In the seminar area log home enthusiasts were taken step by step through, "9 Steps to the Good Log Home" booklet, presented by the Log Home Academy group. This course prepares anyone to move forward confidently with their dream log home project. The ever popular 101 Log Basics was well received by those just starting on the log home journey. And the lucky ones that already own a log home got well informed in how to



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NEW!

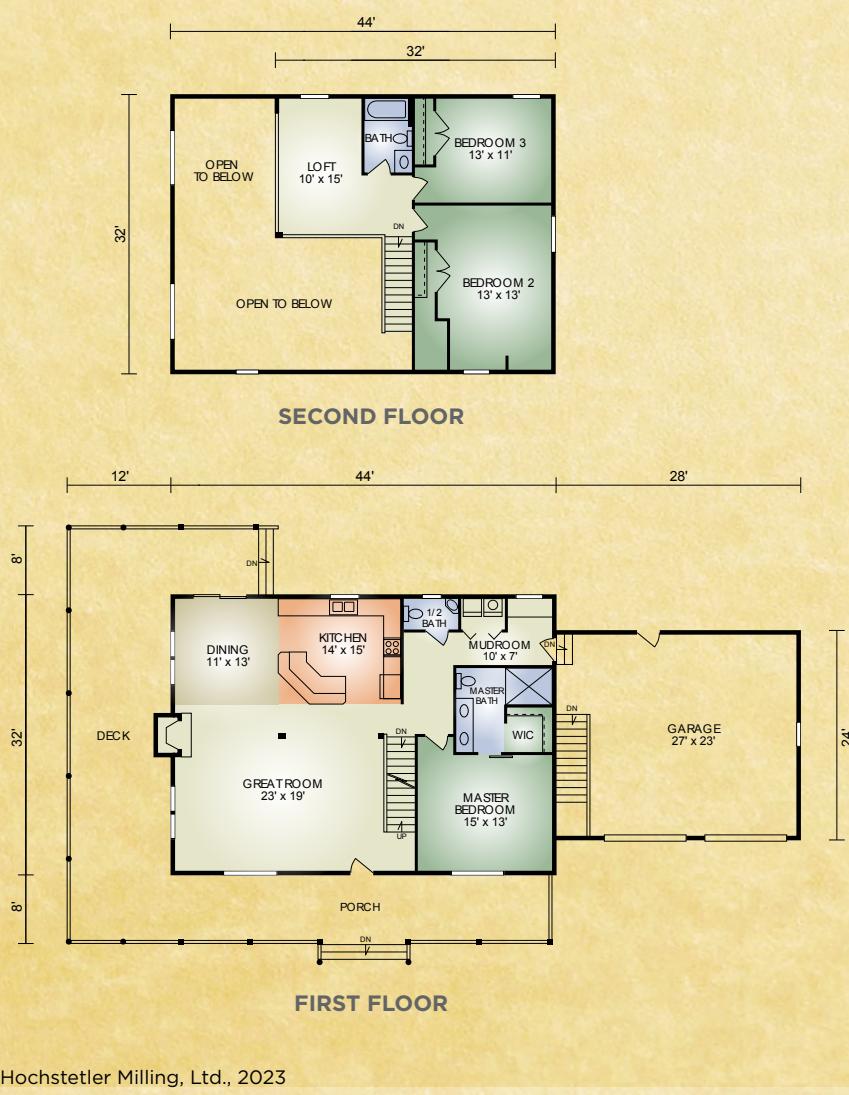
Pennsylvania

2,127 sq. ft.
2 BR / 2-1/2 BA



Coziness is what describes the Pennsylvania home. Imagine relaxing in the great room after a long day at work, with the large stone fireplace, timbered cathedral ceiling and the large gable windows bringing the outdoors in. The openness between the kitchen, dining and great room keeps the conversations flowing. The Master Suite is on the main-floor with washer and dryer conveniently close by. Upstairs are 2 additional bedrooms, full bath and loft area with space for an office or hobby area. Let this be your next home.

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.

A Politically Correct Home? (continued from page 1)

produce for the market. Total carbon emitted to produce a metric ton (2204.6 pounds) of wood= 33 (kg C/t) versus recycled steel, 220 kg and virgin steel 694 kg! And what's more, if we take into the account that trees are sequestering carbon out of the air as they grow, the net emission becomes minus zero 457kg for every metric ton of lumber produced!

As trees grow, they take carbon out of the atmosphere and put clean air back, providing they are young and vigorous. Think air filters. Once that tree dies from the inside, the carbon is then released back into the atmosphere. However if we as good environmental stewards harvest the trees before they die and use the wood for homes, the carbon will then stay in the wood and at the same time allow room for younger trees to thrive and sequester even more carbon.

On the other hand, if you are what is considered conservative, you probably yearn to be part of "one nation under God." A traditionalist, old-fashioned, die-hard Abe Lincoln fan. You want solid protection, a place for the family to gather around the table, your own place, your heritage, the American dream.

Historically there is nothing as American as the log cabin. Many of our early leaders including Abe Lincoln were born in log cabins. It's an icon of pioneers, family values, and almost everything good. Seeing a log home you reminisce of the good old days. Back in time when family was important, and hard work, and good morals, were expected.

Regardless where you stand, a log home can be the right home for you. 

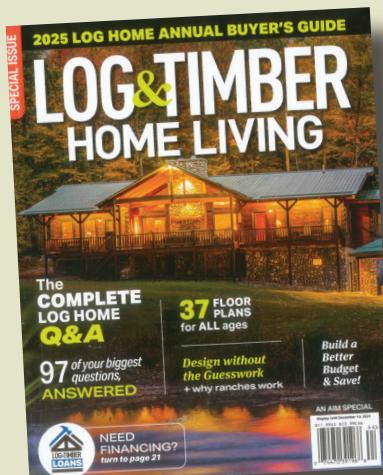
Question: How much carbon is emitted in the atmosphere to produce a metric ton of plastic? Answer: 2502kg which equals 5515.9 pounds! That's enough to make even an industrialist like John D. Rockefeller feel guilty using vinyl siding or floating floor.

THE LIFE OF A LOG HOME OWNER

Sweatmans – NY

We have been in our home now for three years, on a beautiful 50-acre lot and absolutely love the Hochstetler craftsmanship and quality. We have ordered additional stone and spindles since the initial build and the mill staff continues to be so helpful and we are grateful that we weren't "pushed aside" after the initial large home purchase.

Thank you to the architects that helped make some special changes to our master suite area. The builder recommendation in our area was superb and we remain friends today. We would highly recommend Hochstetler Log Homes!



HOCHSTETLER IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to
John and Cheri Sloane
on receiving the honor of
having your log home featured
on the cover of *Log & Timber
Home Living*.



It's that time of the year when we wish to invite you to come in and enjoy the casual and relaxing lifestyle that makes a log home so special. This is the ideal time to discuss your building plans with our experienced design staff.

Beat the spring rush and get an early start with your blueprints!
Call to make an appointment.
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Open house will be held at the
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Black Fork



McKay



Open House days are: December 26, 27, 28, 30, & 31.
Closed on December 23, 24, 25, 29 and January 1. We hope to see you!



Log Cabin Days Recap *(continued from page 1)*

preserve the longevity and beauty of a log home in the log home care session.

If you have a hobby farm or would like to learn more about it, the "Homesteading Tent" was the place to be. Vendors were setup with items you need to get started. Seminars covered vital topics like, Raising Livestock, Gardening, Orcharding, and Herbs.

The Log Cabin Burgers were a big hit once again. We were sold out on Saturday, so make sure next time to get yours early! The food tent was frequently visited by all, looking for another bite of the delicious barbecue chicken or a bowl full of the kettle cooked beans or even to sneak another mouthwatering fry-pie. Others went for the noodles, potato salad and variety of pies that tempted your palette, especially when topped off with a scoop of homemade ice cream.

The Cabin, Rustic Furniture and Décor Auction was well attended. There were four cabins to choose from, four timbered pavilions and beautiful rustic showcase furniture. An auction attendee said, "The Rustic Furniture Auction was like no other I ever attended. Some very unique pieces and great prices. If you're in the market for rustic furniture, this is the auction to attend!"

Children were gold digging in the pine shavings, trying their talent in the coloring contest, building cabins with Lincoln logs, petting the animals, taking rides on the covered wagon. Diane Spreng says, "Our granddaughters look forward to it every year and get very excited when they see the covered wagon advertising Log Cabin Days."

Other events included axe throwing; cross-cut sawing; wooden bowls being made with a lathe; old-fashioned steam engines powering a sawmill, chain saw wood carving; and weaving and rug making. Over 50 booths displayed rustic log home furniture and furnishings, cabinetry, doors, windows, flooring and miscellaneous building materials. There was truly something for everyone.

Hochstetler Log Homes would like to thank everyone involved in making this a successful event. American Cancer Society and Mohican Parochial School always appreciates the strong support they receive from attendees. We hope to see everyone again next year at Log Cabin Days, September, 12th & 13th 2025. 





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Handcrafted for Life: The Cabin Store – by Janice Brewster Weiser

The Cabin Store makes log houses into homes

In a world where many people shop online for furniture and decor, The Cabin Store in Mount Hope, Ohio, is different. The Amish-owned store doesn't have a website. "We want customers to come in to see, touch, smell, hear and experience what we have to offer," says owner Junior Yoder.

And people do come in – from nearby communities and across the country. It's worth it, Junior says, to find the lodge, Western and country-style furnishings and accessories that are just right for log or rustic timber home. "We want to make a cabin look complete when it's done."

Taking It All In

It's easy to spot a first-time visitor to The Cabin Store, Junior says. "The first half minute they just stand there and gaze. It's a unique store, it's just different, you have to go through twice to see everything."

The Cabin Store, which traces its roots back to Junior's previous work carving and selling barn-timber fireplace mantels, now occupies two floors and 12,000 square feet. Inside, shoppers discover a world of handcrafted furniture and lighting, along with every decorative item a homeowner would want, from comforters to candles to carvings.

The vast majority of items are handcrafted in the U.S. The wood furniture is all handmade from materials like Aspen and salvaged barn wood. The bench-made upholstered pieces feature leather or lodge, cabin or Western-themed fabrics. "We ship anywhere... Texas, California, Florida, Montana, Tennessee," Junior says. The store also offers design services and will build custom items based on customers' specifications. "You bring in a picture and we'll duplicate it."



Shedding Light

Statement chandeliers, lamps and other light fixtures are popular with The Cabin Store's customers. Naturally shed antlers sourced in Wyoming are used by Midwestern craftspeople to create one-of-a-kind pieces. The store also carries rustic chandeliers handcrafted from barn beams, salvaged hay trolleys and freeform wrought iron.

Getting lighting advice from log home experts like the staff at The Cabin Store is valuable. "We are picky on color of lighting," Junior says. "Lighting can make your home look good or it can make it look bad. We have ways to make it look real good and warm, instead of cold and not inviting."

Reclaiming and Reusing

Many of the products at The Cabin Store make good use of reclaimed materials. Antique barn wood from Ohio and neighboring states is perfect for log homes, Junior says. It's typically deciduous hardwood, with a dark color that complements honey-toned log walls.

Some of the store's newest offerings are gazebos made from corrugated metal grain bins. These outdoor structures are maintenance-free and have a distinct country style.

Taxidermy found throughout the store ranges from classic mounted heads to whimsical groupings of smaller animals.

Ripple Effects

The quality and style of the store's goods draw customers in, but they might not realize their purchases help hundreds of local artisans and their families. Junior says there are 400 to 600 small woodshops in the Millersburg area that work together to make furniture. "When you buy something at The Cabin Store," he says, "You're supporting more than just The Cabin Store, you're supporting other family businesses."

When You Go

The Cabin Store (330-674-1838) is located at 7860 State Route 241 in Mount Hope, Ohio, and is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. It's closed on Sunday. While you're in the area, Junior recommends a trip to local favorite, Mrs. Yoder's restaurant in Millersburg, for fried chicken and mashed potatoes.

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SOAKING UP THE MARYLAND *Lake Life*

by Janice Brewster Weiser

Growing up in Maine, John Bobrowiecki was used to summers spent on a lake, fishing, boating and swimming. When his career with the military took him to Virginia, John and his wife, Laura, went in search of lake life closer to home. They focused on Maryland's Deep Creek Lake and discovered a $\frac{3}{4}$ -acre lot overlooking the water. The property came with access to a quiet cove on the lake and was close to a ski resort and many other outdoor activities.

John had a vision of their home away from home. "I probably pushed the agenda for a log home," he says. "I liked the classic log home style." Before they bought the lot, the couple had stayed in the Deep Creek area in a log cabin with some friends. It was wintertime and the cozy look and feel of logs worked their magic on his wife. "Laura started drinking the juice," John laughs.



Designing the Dream

With the perfect spot picked out, the couple began searching for a log home provider and builder. Unfortunately, the pandemic was delaying many of the local companies, so they cast a wider net with an online search. "We came across the Hochstetler website and it had some really good photos of layouts and real-world examples of homes they had built," John recalls.

They reached out to Hochstetler's sales and design consultant Brett Martin, who helped them refine their ideas with inspiration from a stock plan, The Clearfork, which features a prow front filled with windows. "They had a setting that made it nice to overlook the lake view," Brett says.

Although most buyers customize their floor plans, having stock plans available creates a good jumping-off point. "Oftentimes when people come in and see something that's an inspiration, we can then begin showing them pictures of a home like theirs that we've already built," Brett says. "It helps to solidify their ideas."

Room to Spare and Share

Because they have a large extended family, the Bobrowieckis wanted plenty of space in their log home. The finished design includes six bedrooms and four baths with 5,000 square feet of living space on three levels. Included on their "must have" list were a kitchen that would be open for entertaining, a large fireplace in the main room and a spot for one of John's prized possessions: a Maine moose trophy from a successful hunt when he was just 13 years old.

To make life easier for John, a Marine veteran who uses a wheelchair, all the essentials for comfortable living are located on the main level. An elevator also connects the main level to the lower level, where a bar area is outfitted with a handcrafted live-edge bar that Laura and John purchased from a "mom and pop" shop in West Virginia. An accessible ramp leads from the deck to the driveway.

Designing a home that's accessible to all makes a lot of sense, Brett says, especially when buyers plan to retire in their homes. "The obvious thing is to keep the master suite on the first floor, the laundry on the first floor, so that whether you build a two-story or three-story home, aging in place can happen on that first floor," he says. "We're also designing 3-foot-wide doorways, so access and mobility is easy in the home."

The universal design of the Bobrowieckis' home has been a blessing in other ways as well: Laura and John always planned to rent the home out as a vacation getaway to help offset their costs. "We've had several renters who were older or had mobility issues," John says. "It was a big thing, to have that ability to get from level to level without going up or down stairs."



When Hochstetler works with buyers who foresee renting their homes to others, Brett recommends adding as many bedrooms as possible. "The more bodies they can sleep, the more advantageous," he says. The bedrooms typically share bathrooms, since adding too many baths to a design can raise costs and eat up space.

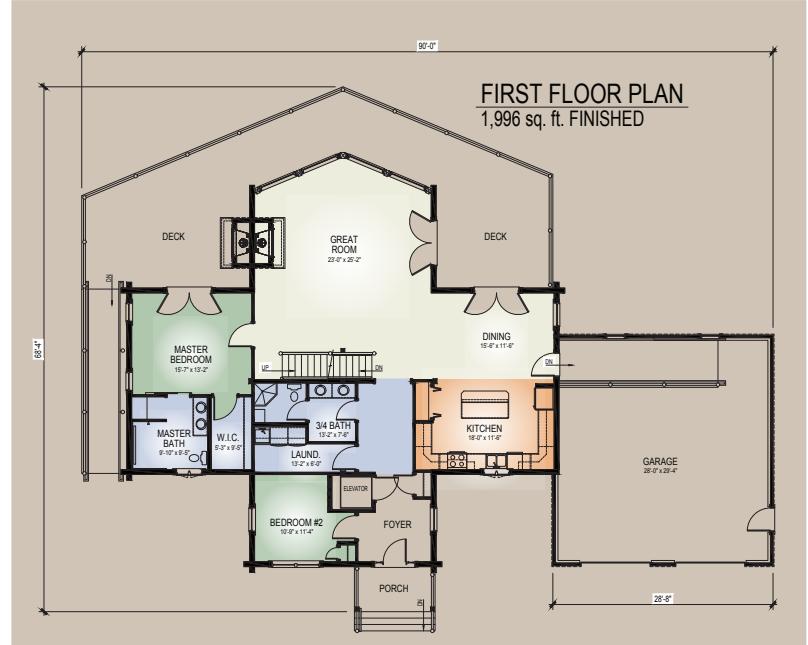
The Bobrowieckis included three different locked storage areas in their home because having secure storage for the owners' personal belongings is important when renting. "It's nice to have locked closet space on all three floors," Brett says. Basement storage space is typically easy to carve out. On the main floor and second story that space can be a closet that's accessible to a hallway.

Favorite Times and Places

Now that they have had time to enjoy their new home, Laura and John have discovered some favorite spots. "I really like having a wood-burning fireplace, the smell of it, the feel of it, but we knew we'd have to have renters," John says. "So the compromise we made was having a gas fireplace in the interior of the house, and a wood-burning fireplace out on the deck."

Enjoying that fireplace and watching the stars overhead brings the couple a sense of peace. "We've sat out on the deck with the outdoor fireplace. You have a great view of the stars. It looks almost like a movie because there's not a lot of light pollution in the area." The deck is a great place to start the day, too. "Our favorite thing to do is first thing in the morning having a cup of coffee sitting out on the deck," John says. "It's relaxing and puts you at ease. Seeing some of the wildlife that walks by...It's a really cool experience."

And, they've shared these experiences with others, too — hosting reunions and holiday get-togethers at the house they've named Great Escape Lodge. While the interior glows with light from the great room's antler chandelier, they've enjoyed having family gather around the outdoor fire pit. "We were able to fit everyone out there, roasting marshmallows and telling the same stories that we always tell when we're together," John says. "It was a really cool moment." 



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



Tech Section

Educational and Interesting Facts.

Question:

How did you get started in Log Homes?

Answer:

As an Amish youth I was exposed to numerous barn raisings. I was all in. In the morning everything was on the deck or ground. By sheer brawn of several hundred men the barn was up and done by early afternoon. Totally amazing. Individually our effort seemed insignificant, but collectively much was done.

At seventeen I helped build my first log home. An awesome experience. It intrigued me from the start.

At twenty one in 1985 I borrowed money (at 18.5 % interest) and bought an old 4-sided planer. We were able to plane large timbers and log home logs. I was also in partnership with Johnny Miller in Oakbridge Timber Framing, a good friend of the family. Not until the mid 90's did the log home part take off and Johnny and I decided it would be better if I took on the planing mill, milling log homes and heavy timbers and he would continue with Oakbridge Timber Framing doing timber framed structures.

Levi Hochstetler

Proprietor of Hochstetler Log Homes

The Hochstetler Log Home website host will be launching an exciting newly designed website January 1st. Be sure to visit and enjoy the added features and information.

Nathan Hochstetler

Marketing at Hochstetler Log Homes

Question:

Out of the hundreds of log homes you have designed which one stands out for you the most? And why?

Answer:

The John & Vicki Young home probably stands out to me the most of all the log homes I have designed. It stands out, I think, for a few reasons:

1. ***The finished product was successful.*** It would be hard to argue that the finished home is not good architecture. The use of natural materials is beautiful, the logs and timbers are oversized for integrity and the rooms and spaces function just the way they were intended for.
2. ***The process was challenging.*** Overcoming a challenge is more satisfying than the easy route to success. John's question when I first met him was: "Why is a young man such as yourself qualified to design my dream home?" And the challenges did not stop there. One could argue that these constant challenging of ideas is what ultimately led to such a successful design.
3. ***It is local.*** I like to take the same design approach no matter where a project is located; but when it is on a piece of ground in a region of which I have deep knowledge, with a client who is part of my community, the project becomes personal.

Steve Lykins, Log Home Engineer and Design

**Question:**

What are the first steps in getting the loan process started?

Answer:

The first step to getting started with the loan process is to contact your banker and get pre-approved. We can do this by scheduling the application appointment over the phone or applying online at www.timadamsmortgage.com. After the application is received and credit has been reviewed, we issue a pre-approval.

Tim Adams

Log Home Financer at 1st Federal Community Bank

Question:

What area in my home should I start with, to base my interior design on?

Answer:

I usually recommend starting with the kitchen area, as it is usually the heart of the home! Especially when you have an open concept floor plan, everything has to "flow" finish wise and designing your dream kitchen is the best space to start.

Jara Thomas

Interior designer of log homes

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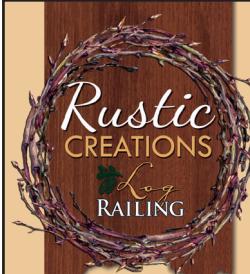
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CABIN FEVER

"Northwoods Special" – Story by Mike Kortas, written by Bill Dinkins

Since I was a young lad, my father had always gone from our home in Chicago to northern Minnesota on his fishing vacations. Lake Winnibigoshish was his favorite destination and the entire family loved going there. When I married and moved to Cincinnati I continued to go up to Minnesota, even though it was 1,000 miles away. We usually spent the first night in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, at a motel which looked eerily like the Bates Motel in *Psycho*. I recall one restaurant we usually ate at which had a large bull statue out front. One of the locals, when asked where you could get a good burger, had a ready reply, "Go down there a short piece 'til you see a large bull out front and you're there." Then he added, "that ain't no bull!" The restaurant was famous for its Big Bull Burger.

Two of my best buddies from high school in Chicago were Mike and Larry. Both liked fishing and I convinced them they would catch the biggest fish of their lives at Lake Winnibigoshish. Both were skeptical until we made a trip there one year. The first walleyes they caught were, sure enough, the largest they'd ever caught. I said, "throw 'em back", and they wanted to throw me out of the boat! Later, that same day, they both caught fish even bigger and were overjoyed! Those we kept.

Throughout the years we always stayed in touch and made the trek to "Lake Winnie" every year, even after we all got married and started having kids. In 2005, we decided to try a new lake, Lake Leech, well-known for its walleye fishing. Our trips must have resembled a caravan as we started in Cincinnati, picked up Mike and Larry's families in Chicago, proceeded to Eau Claire, and finally ended up at the lake. There were 17 of us, including Mike, Larry, and John's families and my family of 4. Unlike today, the kids never got bored. We rented "Whitetail", one of several log cabins at the camp. "Raccoon" and "Black Bear" were two other cabins we rented.

On the last day, my son, Pete, and John's son, Fred, had their fill of catching walleye and decided to try for muskie. Fred had never done much fishing but was armed with his trusty little Zebco 33 spinning reel, 10 lb. test line, and the vintage red and white Pike Oreno plug, which he had borrowed from his

Grandpa's tackle box. They headed out to a weedy bay, while carefully avoiding the numerous stumps, and proceeded to beat the water to a froth while casting. Suddenly, Fred got a snag. "I can't move it," he said. Pete said, "Your line's moving, Fred." And about

that time a giant muskie exploded from the water, sending a fountain of water 6' into the air before splashdown. The resulting "tug of war" went on for 15 minutes, with Fred reeling the big fish in, only to have the muskie turn and dive as the reel screamed out.

Finally, the big fish surfaced alongside the boat. Fred said, "Get the net." Pete said, "Got it, but it's not big enough. This is a Walleye net, not a Muskie net!" Pete noticed another fisherman across the bay and bellowed, "We need a bigger net ... do you have one?" The fisherman replied, "Be right over." He looked just like Z-Z Top, the musician with the long, pointed beard and a strong, hearty laugh as he pulled alongside. "Use this Scissor Net," he instructed. "Just slide him in, measure him, take a photo and release him."

Fred's muskie was 42" and probably weighed between 18-20 lbs. Quite an accomplishment for the 12 year old who'd caught nothing but bluegills on his Zebco before. At our end-of-the-week "Big Fish" contest, we all gathered 'round for the celebration. Hank, our beloved lake guide, stepped forward and presented Fred with the coveted award...a can of Spam and a can of sardines. "This is your "Northwoods Special!"



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