

Country's Best **Cabins**

**7 BUILDING
ISSUES
SOLVED!**



avoid
**COMMON
DESIGN
PITFALLS**

LESSONS LEARNED:

Cabin Owners
Share Real-Life Tips

PLUS: Natural Water Features
Installing Electrical Outlets
Add Space with a Finished Basement



To add a personal touch to its homes, Pioneer Log Homes likes to include an eagle carving in each house that it builds. According to John Leszczynski, president of Pioneer Log Homes Midwest, deep overhangs are “an important part of good design.” He recommends a 4- to 5-foot minimum for adequate protection from the sun — a key element for keeping your home-maintenance tasks in check.

Back to BASICS

A Wisconsin real-estate developer creates a laid-back lakeside community – and a stunning log home to boot.



When Jack Mitchell decided to build a log cabin, he knew he wanted to create a getaway for his family and friends to enjoy — an escape from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

“It was one of those items that had always been on my bucket list,” says Jack, a real-estate developer in Green Bay, Wisconsin. “I also had a young family at the time, so I got to thinking about building a place to create memories that they’d always remember.” In short, he wanted to create a place to get back to the basics.

And he succeeded in his efforts. The home itself,

The home's main living spaces (right) feel bright and airy, thanks to soaring cathedral ceilings and a mix of light drywall and wood. The sitting area, which also features a real central Wisconsin fieldstone fireplace, leads to the upper-level loft.

The main level's openness (opposite) creates an easy transition from space to space. "The flow of this home really makes it special," says Andre Chevigny, general manager of Pioneer Log Homes of British Columbia. "It's not a huge house, but it has that 'big lodge' feel, thanks to the oversized logs and joinery."



however, is anything but basic. Located on Tom Doyle Lake near Newbold, Wisconsin, the 2,600-square-foot cabin is part of Garrett's Landing, a 45-lot community that Jack purchased and developed himself. After buying the 102-acre property, he wanted to kick-start the development by building a truly unique home that would draw attention to the area, so he began contacting all the log-home builders in the state of Wisconsin and went to a couple log-home shows.

All of his research eventually led him to Pioneer Log Homes Midwest in Grafton, Wisconsin, a dealer for Pioneer Log Homes of British Columbia. "I began speaking with the president, John Leszczynski, about building a spec home, but as we started planning the

house, I fell in love with the home and how unique it was. So I went ahead and bought the home for myself," says Jack, with a laugh. "It would've been much too hard for me to build this home only to sell it to someone else."

The home's customized plan is based on Pioneer's standard Winchester plan, but the design team added a few personalized touches to accommodate Jack, his wife, Ann, and their son, Garrett, for whom the community was named. "The only thing that was set in stone was the layout of the first floor because of the structural-log requirements, which affected where the kitchen and open living areas would be," says Jack. From there, they decided to put in a



Jack opted for large, uninterrupted windows in the main living area of the lakeside cabin (right). The windows, which look out onto the home's spacious back porch, also frame the gorgeous views that made this waterfront property so appealing.

The home's floors are maple hardwood, while the kitchen cabinets (opposite) are made of reclaimed fir that was reconditioned with car bondo to fill in any imperfections in the wood.



natural-stone fireplace, so they needed to make some adaptations to the logs to accommodate that.

The upper level, which includes a loft-style bedroom, in addition to a master bedroom and a shared bath, was also designed entirely by Jack. "Many of the unique design elements in this home were thought up by the homeowners themselves," says the dealer. "From the basement to the screened-in porch, it's really a one-of-a-kind home."

Most spectacular, though, are the surprise details found throughout the house — namely, the magnificent handcrafted logs and built-ins. "The back porch features a built-in picnic table that is made from one of the integral logs of the house," says the dealer. There is also a lot of character in the corners, thanks to the use of Pioneer's flared-out, tapered cedar logs, which add true character to the home. There's even an eagle carving that keeps watch over the home — a staple of Pioneer's design aesthetic.

"If it's OK with the homeowners, we include an eagle carving in every house we do," explains Andre Chevigny, general manager of Pioneer Log Homes of British Columbia. "For 25 years this has been a trademark on most of our homes. It provides an artistic element to the exterior, while also adding a unique feature inside where we can add another carving or leave the flared-out end like we did for the Mitchells."

But when the Mitchell family visits their lakeside cabin, there's a lot less focus on the magnificent home, and more on each other. "We don't have electronics up here. No TV, no computers — just a radio," says Jack. "We also have a little journal that my wife always fills out on the very last day of every trip. Whether it's a story about a fish that was caught and how big it was, or some kind of funny event that happened, we'll always have this tangible reminder that, as we get older, will always remind us of all the good times we spent at the cabin."



RESOURCES

Square footage: 2,600

Bedrooms: 2 (plus loft)

Bathrooms: 2

Log species: western red cedar

Builder/general contractor: JEM Realty Group, Green Bay, WI (920-217-1666)

Dealer: Pioneer Log Homes Midwest, Grafton, WI (866-255-6148; pioneerloghomesmidwest.com)

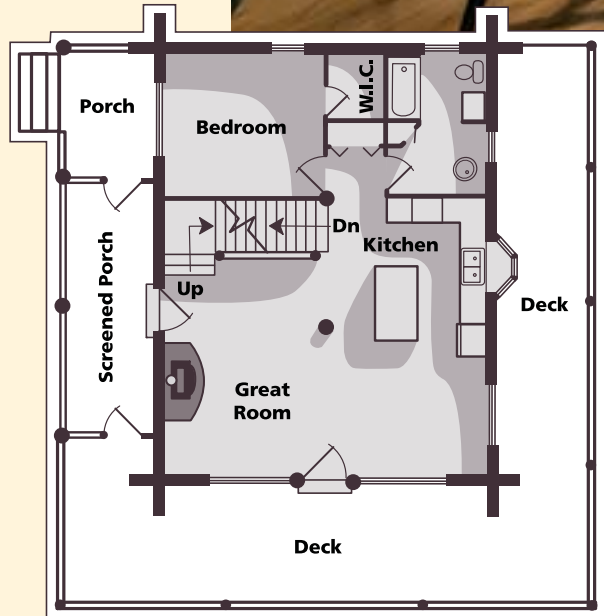
Doors: Nick's Building Supply, Crown Point, IN (219-663-2279; nicksbuilding.com)

Log provider: Pioneer Log Homes of British Columbia (877-822-5647; pioneerloghomesofbc.com).

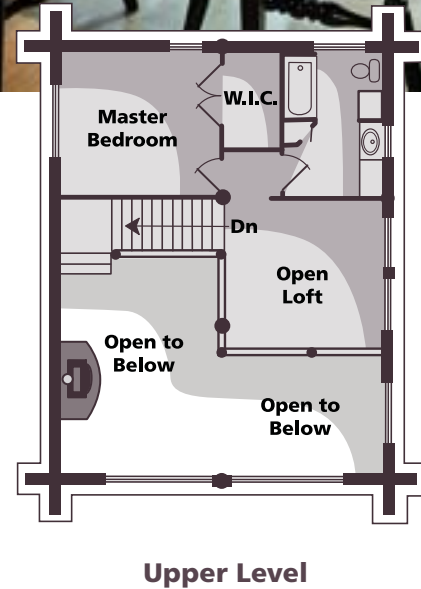
Stain: Timber Pro Coatings, Portland, OR (888-888-6095; timberprocoatings.com)

Windows: VerHalen, Green Bay, WI (800-236-8646; verhaleninc.com)

The Mitchells decided to forgo a formal dining space and instead opted for a casual eating area located directly off the open kitchen. This space, in addition to the large built-in picnic table on the back porch, provides plenty of seating space for family and friends.



Main Level



Upper Level



One of the most unique elements of the home, the built-in picnic table, is made from one of the integral logs of the house. There's also a lot of character in the corners of the homes, where the flared-out, tapered cedar logs are showcased.