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The lower level gives way to a brick terrace at the Hasal home, which overlooks a peaceful Wisconsin lake. **OPPOSITE:** The bench had been in the attic for 20 years back in New Jersey, but here it provides an immediately welcoming note. The chain-saw bear and mushroom rooms up in the beams add a charming country feel.

A Log Home Named
CEDAR
GABIL

Back in the woods of Wisconsin, a log home exudes almost as much charm as the couple who live in it.



*I*T WAS LIKE THE MATING OF PORCUPINES," BOB HASAL jokes, referring to his marriage—not the planning and building of Kay's and his log home. The latter took a mere 20 years, and other than a skirmish or two over the layout, it was almost an easier commitment.

"We'd both been through earlier marriages and emerged fiercely independent people," Bob explains. But Bob and Kay's marriage of more than 20 years, and fierce devotion to one another, offers a clue to the reason why they rank as supremely satisfied log home owners: Determination.

Most log home owners plan carefully for their dream home, but few take 15 years of designing and five more years of planning to arrive at the doorstep. Ironically, when Kay recently uncovered the long-forgotten and

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first of four complete re-designs, she found that it matched almost exactly their final, and actual, floor plan. Although it seems they could have skipped all those years in between, the re-designs and attendant changes were valuable because they helped the Hasals plan, think through, and realize what they didn't want, as well as what they did. "We made our mistakes on paper," says Bob.

All that time also helped them get their site ready. Initially, Bob and Kay were going to retire to northern Wisconsin, and they began buying bits and pieces of land along a lake near Kay's childhood hometown. But the hectic pace of life in New Jersey began to wear on them. "I still saw Wisconsin through the eyes of an 18-year-old; the way it was when I left," Kay explains. "But Bob began showing it to me through his eyes, and I realized what a different lifestyle it was."

As well as how appealing. Eventually, the question for the Hasals became, "Why wait until retirement?"

The move was meant to be. Both found jobs equivalent to their challenging positions back East. "The income levels here are less than what we were used to," Bob says, "but you have to look at the trade-offs. Here, the biggest crime issue is a chipmunk trying to get in your garage."

By this time, they had accumulated 14 acres of prime land on a motor-restricted lake that perfectly suited their interest in canoeing. Not that it had been easy.

"The last parcel of land went all the way through the process, right up to closing, and suddenly the seller disappeared," Bob explains. "Turns out he was in the Witness Protection Program. It took us two years to get a single signature for that one acre of property. It also turned out that it had never been surveyed so the papers read 'south of the road and west of the Hasals.' There was no eastern border at all."

"We wanted that last adjoining property because it was being proposed as public access," Kay continues. "We wanted to preserve the peace as well as make our land seem whole."

"On a 50-foot-wide lot the Good Lord would have a hard time being a good neighbor," adds Bob. As it is, a road runs through a portion of their land and there is a neighbor across the road, though the Hasals can't see their house in the summer and only a small part of it in the winter.



Attention is frequently divided between the impressive 30-ton rock fireplace and the beautiful lake view beyond the French doors and fan-style windows. The jugs on the shelves of the fireplace were another garage-sale prize grouping and strike just the right note of informality.



ALTHOUGH THEY REVIEWED many log home manufacturers, the Hasals quickly narrowed the field to four, and ultimately selected Tomahawk Log & Country Homes. They had done their homework so well that they had laid out their plans right down to the last wall outlet, light switch and plumbing connection.

In their research, the Hasals had toured several log homes and felt that too many log

interior walls absorbed light more than they were comfortable with. "And some had to be dusted," Kay continues, "or they can be difficult to decorate. You can't paint them, wallpaper them or do much to change their appearance. It can also be difficult to hang art on them."

Because they had lovingly accumulated an extensive collection of wildlife art, the latter consideration was important to Bob and Kay. As a result, they planned only three log interior walls, one each in the great

ABOVE OPPOSITE: The gables of the Hasal home are striking and lent their name to the home, "Cedar Gables." **BELOW:** Although the hickory cabinets are not custom-made, careful planning makes them appear so. Their golden stain is complemented by a similar finish on the wood floor.



ABOVE: The 72-inch Ethan Allen maple table is one of only a handful of furniture that the Hasals brought out from New Jersey. There, it had to be pushed up against the wall, but now it enjoys pride of place over a handsome Berber rug. **OPPOSITE:** Sunny summer days find the Hasals and their friends frequenting the deck enjoying the rustling of the leaves and the broad view of the lake.

room, dining room and master bedroom.

Tomahawk was also chosen to serve as the contractor and while the home was under construction, the Hasals rented a nearby apartment to be close by. After work nearly every day they visited the site, following the progress and noting with satisfaction how little adjustment was necessary from their original plans. "We had to switch the swing on a bathroom door, added a closet downstairs and altered one of the beams in the great room," Kay notes.

They also appreciated their friendly building crew, who worked continuously from start to completion, "not disappearing for long periods the way some contractors like

to do," says Bob. There was an abbreviated break in the fall, he recalls—for deer hunting season. This is, after all, flannel-and-jeans country, and the Hasals understood, mostly because they'd become fond of the patient crew who shared the crafting process as it progressed.

The Hasals' home is a bit different from many in that the 3,000-square-foot, insulated-log ranch home is spread out, foregoing an upper story, or even a loft. "We lived in a three-story English Tudor home in New Jersey," Kay explains. "If I wanted a cup of coffee in the morning I had to go downstairs. If I needed to change clothes during the day, I had to go upstairs. After all those years, the



LEFT: Although it's not heated, the porch has enough windows to allow in plenty of warming sun that makes this area a three-season delight.

one thing I knew I wanted—other than a laundry room on the main floor—was a house without stairs.”

Although the main living quarters are on the main floor, there actually is another floor, though it's “downstairs,” according to Kay. “It's not a basement. You know what basements look like, and this doesn't look like a basement.”

The lower level has a family room, bath, a large workshop for Bob, and some storage area. A substantial walkout terrace adds to the sense of openness. Furnished with comfortable pieces from earlier days, almost anyone would find it comfortable. But it doesn't get a lot of use because the Hasals enjoy their great room so much.

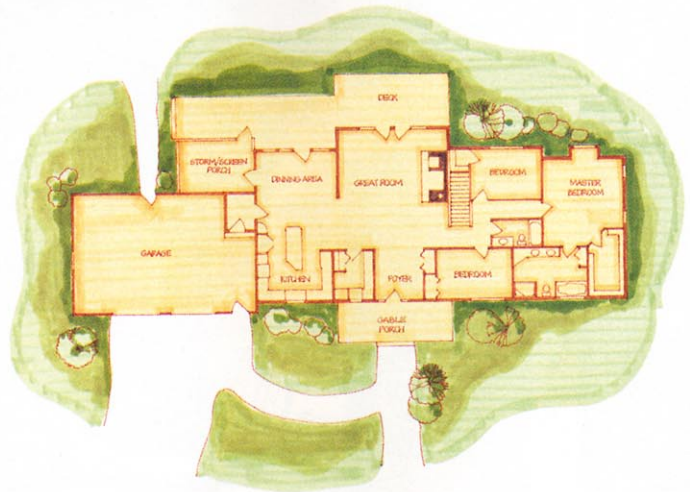
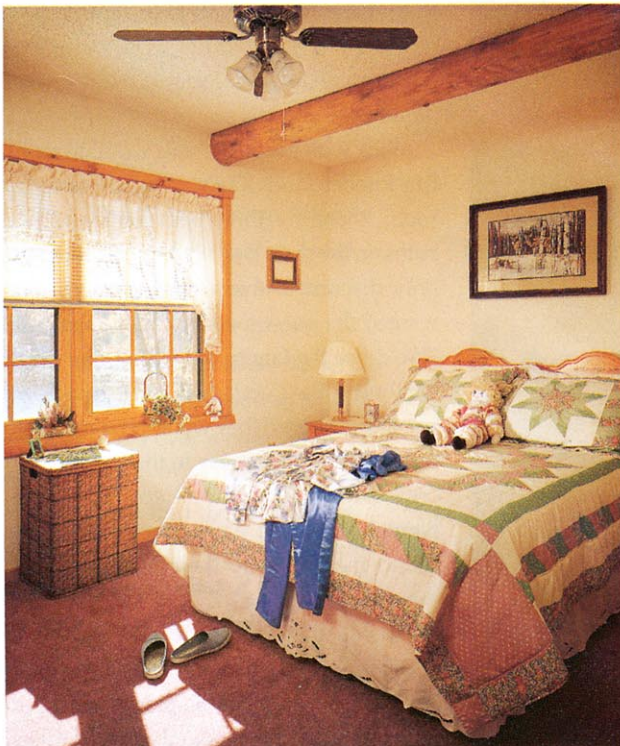
“I furnished the great room with burgundy and a bit of blue against a neutral background,” Kay explains. “Sometimes in the winter with the sun coming through all that great expanse of windows, it can be a bit much. We could go downstairs, but with a roaring fire and comfortable furniture it's hard to pry ourselves away.”

Along with the great room, a dining room, the kitchen and Kay's requisite laundry room, there are three bedrooms and two baths on the main floor. This precipitated the only discord in the planning stages. Bob wanted the guest rooms on the lower floor. “We'd use the family room a lot more than we'll need the guest rooms,” he says, “but my sisters insisted they wouldn't come out to see us if they had to stay in the basement.”

Obviously, they hadn't seen the plans. Nonetheless, Bob gave in and they have found the layout to their liking—and all three sisters'.

Outside, they enjoy extensive decking in addition to the terrace, and while they plan to do some future landscaping, it will be in keeping with the wooded surroundings.





ABOVE: Along with a main-floor laundry room, the other item that Kay insisted on was a window seat. Located in the master bedroom, it provides a cozy corner for Kay and her cats while they watch an eagle's nest in the birch tree just outside the window. **LEFT:** A guest room offers plenty of comfort and a note of informality, as well as a pleasing view.

In addition to this comfortable whirlpool tub, the master bathroom includes a separate shower stall, a double vanity and corner make-up table that Kay says is a hit with all her female visitors.



Even the grass is mixed with white clover that entices wildlife almost to the door. A three-season porch allows them to extend the time they get to commune with nature.

When the home was completed, the company foreman asked if he could duplicate the floor plan for himself, a request that the Hasals took as a supreme compliment. Not only did they agree, but they also indicated that their unique layout could be used by the company, provided they gave it the moniker "Cedar Gables," reflecting the name Bob and

Kay had carefully selected to honor the wood and the styling of their home.

Another interesting feature of the Hasals' home is the flying rake aspect of the gables. Gable overhangs often follow a constant dimension, but in this instance the overhang tapers from 48 inches at the peak to 24 inches at the lower edge. Not only does this add an eye-catching detail but it also provides additional protection for the logs from the elements and yet doesn't inhibit the light entering higher windows.

Now that the Hasals are settled in the house so carefully and lovingly planned, they've had time to reflect upon the decisions they made, such as not waiting for retirement; living in a rural, unspoiled woodland; building a log home; making every day count by living the way they want to, instead of the way they had been.

No two porcupines ever had it so good. 🦔

LOG HOME MANUFACTURER AND BUILDER: Tomahawk Log & Country Homes, Inc., Tomahawk, Wisconsin.