

Smart spaces: small homes that work

LOG HOMETM DESIGN IDEAS

Make your remodeling
project a success

Finding
property:
how to buy
your field
of dreams

Display Until September 11, 2001

September 2001

\$5.99US/\$7.99CAN





RETIREMENT

Semi-retired and ready for life at a slower pace, Don and Judi Hendricks built their log home in the Wisconsin northwoods with entertaining, respite and serenity in mind.

BY TERESA HILGENBERG • PHOTOS © ROGER WADE • STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL

NORTHWOODS

Don Hendricks returns to his hometown in Illinois often. He makes the 320-mile drive from Lake Tomahawk in northern Wisconsin several times a month, not yet ready to completely retire from his real estate ventures. His wife Judi, on the other hand, is content to stay behind, often spending her days trying out new painting techniques.

More than 30 years after the Hendricks began visiting the Wisconsin northwoods, they now have their own piece of heaven on secluded lakefront acreage. Instead of staying in an old hunting camp and taking the kids into town for souvenirs, Don and Judi live here permanently in a log home, busy entertaining guests and getting to know their new neighbors. It is a life that fulfills a dream for both.

"We fell in love with the Lake Tomahawk area," Judi says of their vacation visits, "but I wasn't

going to retire to a hunting camp with generators and bear hunters."

"We always wanted a log home; it was mutual," Don explains. Matching that dream with their affection for the area they had come to know so well was an easy task.

The Lake Tomahawk area boasts plenty of good fishing, crystal clear water for swimming and other water sports, and unique shops downtown. Throw in the couple's log home, designed and built by Tomahawk Log & Country Homes, and Don and Judi feel they'll have the best of everything when they finally retire full time.

It was in 1996 that fate nudged the Hendricks into buying lakeside property in the area. While visiting family that had built a home within walking distance of Don and Judi's now-completed home, the couple saw a lot for sale, walked over to

Don and Judi Hendricks added several gables to the front and back of their home's design and they're glad they did. "It added so much to the house," Judi says, "and it makes it look that much more substantial." The home's wooded setting includes stands of white pine, oak, maple and white birch.





The back of the house faces the lake to take maximum advantage of the property's views while four sets of french doors allow plenty of natural light into the home and keep the outdoors easily accessible. Rough-textured shingles were a compromise; the Hendricks wanted a metal roof but couldn't find a contractor to install it. The dark green roof and window and door trim provide a nice accent to the home's honey-colored logs.

look at it, and bought it that weekend. They planned to hold on to the lot, not quite ready to retire. But fate stepped in again.

"We were sort of forced to build," Don says. Two years after they bought the property, the local city government began talking about new zoning regulations that would make it impossible for Don and Judi to build their dream home. Among other things, the zoning proposals included 200-foot frontage and 100-foot setback requirements. Don and Judi didn't own enough frontage and wanted to build their home close to the lake.

"We had started looking through magazines; we read a lot of articles," Don says. "We checked with a lot of companies." It turned out that the company offering the type of log package the Hendricks wanted was right in their backyard.

"Tomahawk was close, and when we visited them they were friendly," Judi says. "We liked their homes, talked to homeowners. Everyone seemed to be happy."

"We also felt that the quality you got for the money was really where we wanted to be," Don

says, adding that he found it even more impressive that the same Tomahawk crew works on each project from beginning to end.

"One year later, the same guys were putting the finishing touches on our house," he says.

Don and Judi both had worked in various areas of real estate and had some pretty good ideas about what they wanted out of their log home. They took those ideas to Troy Gullo at Tomahawk, who helped Don and Judi translate them into a working plan.

"We basically had our floor plan picked out," Don says. "We put our heads together and knew what we wanted."

"I also had collected pictures out of log home magazines," Judi says. "I did a notebook of the different things I wanted and liked."



Don and Judi Hendricks pose on their porch.



Native Wisconsin rock on the great room fireplace matches the stone on the exterior of the home. Don and Judi chose a square-log mantel design to offset the round logs used throughout most of the home.

The Tomahawk design staff fine-tuned Don and Judi's plans and ideas, many of which centered around family and friends.

"We wanted a home for entertaining," Judi says. "We wanted that large kitchen and great room. We wanted it all on one level, basically, because this is where we'd retire and we wanted to know we could use it without going upstairs to a bedroom."

Equally important was taking advantage of the views the site offered. The Hendricks' lot is wooded and features a jaw-dropping view of the lake. The house's orientation, even the size and place-

ment of several rooms, was dictated by how the terrain would be affected and how it in turn would affect the views from the home.

Don and Judi made an important discovery while clearing trees from the property, a discovery that had great impact on the final design of their home. It turned out that an old sidewalk with fieldstone gutters ran across the property. After almost three weeks of hard work excavating the sidewalk, Don and Judi decided it was too priceless to destroy.

"We worked the floor plan around that," Judi

says. "We cut down the size of the house and eliminated a screened porch." Today, the sidewalk is incorporated into the home's natural landscaping, and fieldstone both inside the home and out matches the gutters on the sidewalk.

To accommodate visiting friends and family (their son and daughter and their growing families still live in Illinois), Don and Judi added an entertainment island between the kitchen and great room. The bar-height unit includes an abundance of storage space as well as its own sink and ice machine. Best of all, it helps keep the cook involved in conversation while preparing a meal.

"It just is a great thing," Judi says. "People usually end up gathering around that island."

Finally, Judi knew she wanted a sizable laundry area that could serve a dual purpose as a studio. She has "always dabbled" in art but has increased her interest in painting wildlife and other northwoods themes since making the move from Illinois. Her handiwork can be seen on many pieces throughout the house, and a few of her creations can even be purchased at several local shops.

Don and Judi finalized plans for their 2,500 square foot home during the summer of 1998. In August, Tomahawk's crew began installing its trademark system that features a half-log installed over 6-inch batting-insulated studs wrapped in 1-inch rigid insulation. The Hendricks home features a large 12-inch corner system that Tomahawk had used only once before.

The project was not without challenges. Including the lower-level walkout and the partial loft set in the soaring first-floor ceiling, the home's north facade rises almost three stories above the ground. Add sloping terrain and the Hendricks' desire to cut as few trees as feasible, and it became impossible to use a crane to complete work on



Judi's talents can be seen on two pieces in this great room vignette. The Native American figure on the drum was done in oils, while the wolf was fine-lined burned on a slab of wood and then painted in acrylics.

that side of the house. "Lots of musclework" went into setting the trusses by hand.

Before they could move in the following June, Don and Judi would also put a great deal of sweat equity into the project.

"I did a lot of staining and sealing, especially on the knotty pine ceiling," says Judi, who stayed onsite throughout much of the construction. While Don continued to work and oversee the sale of their home back in Illinois, Judi lived in a guest cottage — actually a garage with guest

quarters — they built shortly after they bought the property.

The logs were set and roof installed before the harsh Wisconsin winter set in. In fact, weather had little effect on the project at all.

Don and Judi spent three weeks clearing soil and other woodland debris from a sidewalk they found buried on their lot. They think the sidewalk, which runs across the property and can be seen near the walk-out's back door in the photo below, was installed years ago when an old Catholic retreat operated in the area.





Sconces from Cripple Creek Antler Company can be seen on each side of the open stairs. The home's front door peeks between square railings chosen, like the fireplace mantel, to offset the home's round logs.

"It went very smoothly," Don says of the construction. "The weather cooperated, and I think we only had one day where it was a problem."

One of the Hendricks' favorite features of their new home is its heating system. Normally installed within a home's flooring, the hydronic system used in the house is a staple-up system installed under the floor. Though they knew they wanted to forego traditional forced-air heat, Don and Judi had some difficulty finding someone to install the hydronic system.

"We read an article, talked to several plumbers

and decided it was what we wanted," Don says, "but we couldn't find someone who could do it." They "called a hundred people" and eventually found a local tradesman who could install the system, and now say they couldn't be happier with it.

"It is such an even heat. The inside windows are not dirty, there's no fumes," Judi says. "It's all nice and toasty."

Installing the system meant Don and Judi had to select special padding and short-napped carpet for the home's few carpeted areas. But that wasn't a problem, Judi says, because sand and other dirt



Fieldstone on the center island complements hickory cabinets. The bar-height entertainment island at far left is one of the couple's favorite features of their home. A local artist etched an oak leaf design on the glass pocket door (to the right of the refrigerator) that separates the kitchen from the mudroom.

Tomahawk's newest corner system features huge log ends showcased here in the deck sitting area off the master bedroom.

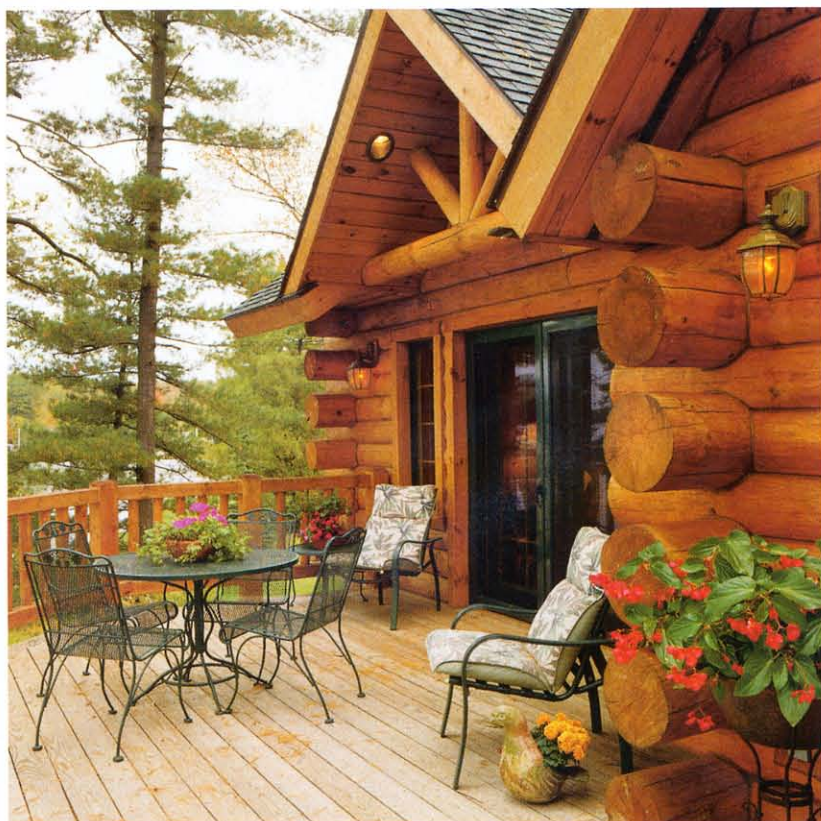
make their way into the house and the carpet is easy to maintain. Much of the house features another easy-care flooring product, tile.

The hydronic system is augmented by a Heatilator fireplace in the great room. Together, the two have kept the Hendricks home warm and their heat bills down.

"Our utility bills are so low, even with the gas price increases," Judi says. "The northwest wind blows right onto the face of the house and we don't even notice it."

That same exposure, along with the wooded nature of the lot, helps keep the house cool in hot summer months. That's when Don and Judi entertain most, whether it's little Allison and Carson coming to visit Grandma and Grandpa or members of the local art league gathering for a workshop. No matter who they are, visitors get a taste of the good life Don and Judi have built for their northwoods retirement. 🏡

*See page 96 for resources
and the Hendricks home floor plan.*





RESOURCES:

Tomahawk Log & Country Homes
2285 County L • Tomahawk, WI 54487
Phone: 800-544-0636
E-mail: sales@tomahawklog.com
www.tomahawklog.com

Cripple Creek Antler Company
7323 Hwy 51S • Minocqua, WI 54548
Phone: 715-356-4024
www.cripplecreekantler.com

Heatilator
1915 W. Saunders • Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
Phone: 800-843-2848
www.heatilator.com

A new iron bed joins antiques in the guest room. Saguaro cactus frames the prints hanging above the bed, one of the Hendricks' finds on their annual winter trip to the Southwest. Judi's handiwork can be seen in the deer print.

The master bath features cultured marble countertops, his-and-her sinks and soapstone tiles. The whirlpool tub is set higher than normal to take advantage of views of the lake; the guest cottage/garage can be seen through the window.

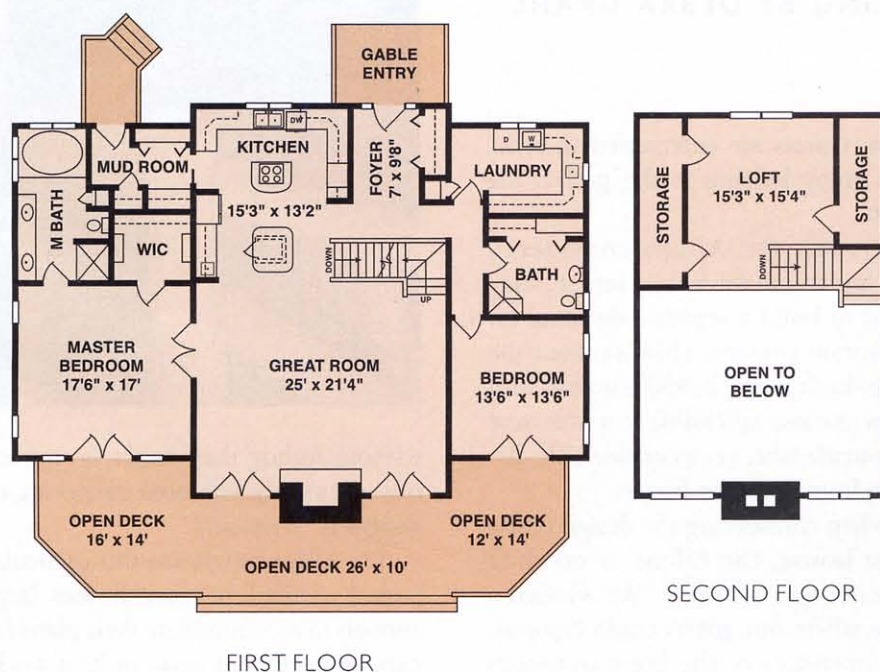




French doors open off the great room into the master bedroom, where country French furnishings from Don and Judi's former home were "toned down a bit" to make the transition to the log home's rustic setting. Hewn timbers with chinking were installed on three walls for variety.

hendricks home floor plan

Floor plan courtesy Tomahawk Log & Country Homes



The guest bath features knotty pine wainscot to mirror the pine used on much of the home's ceilings. Judi chose a pedestal sink to give the room "an older feel" and the Corian ledge for its durability.