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TOMAHAWK, WISCONSIN



RIGHT: The original Morris cabin was dismantled to make room for the larger version. ABOVE: The new spacious vacation home will continue to serve as the family vacation headquarters.

Modernizing Tradition

BY RONDA MOLLIKA PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL



A Wisconsin lakeside log home combines elements of a generations-old cabin with a neo-classic update.



Back in 1922, when northern Wisconsin roads were made of dirt and logging businesses still operated along the waterways, Rick Morris' great-grandfather bought 100 acres of land next to Al Kahn's Hunting & Fishing Resort along a lake near the town of Tomahawk. "It used to take them 18 hours to get from the Chicago area to Tomahawk," Rick says. "It now takes around five."

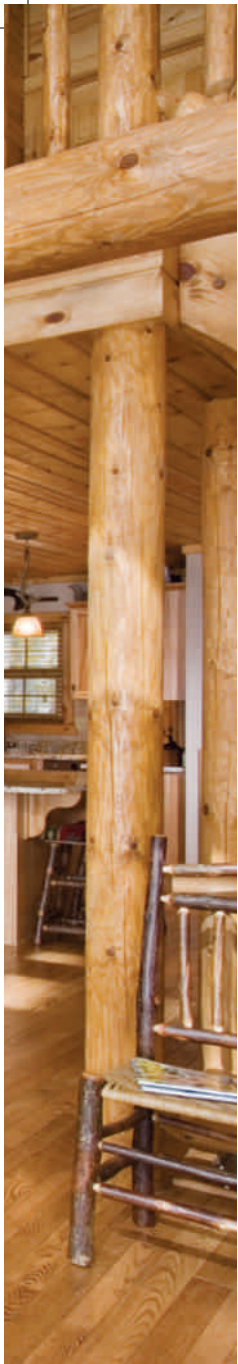
A small two-bedroom cabin named The Pinewood was built on the property and was used as a getaway during the hot summer months and as a hunting cabin in the fall. It was a rustic full log structure with no indoor plumbing and a small porch on the side. An addition with four bedrooms and a bathroom was added years later as the family grew.

Three years ago, Rick's father passed away. The Morris — Rick, his brother Steve, and sister Cathy — decided to continue the family tradition of gathering on the lake, but felt that

the 80-year-old log cabin needed too much repair to renovate. They agreed to take down the old cabin and build a new vacation home for all to share.

"Our hearts and memories were still with the old log cabin and we wanted to preserve that log-home feel," Rick says. They looked through several log home magazines and fell in love with the spacious rooms and large windows that came with the new log homes of today. A critical component was to be able to modernize the generations-old "Up North" look — to carry the tradition of a lakeside vacation in a log home.

The craftsmanship and detail of Tomahawk Log & Country Homes, located just down the road, immediately captured the attention of the Morris clan. Tomahawk sales rep. Ron Volz helped them choose a stock floor plan and adjust it to accommodate two master-bedroom suites, three full bathrooms, built-in bunk beds, and a complete finish to the lower level.



LEFT: Original logs, with over 100 guest signatures, were brought from the old cabin to the entryway of the new home.

BELOW: The open kitchen features hickory cabinets, granite countertops, and stainless steel appliances. **OPPOSITE:** Above the stone fireplace is an oil painting of the original Pinewood cabin.

Tomahawk's Energy-Log construction wall system, which provides added insulation of a two-by-six-inch wall with the beauty of a half log on the exterior, helped Rick confirm the decision. "We really looked forward to using the home more in the winter and were attracted to the insulated wall system," says Rick.

To maximize the lake view, the design featured lots of windows; the kitchen, dining, and great room not only have spectacular views, but easy





The upper master suite has a lake view and easy access to the deck.

access to the wrap-around deck. In keeping with the memory of the old cabin and its traditional red trim, the Morris' topped the new cabin with a red metal roof. This will provide a lifetime of protection and maintain the rustic look of the northern cottage.

"Tying the old with the new was very enjoyable," says Ron. "Once the revisions were made to the 4,300-square-foot floor plan, it all went together within a 10 months." The old cabin remained standing as the new one was being built just 20 feet away so the Morris' could continue to enjoy the property during the summer and to keep an eye on the construction progress.

Other remnants of the old cabin were integrated into the new home, including a memory wall that is now part of the front entry. For the past 80 years, every guest and grandchild that entered the cabin signed and dated his or her name to the wall. The total today is more than 100 signatures. A vertical log from another part of the cabin that measured the heights of the kids was also added to the foyer. "Our newest member of the family is our granddaughter — she's the 6th generation to visit The Pinewood,"

says Rick. "We've already marked her height into that same log."

Many original furnishings were also brought to the new cabin. The original granite fireplace still stands in the yard; it's now an outdoor area where family stories are told by the fire and passed to the next generation.

Rick's wife Nancy did much of the decorating, intermingling the treasured antiques with the new pieces throughout the home. "Above the kitchen cabinets are a lot of antique accessories from the 'old' cottage: spatterware bowls, chamber pots, and candle molds," says Nancy.

Updating the log home ensures that future generations of the Morris family can continue tradition. "We want this to be a place where our grandchildren will bring their grandchildren and they can sign the wall and measure themselves as they grow," says Rick. "We made it so that everyone will enjoy their time up north." ♦

LOG PRODUCER: Tomahawk Log & Country Homes, Tomahawk, WI.





LEFT: The lakeside deck was built with synthetic materials and makes upkeep easy.

BELOW: The original granite fireplace remains standing and serves as an outdoor fireplace.

