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A House to Grow With



BY TERESA HILGENBERG
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ABOVE: Touches of the fall harvest frame the main entry. The home's green roof is in striking contrast to the golds and oranges of surrounding trees.

LEFT: A wooded rural setting lends the home a quiet, peaceful atmosphere. The basement includes two bedrooms; the walkout is often used for entertaining.

Like many people, Kevin and Cindy Quinn began looking for property with the intent of making an investment. That was about four years ago, when they were living outside Madison, Wisconsin, with their three children and with no real inclination to buy or build a home any time soon.

The Quinns were drawn in their search for property to northern Wisconsin, where Cindy grew up and where her parents still lived. It was also, it turned out, where they would find "the perfect property" not far from a popular northwoods tourist town. The location was ideal because it would afford rural living with the convenience of the city nearby when they were ready to move.

When her father became ill, Cindy and Kevin sold their house, packed up their family and moved north to help her mom. The move brought the Quinns closer to family and, in essence, led them to Tomahawk Log & Country Homes.

"Through earlier research my mom had told us about Tomahawk's Energy-Log construction," Cindy says, referring to Tomahawk's half-log construction method. "So I was kind of intrigued with that whole prospect of not having to have all log inside."

After doing several months of research on Tomahawk, including serious study of the company's planbook,

Cindy says "northwoods flair" best describes her decorating style. Basic window treatments, a stone hearth to complement the logs and warm colors throughout bring it all together in the great room.



Kevin and Cindy decided to visit the model just north of the city of Tomahawk. There they met Troy Gullo, a sales representative who, it turned out, had designed a log home with his wife. The Quinns fell in love with the Gullos' design and, after making some minor changes, decided it was the home they would build.

"We didn't necessarily need a huge house," Cindy says. "We'd always lived in houses of about 1,600 square feet." The Gullos' plan, it seemed, was a perfect fit.

The home designed by the Gullos also had many features Cindy was looking for, including an open floor plan and good traffic flow. "I really liked how the dining room was offset from the great room," Cindy explains. "The master bedroom is on the top floor, which is nice. It's a house we can grow with."

In the meantime, Kevin and Cindy had found that "perfect" piece of property, a small acreage in a rural subdivision where today they "have neighbors but you hardly know it."

With a plan in hand and property purchased, Kevin and Cindy were ready to go ahead with the project. The

home's foundation was poured in June of 1998; not long after, Tomahawk's crew began constructing the 1,536 square foot house of 6-inch red and white pine. The company's chalet log, a handhewn log style approximately 3 inches thick, was used with its trademark EnergyLog method of construction. This system entails framing with 2x6 studs, then applying 6-inch bat insulation wrapped with 1-inch foil-faced rigid insulation, all of which is finished with the half-log siding. The Quinns chose Tomahawk's Verti-Lok corners.

"It just has a simple, clean look, and it fit into our budget," Cindy explains.

With the shell constructed, Cindy and Kevin began work on their biggest task in the construction process: staining all interior and exterior wood surfaces.

"We did it because we had a budget to stick to," Cindy explains. "That was another great thing about Tomahawk: they're perfectly willing to let people do some of the work on their home."

The Quinns also did a great deal of finish work on the home, installing wood flooring in the kitchen and dining room; cultured stone on the walkout, fireplace and kitchen island; and tile in the bathrooms and mudroom and on





RIGHT: The Quinns did a great deal of work on their home, including installation of the wood flooring in the kitchen.

BELOW: One of the things Cindy liked about the floor plan was that the dining room was easily accessible to the kitchen, yet offset from the great room.

the kitchen countertops. All in all, they ran into very few problems during the course of building.

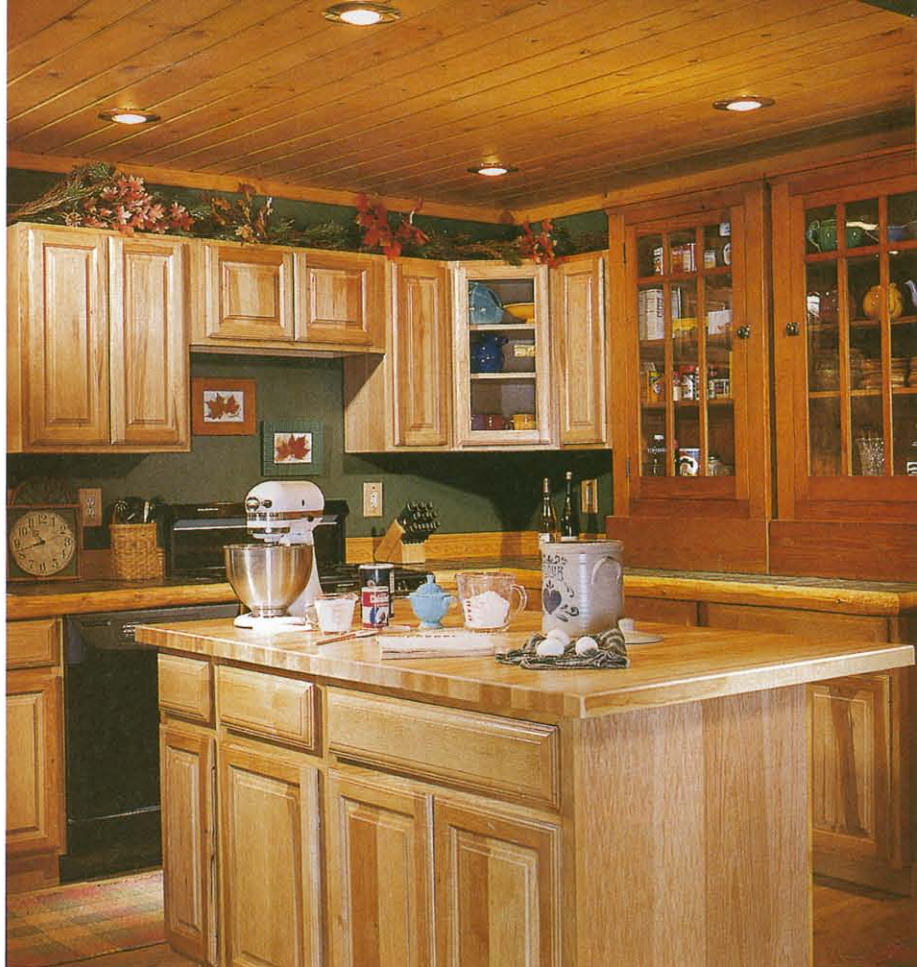
"The hardest part was just keeping up with the guys," Cindy says of staying ahead of Tomahawk's crew and subcontractors. "But that was another reason we had been drawn to Tomahawk: their reputation of having their crew and subcontractors on time. Because of their timelines, we were moved in by the end of October."

Designing the home's interior was easy for Cindy, who admits to having an affection for "changing things." The use of plasterboard in various areas of the home provided the canvas for her decorating skills. You'll find wallpaper in the bathrooms, painted walls in several other rooms and all kinds of special touches throughout that lend the home a northwoods feel.

"For me it's kind of fun because I like to change colors," Cindy says of the use of plasterboard. "You wouldn't believe what a difference you can make with a gallon of paint."

Many other unique accents were incorporated into the home's décor. In her daughter's room, Cindy handpainted favorite childhood characters on cheery pale yellow walls. Curtains and a matching bedspread in the master bedroom are also Cindy's handiwork, as are the unusual rod supports on the windows.

"For those I cut birch pieces, the "V"



RIGHT: In the master bedroom, antiques "picked up along the way" join handmade window treatments to create a relaxed setting.

BELOW: Cindy's penchant for "changing things" led to the inclusion of plasterboard in many areas of the home.



part where branches meet, and then hung rods on them," Cindy explains.

The use of half-log accents can also be found in the master bath, where a chair rail and mirror frames bring a bit of northwoods flavor into a room that doesn't have much exposed log.

"A lot of the ideas came from magazines," Cindy says, including the log edging she installed on the kitchen counters.

The home's furnishings are by and large "antiques and things I've picked up along the way that fit the northwoods-type flair," Cindy says. "They're things we've accumulated. That's what's nice about the northwoods: there's these great shops where you can find all sorts of interesting pieces."

Cindy says that furnishing and decorating the home isn't a "do it and you're finished" kind of thing; it's an ongoing process.

"If you don't have it in mind to have it all done right away, it's quite easy," she says.



Now that the family is settled, Cindy says she will continue to pick up furniture and accents when she sees something she likes. But it's not something she has a timeline or agenda for. "I guess you have to just not be in a rush to do stuff," she says.

As for the home itself, she would change very little.

"For the most part I'm happy with the floor plan," she says. "I'd change the little things, like using round instead of square handrails on the stairs."

Her favorite part of the home is the storm sun porch, a screened-in space that allows the family and visitors alike to enjoy the outdoors even when summer mosquitoes converge on the area.

"You still enjoy the weather there," she says of the sun porch. "You feel like you're outside."

That connection to the outdoors is another bonus of living in a log home, the Quinns have discovered.

"Our kids love it as much as we do," Cindy says. "It's almost like we're

camping. I just like the feel ... the whole feel of the home is comfortable and relaxing."

And that, she has discovered, is more than a feeling, it's an attitude the family will live with for a long time to come.

"We've just decided to take things a little slower," Cindy says. "I never thought we would have a log home ... we're very lucky to have *this* home. This is basically our retirement home. We just built it 20 years earlier than planned." 🏠

RIGHT: Walls in the master bath bear a leaf print wallpaper that continues the northwoods flavor of the home's décor. The half-log mirror frames are one of many unique accents in the Quinn home.



LEFT: This storm sun porch is among the favored rooms in the home. On warm nights, the family gathers here to enjoy bug-free relaxation.

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Quinn Floor Plan

