

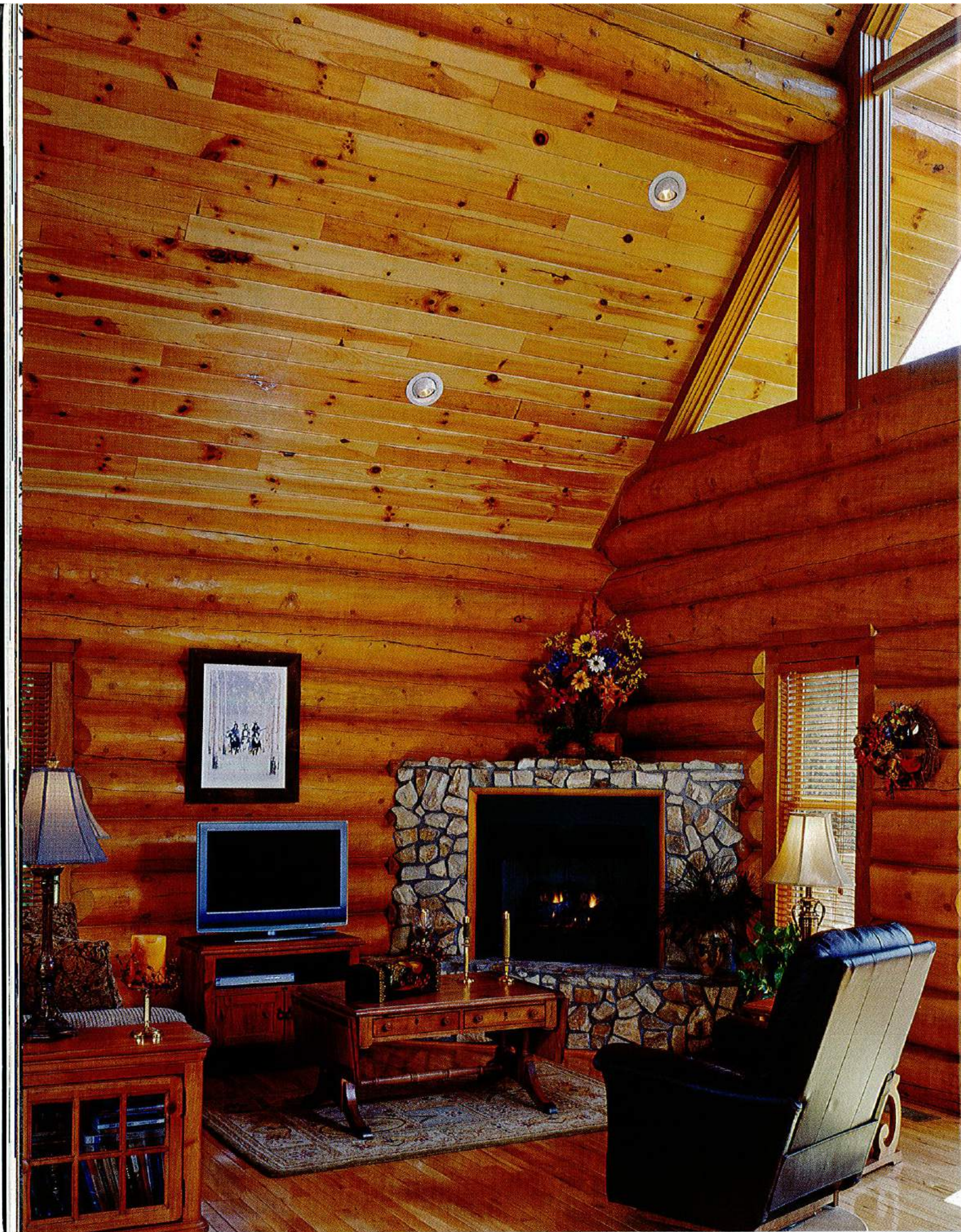


if AT FIRST *you don't* SUCCEED

*A practical approach
helps a North Carolina
couple's dream come true.*

Marilyn and Jack Knaff chose logs for their site with pastoral views of the Smoky Mountains because a real estate agent told them a log home in that area would be easier to sell. After it was built, the couple added railings to the porch to give it more of a finished look. A concession to their age was a ramp rather than stairs to the porch.

STORY BY CHERYL KENNY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES RAY SPAHN
STYLING BY COLLEEN MACOMBER



The first mountain home that Marilyn and Jack Knaff built in North Carolina was too small. Their second was too out of the way. But the third—a log home with fabulous views of the Smoky Mountains—turned out just right.

Jack, a retired real estate agent, and Marilyn, formerly a registered nurse, lived in a variety of homes, but never log. Although Marilyn considered them “interesting and attractive,” she says they had a more practical reason for choosing logs: “A local real estate agent told us that in this area of North Carolina a log home is easier to sell.” Plus, one was perfect for their 1.2-acre, mountainside lot.

After Jack sketched some preliminary plans, he contacted Dominick Minotti, a friend from his church and the president of Wahconah Log Homes. The couple hired Wahconah to customize their design.

The Knaffs sought a layout that had all their personal living space on one level, an efficient kitchen, an open great room and two bedrooms for guests. Because they were on a tight budget, they rejected

OPPOSITE: The great room showcases the 12-inch milled wall logs, which are stained cedar and topped by a pine tongue-and-groove ceiling. Jack bought the stone and faced the fireplace himself to save money. He collaborated with Marilyn on the silk floral arrangement on the mantel.

ABOVE: The couple's 10-by-36-foot deck commands a view of nearby woods and distant peaks. The log posts on the deck cost more than plain wood posts, but the couple preferred the look. The decking is pine.



LEFT: The Knaffs enjoy hosting dinner parties for up to 12 in their cozy dining area. An ornate chandelier hovers above the oak dining table and painted black chairs from Broyhill's Attic Treasures collection. The corner curio cabinet displays Marilyn's collection of Hummel figurines. The maple china cabinet is Canyon Creed, also from Broyhill.

a two-story design with guest bedrooms upstairs because of the expense of using dormers. They also decided against having guest bedrooms on the main level because they would mean a larger, costlier footprint. Eventually, the couple settled on a 1,496-square-foot main level, with a great room, office, laundry, powder room and master bedroom suite, atop a 1,076-square-foot lower level (partially above-grade), with two guest bedrooms and baths, and a sitting area. The lower level also has a two-car garage.

The spruce logs for the Knaffs' home came from Yellowstone Log Homes, an Idaho company that Wahconah represents. Most of them are milled, but a few handcrafted character logs were added for trusses and posts "to give a little spice," says Yellowstone's Scott Youngstrom. The full-round logs used for the walls are 12-inches in diameter, with a Swedish-cope profile and saddle-notch corners. The interior logs reach up to 22-inches in diameter in the great room's king-post truss system and have a drawknife finish. The logs are stained cedar.

Jack and Marilyn, both in their 70s, completed many finishing touches on the three-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bath home. They installed wood trim and painted the walls on the lower level, where Jack also installed laminate and ceramic tile flooring. He finished post



ABOVE: Making meals is a snap in the efficient kitchen, which provides enough workspace for the couple to cook together. They bought the Diamond hickory cabinets with cathedral-arched door panels and had their builder install them. They chose Silestone for the countertops, favoring the look but also because it requires less maintenance than granite. Hickory bead board facing distinguishes the breakfast bar. Marilyn chose white appliances because she doesn't like how smudges show on stainless steel. A 22-inch hand-finished log highlights the overhead space.



The wall logs feature a Swedish-cope profile, where the bottom of the logs are curved to fit over the top of the ones below, and overlapping saddle-notched corners. The Knaffs say they considered wall logs with 8-inch diameters, but settled on 12-inch ones "for stability."

Budget-Saving Tips

Some highlights of the money-saving ideas that Jack and Marilyn came up with for their log-home project:

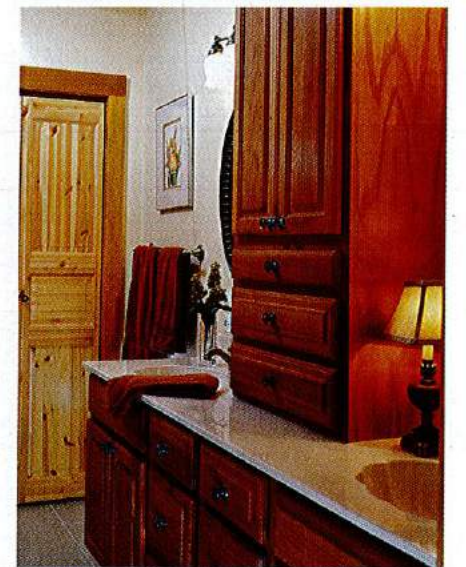
- **DESIGN:** Although they preferred having guest bedrooms on the main floor, they decided to locate the guest bedrooms in their lower level to keep their home's footprint smaller and less expensive.
- **CONSTRUCTION:** They selected more expensive, 12-inch round logs for their walls but offset that extra cost by having them milled rather than hand peeled.
- **FINISHING MATERIALS:** By buying large quantities of appliances and plumbing and lighting fixtures from a single home store, they were able to negotiate a 10 percent bulk discount, plus free extended warranties. They recommend speaking directly with the store manager to hammer out concessions for large orders.

The couple also used oak flooring only on the main level, going with cheaper, wood-looking laminate flooring on the lower level. They further maximized their savings by buying discontinued oak flooring that had been deeply discounted.



LEFT: The warm combination of the cedar-stained logs and carpeting in the master bedroom creates an inviting sanctuary. The bedroom suite is from Broyhill's Yorkshire Market line. The green, gold and rose patchwork squares of the bedspread add a subtle splash of color to the woodsy room.

BELOW: A red oak vanity in the master bath has a light beige cultured marble top with double sinks. The brushed stainless faucets are by Moen, and the plumbing fixtures are from Kohler. Lacking logs, the pale peach tile floors and light yellow walls create a soft, relaxing atmosphere. The couple used pocket doors to save space.



caps on the deck and helped install the main-level oak floors.

His says his most satisfying project was facing the great room fireplace with stone. "We went to a local place specializing in rocks and told the man we wanted smaller stones," Jack relates. "The man pointed and said, 'Like the ones on the ground?' and I said, 'Yes.' The man said, 'If you clear them off the ground, you can have them for free.'" Jack jumped at the opportunity, then spent a week affixing them to the fireplace, getting the look he wanted while saving money.

The couple also saved by buying many of their appliances and fixtures themselves, and then having their builder install them. "When you buy through your builder, he is the middle man," Marilyn notes, "and there is certain to

be a mark-up."

While some builders discourage homeowners from being so hands on, Wahconah actually encouraged the couple. "We try to help out the homeowners if they want to tackle some things themselves," Dominick notes, cautioning that homeowners must adhere to his timeline to avoid delaying construction.

Their practical approach saved the Knaffs money, but they agree that their biggest reward was how beautifully the home turned out. It's small enough to be cozy, yet spacious enough to accommodate dinner parties with friends and "overnight visits by ones and twos" from their three daughters.

"This is the house that Jack—and Marilyn—built," she says, "and it's their final one." ■

home details

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 2,572

LOG COMPANY: Yellowstone Log Homes

BUILDER: Wahconah Log Homes

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
SEE RESOURCES ON PAGE 62.

the rest of the story...
loghomeliving.com