

*You Get  
What  
You Give*



The exterior of the home displays an abundance of intricate design elements to match its size. “You have to get a lot of architectural features into a design of this scale so that it has curb appeal,” explains designer, Mike Orr of Wisconsin Log Homes.



Having plenty of space to share with family and friends, old and new, was the inspiration behind this charitable couple’s expansive log and timber hybrid.

story by **Suzanna Logan** | photography by **KCJ Studios**





**LEFT:** An open stair system with modern metal details adds architectural interest to the main floor.

**BELOW:** The scope of the home required that it be treated as a commercial-grade structure in many ways. Areas of the house are framed out with 2-by-8 glue-lam construction to accommodate its size.



**A**t more than 11,000 square feet, it's no secret that Jim and Susie have a big house. And, if you spend more than a few minutes with the couple, you'll quickly find out they've got big hearts to match.

No one knows that better than the 17 teenagers from the local Boys and Girls Club who attended a week-long summer camp at the couple's lakeside home this past year. During the week, the house bustled with the usual pursuits — boating, swimming, fishing and campfires — but what made the activities extra-special was that they were being experienced for the first time.

"These kids had never had those opportunities," says Susie. "They'd never made a s'more, been on a boat or held a fishing pole,

and through a lot of coordination, we were able to create a wonderful experience for them and for us." Jim adds: "It was a dream come true for us. When we first saw this house on paper, it was like, 'God, if you let us have this house, we will find a way to share it.'"

The couple's desire to share their blessings with others is, in a nutshell, what prompted them to build their spectacular eight-bedroom getaway on the shores of the same sandy-bottomed, spring-fed lake where, for two decades, they'd spent weekends, sum-









This gourmet kitchen is the hub of the home where everyone naturally gathers to eat, drink and chat. The expansive island at its center – with seating for seven and still plenty of surface space for food prep – is the heart of the hub.

mer vacations and holiday breaks with their own children.

After 20 years, the couple had outgrown their first lake house — a rustic log cabin they built from a Wisconsin Log Homes catalog — and were ready to move on ... but not *too* far. “At first, when we thought of building another cabin, we thought maybe we should look at another lake or part of the state, but the kids said, ‘This is *our* lake,’” recalls Jim.

And so the decision was made to stay put and purchase what Jim calls “the best lot on the lake,” a former public park with a flat walk-out to the water, southern exposure and expansive oak trees. (It serendipitously became available just as the couple began their site search.)

With the perfect property in place, it was time to create the perfect plan to match. The couple returned to Wisconsin Log Homes, but this time, they were seeking something more modern. “We call their house a hybrid timber-style home because it’s conventionally built but features lots of wood accents, timber trusses and stone columns,” explains Mike Orr, the home consultant at Wisconsin Log Homes who spearheaded the project.

The couple started with a 5,800-square-foot stock plan, then nearly doubled it, adding four new bedrooms and three bathrooms. “Our goal was for each of our children’s families to have their own little space,” says Susie. “Every bedroom has its own bath and an extra bunk bed.”

What wasn’t on the couple’s dream home wish list? Having anything showy. “It’s bigger than we planned, and we laugh about that,” says Jim. What *was* on their seven-page-long list of ideas was a place where their guests — whether family members or local teens — would always feel welcome. “We wanted it to be comfortable for a large number of people, 25 or 30 of us at once,” says Jim, “but it also needed to feel comfortable for the two of us.”

To accomplish this, Mike and the Wisconsin Log Homes design team drew up a floor plan that places the master suite, great room, kitchen and outdoor living spaces in close proximity. “Those are the spaces Susie



**RIGHT:** The proximity of the dining table to the kitchen island encourages interaction between guests, making the arrangement ideal for large gatherings.

**BELOW:** A well-thought-out lighting plan in the dining area creates an inviting ambiance day or night. Natural light combines with recessed fixtures, wall sconces and a simple metal-framed chandelier to put the room (and its guests) in the best light – literally.



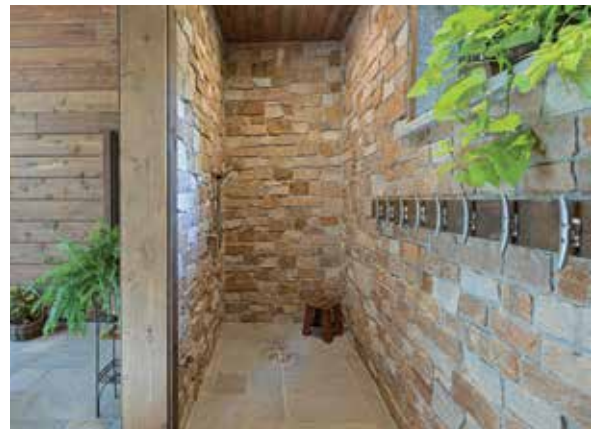




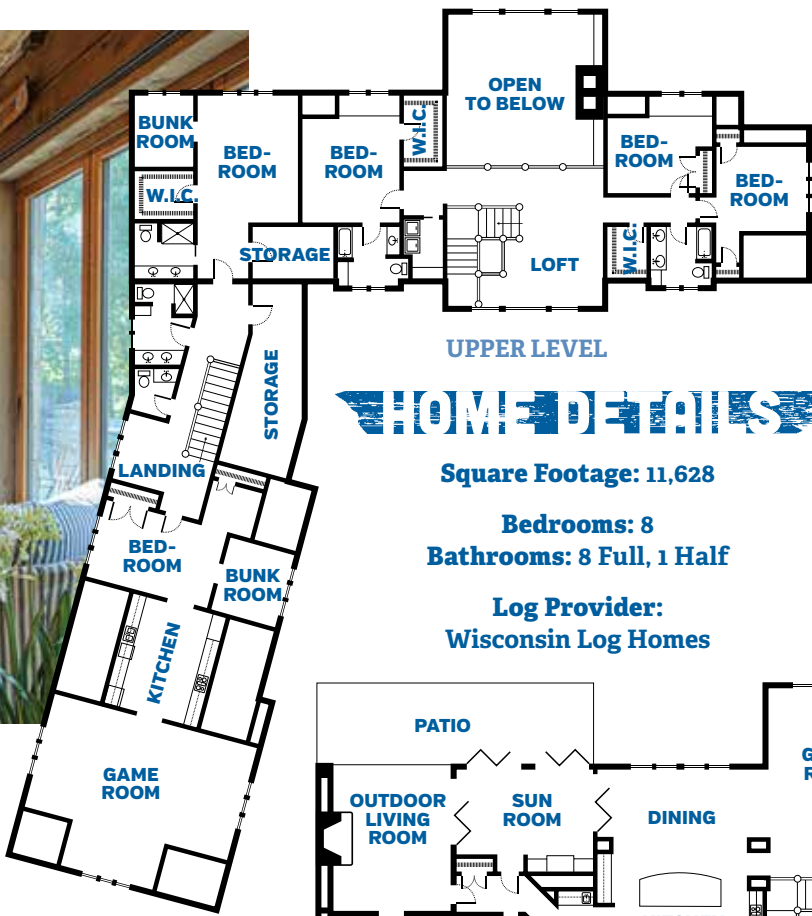
The stone fireplace and lights strung overhead create a defined gathering area under the covered patio. An indoor-outdoor rug and comfortable seating cozy up the space.



The porch, enclosed by four NanaWall doors, serves as a hybrid indoor/outdoor living space between the home's main interiors and the covered patio.







UPPER LEVEL

## HOME DETAILS

Square Footage: 11,628

Bedrooms: 8

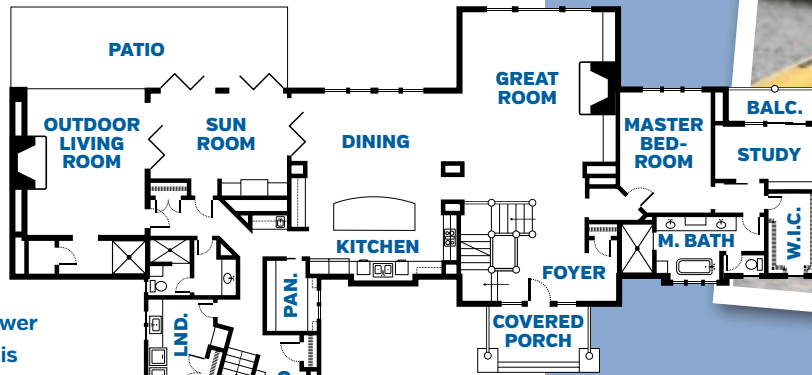
Bathrooms: 8 Full, 1 Half

Log Provider:

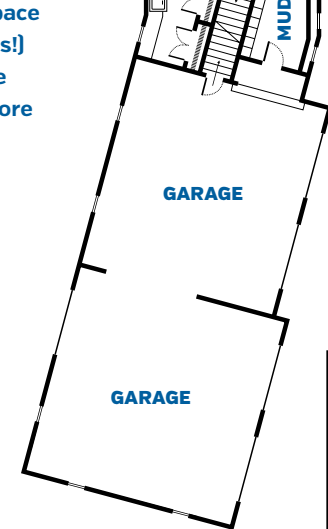
Wisconsin Log Homes



**LEFT:** There's nothing quite like a refreshing shower after a day on the lake. This stone-encased outdoor space (with plenty of towel hooks!) is a practical place to rinse feet and bathing suits before heading inside.



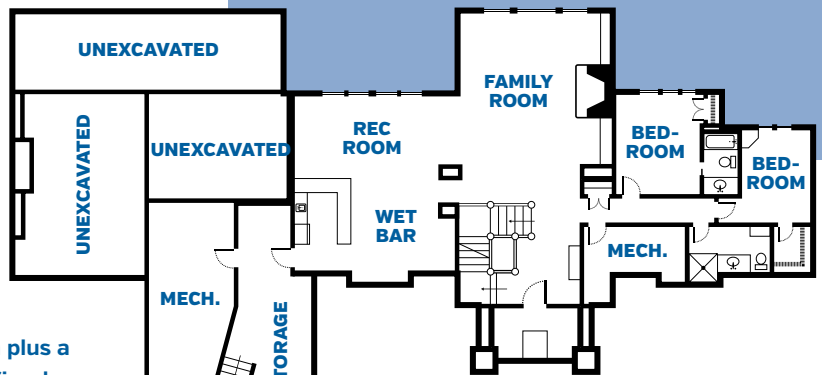
MAIN LEVEL



**A FULL HOUSE**  
Seventeen youth, ages 13 to 17, joined Jim and Susie at their lakeside home for a week of summer fun. "The cabin handled it so well," says Jim. "You can have 25 people sitting down for every meal, and it doesn't feel cramped."



**LEFT & FAR LEFT:** The home's lower level is party central, with a combination wet bar and recreation room plus a family room, complete with fireplace and a large-screen television. The area is especially popular as cooler weather settles in.



LOWER LEVEL





A navy-and-white color scheme gives one of the guest bedrooms a nautical vibe, while sliding barn doors add rustic character.



The powder room vanity is made from a 100-year-old oak tree that had to be felled during construction. (The dining table, wall crosses and a table in the wine cellar are made from the same tree.)



An upstairs wing functions as a separate apartment. The space includes a bunk room that sleeps 14, a kitchen, a game room and a private entrance.





**ABOVE:** A tongue-and-groove ceiling plus a reclaimed-wood accent wall lend a sense of authenticity and warmth to the home's master bedroom. Wall-to-wall carpeting, an upholstered headboard, and plenty of throw blankets and pillows soften the space.

**RIGHT:** A glass-encased walk-in shower, chandelier-topped soaking tub and his and hers vanities create a sense of luxury in the home's master bath.



and I use when we are at the house,” says Jim. The remainder of the rooms are tucked away for privacy, including all of the guest suites and the bunk room above the garage that sleeps 14. “Because of the way the house is laid out, you forget those additional spaces are there, so the house doesn’t feel as big as it is,” says Jim.

When they *do* have a full house, the shared spaces are an entertainer’s dream, including a chef-style kitchen with a dining

area that seats 20, a wine cellar, wet bar in the lower level and resort-style outdoor spaces that flow into the home with ease thanks to disappearing NanaWall doors.

While the couple is aware of the home’s sprawling size — “It’s a lot of work, a labor of love,” says Susie — they wouldn’t change a thing. “It’s incredible, and it’s a place we hope will stay in the family for generations,” says Jim. He adds, jokingly: “The newest grand baby came here at eight days old, and we

won’t rest until the bunk room is filled with grandkids.”

Until then, the couple is happy to spend their days with the family, friends and community members who frequent their home. “During the day, we do a lot of lawn and activities, all blessed with fellowship and laughter,” Susie says. “In the evening, we take cruises up and down the lake and end up around the campfire with s’mores. It’s our happy place.” **L**