

Country's Best

# Log Homes

**Natural  
DECOR**

Your guide to  
log furniture

## The Ultimate Kitchen Issue

**New** products, **hot** trends and  
the **best** floor plan designs

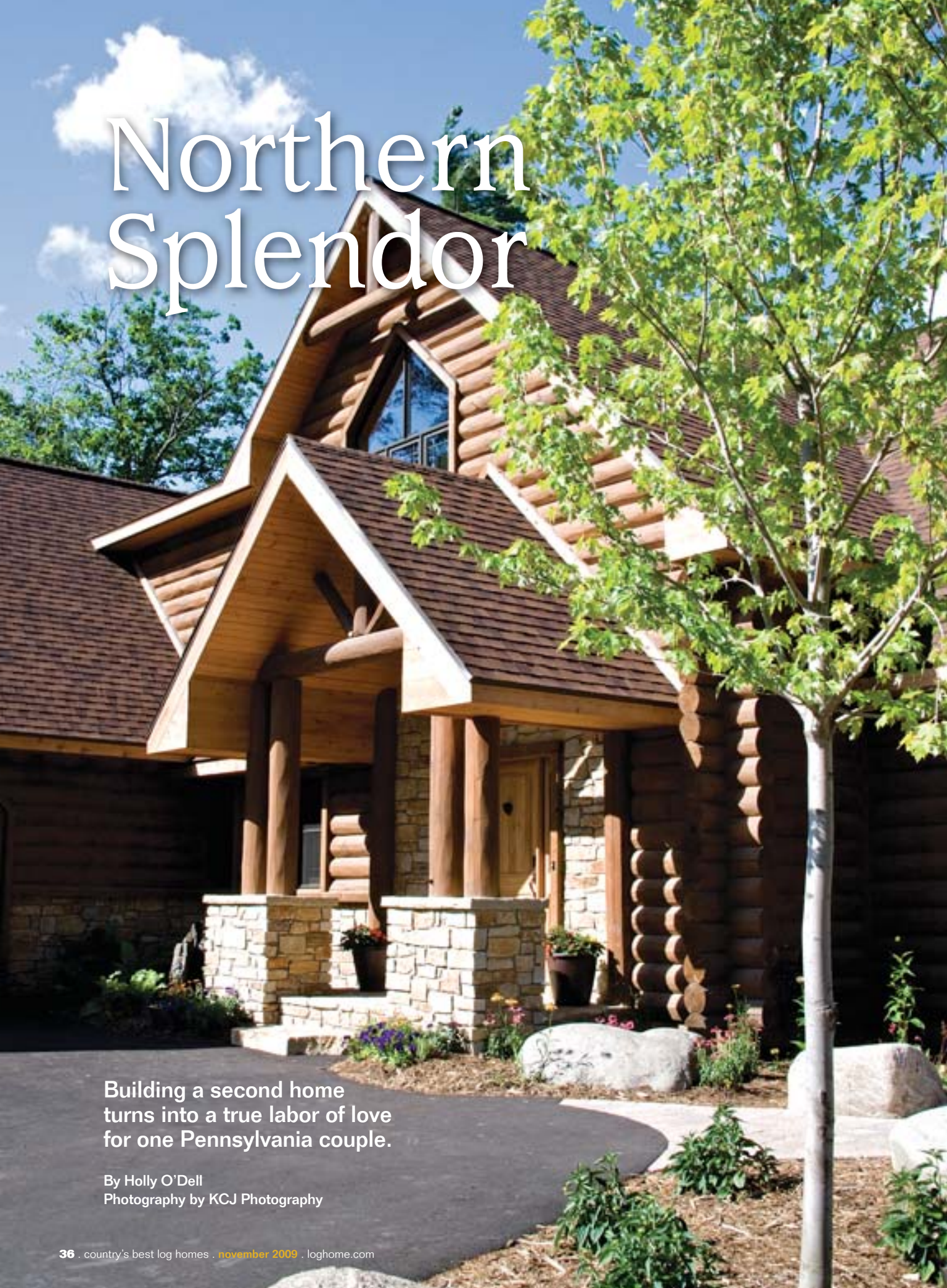
**Snow Patrol**  
Prepare your home  
for winter

Come to a  
**LOG HOME SHOW!**  
2010 schedule pg. 55

[www.loghome.com](http://www.loghome.com)

**TIPS** to maximize space in a small home  
to finance your land purchase

# Northern Splendor



Building a second home turns into a true labor of love for one Pennsylvania couple.

By Holly O'Dell  
Photography by KCJ Photography

Gil and Rocky Schmidtke lived in a log home for three years, but they never felt like it was their own. "It was someone else's plan, and the layout didn't work for us," Rocky recalls. When they decided to build a second home, they addressed their most important goals: a home that could comfortably accommodate the pair and their visiting children and grandchildren, a floor plan that allowed for both openness and privacy, and a wall of windows boasting water views.

The couple found land in Gil's North Woods hometown of Minocqua, Wisconsin. Situated on a 45-degree angle, the tree-filled property overlooked a lake—the ideal spot to build their four-bedroom home. Gil and Rocky turned to Wisconsin Log Homes, choosing a half-log system with pine logs for the interior, a conventionally framed insulated core and 10-inch spruce exterior logs with hand-peeled finish and full-round saddle-notch corners.

With the help of their personal home consultant and Wisconsin Log Homes' design team, the Schmidtkes altered the Green Bay company's Alpine Meadow II floor plan to include a full walkout basement, a sunroom off the dining room and an office area in the loft. "By the time these modifications were made and their personal touches were added, the Schmidtkes' home became a one-of-a-kind design," says Bob Patschke, Wisconsin's design manager.



Three ceramic vessels (above) complement the contemporary oil canvases that Rocky implemented as a decorative element in the front entry.

The foyer (below) greets guests with an Andean walnut two-panel, arched-top, solid-wood door, custom antler light fixture and mirror, a table made of a tree trunk and slate tile flooring.

Gable trusses and multiple rooflines (opposite), complemented by hand-finished spruce logs and stone accents, create a welcoming approach from the street side.





Indeed, the customized layout accomplishes Gil and Rocky's objectives. On the main floor, varying ceiling heights simultaneously bring definition and continuity to the open great room and dining and kitchen areas. "We like to all be together, so I can still talk to someone watching the football game in the great room while I am at the stove," Rocky notes.

In the great room, a soaring prow wall offers spectacular views over the lake, just as the Schmidtkes had initially envisioned. The windows' massive round log trim "puts a picture frame on each window," Rocky says. Wall-height collar ties and a dry-stack ledgerstone fireplace add depth to the tongue-and-groove knotty pine vaulted ceilings, while hickory flooring connects the public spaces on the main level.

The remainder of the first floor quietly transitions to the master suite, where vaulted ceilings, a built-in fireplace and a shed porch contribute to the privacy the couple sought for this space. Two bedrooms in the finished lower level are designed to give guests that same sense of seclusion.

For the Schmidtkes, who enjoy an indoor-outdoor lifestyle, designing the outside space was as important as the interior.



Gil and Rocky chose an open log-and-timber staircase design (above) so it did not block lake views from the front entrance or disrupt natural light.

In the dining room (left), an antler chandelier hangs over a burled oak table the couple has owned for 30 years. The vaulted space is surrounded by a deck and the sunroom.

In the great room (opposite), wall-height collar ties of pine balance the vaulted space. A zebra-skin rug and photos taken by the Schmidtkes in Africa adorn the walls. A prow wall sets the stage for dramatic lake and tree views, along with plenty of natural light. In lieu of lamps, Rocky relied on track and indirect lighting in this room and throughout the house. Dry-stack ledgerstone surrounds the fireplace. Pine logs and ceiling combine with hickory floors for a bright, casual look.



Case in point: Off the kitchen deck, a waterfall flows to a walkway, meets a bridge and trickles down to the lower level, where a patio and fire pit are located. In addition, stone outcroppings serve as steps on either side of the house, leading to the lake.

Whether they're entertaining family in the summer months or basking in the glow of the fireplace over the holidays, Gil and Rocky enjoy their log home to the fullest. "We've become homebodies," Rocky admits. "We both love to cook, and I would rather grill on my deck and enjoy the view. We love our home so much that we just want to be in it." CBLH

Nature calls in the powder room (right) in the form of a pedestal made from a tree trunk, hickory flooring, nature-inspired murals and a stone vessel sink.

Tucked away from the hubbub of the main floor's public spaces, the master suite (below) opens to a private deck, complete with comfortable furnishings and a hot tub. A custom built-in fireplace warms up the area without taking up floor space.

A granite-topped peninsula featuring straight and rounded edges anchors the kitchen (opposite), creating a spot that offers ample storage and is perfect for gathering and entertaining.





Perched atop land that sits at a 45-degree angle (opposite), the home has a generous number of windows, decks and patios to capture the views of surrounding trees and the lake below. Boulders and wild flowers populate the land leading to the water.

Rocky designed the expansive deck off the kitchen (below) to incorporate flower boxes that double as boundaries (above). The deck also serves as the starting point for a waterfall (right) that ends near the lower-level patio and fire pit.



#### RESOURCES

Square footage: 5,556

# Bedrooms: 4

# Bathrooms: 3

# Half bathrooms: 2

Log producer; general contractor: Wisconsin Log Homes, Green Bay, WI. Circle 029 on the Reader Service Card between pages 56-57 for free information.

Log species: Spruce and pine



# Floor TOUR

Log producer: Wisconsin Log Homes  
 2390 Pamperin Road, Green Bay, WI  
 800-844-7970  
 info@wisconsinloghomes.com  
 www.wisconsinloghomes.com

Family Room • Great Room • Sunroom • Bathroom • Dining Room

## Family Room



Rocky and Gil designed the walkout lower level with guests in mind, building two bedrooms and a cozy family room set against the backdrop of the lake.

## Great Room

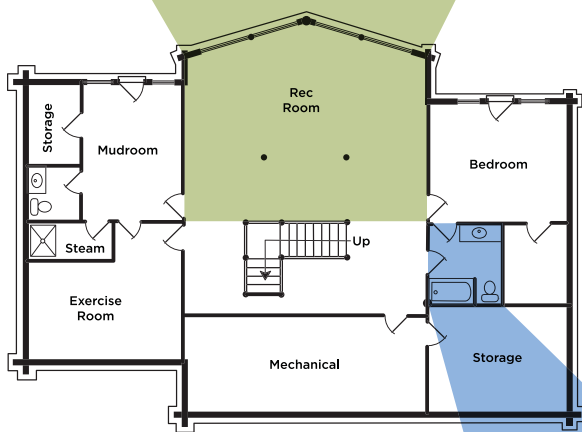


A prow wall features oversized, log-framed windows to dramatize the view and admit plenty of natural light that lessens the mass of the log walls. Pine logs and ceiling combine with hickory floors to promote a casual look.

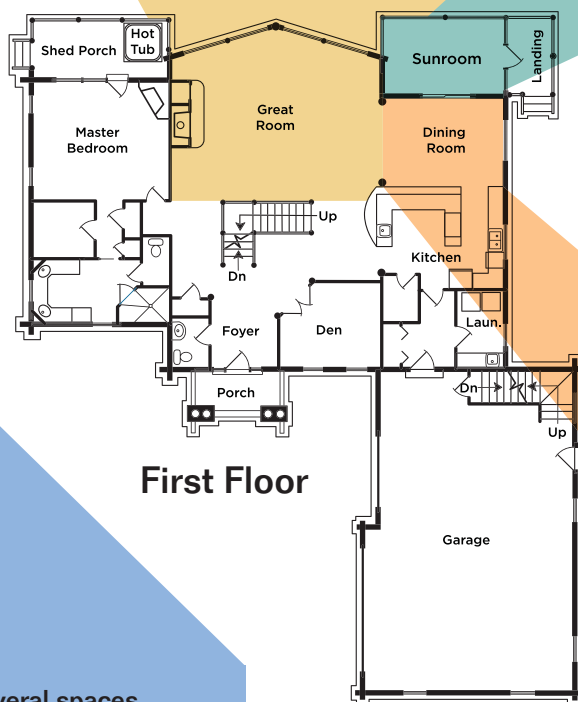
## Sunroom



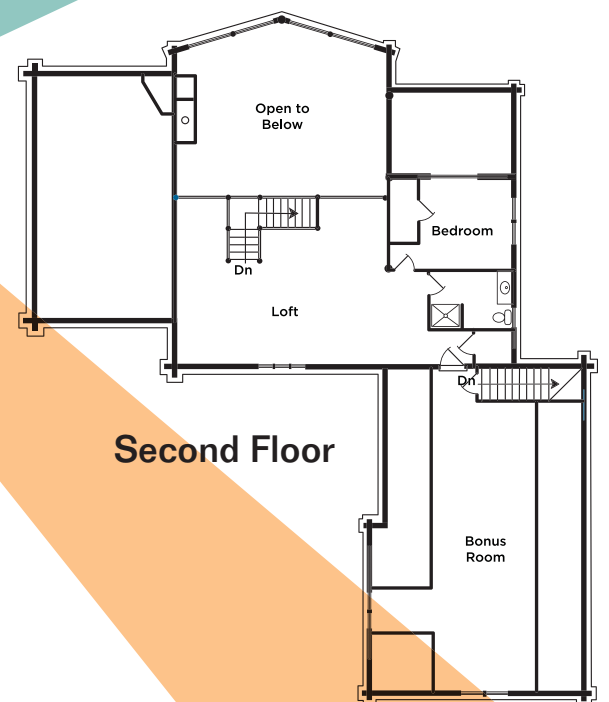
During the summer, Gil and Rocky eat most meals in the sunroom, where they get the sense of dining outdoors without the bugs.



Basement



First Floor



Second Floor

## Bathroom



In several spaces throughout the home—including the guest bathroom on the lower level—Rocky commissioned an artist to paint nature-inspired murals, such as this eagle perched atop a tree.

## Dining Room



To soften the visual impact of the log walls, hardwood floors and burled oak table, Gil and Rocky upholstered the chairs in the dining area, which borders the great room, kitchen and sunroom.