

# Country's Best Log Homes

## FLOORPLAN & DESIGN GUIDE

**YOU'RE  
INVITED!**

Check inside to  
get half-price  
admission to a  
log home show!

See page 25 for details!

**50+**  
**TOP-SELLING  
FLOORPLANS**



2006

*Inside*

**10 FORGOTTEN SPACES**  
**MONEY-SAVING STRATEGIES**

**3 STOCK PLANS, 6 UNIQUE HOMES**

fw

F+W PUBLICATIONS, INC.

U.S. \$4.99  
CANADA \$6.99



Display until May 1, 2006

# ALL IN THE FAMILY

BY MARGARET A. HAAPOJA  
PHOTOS BY ROGER WADE  
STYLING BY DEBRA GRAHL



**ABOVE:** A wood-burning fireplace faced with cultured stone divides the living room from the kitchen and dining room.

**LEFT:** From the entry, stairs lead to the second floor and doors open into the living room, nursery, and master bedroom.



The perfect floorplan for a young family grows out of a lifetime in the log home business, lots of research, and many hours of computer time.

Although Lori Ashlock grew up in the log home business, it was her husband Mark who suggested they build their own. Mark remembers admiring a friend's log home as a child and seeing them in magazines and movies over the years. "When Lori told me she'd lived in a log home all her life, I said, 'Well, I haven't, so I want one,'" he says.

Rick Denton, Lori's father and the president of Honest Abe Log Homes in Moss, Tennessee, gave the young couple a lot on the family farm. "Lori and Mark were living in Nashville, and it was a good way for me to get them closer to home," he says. The pair built right across from Lori's brother's log home and not far from her parents', and the whole family pitched in on the project. "We created our own little crew to do all the trim work, staining, all the finish work," says Denton, who admits he had little to do with planning the home because his daughter had a clear picture in her mind of the house she wanted.

"I've always liked different," Lori says. "I don't want to be the same as the house next door." For months, Lori sat at the computer working on floorplans using home design software. "The plan is custom," she says, "completely from scratch. I spent hours at the computer, and it took a whole lot of time because I had to think of every little detail."

The software allowed her to design around the room sizes she wanted, and the room sizes were based on the furniture she wanted to fit into each space. She had to decide how wide the fireplace would be and how much space she wanted from one kitchen cabinet to another. "I had a lot of help," she adds, "from the fireplace people and the cabinet man. Honest Abe helped, too. I was down there a million times with changes until it was ready for them to draw the final floorplans."

"Fitting the stairs into our house was the biggest headache I had," she says. "It took forever to figure out how to get the stairs to work with the plan I had." She remembers her father talking about clients coming in with plans drawn on a paper sack and expecting stairs to fit into a little tiny triangle. "They don't understand that it takes six to nine feet of your house to get stairs to work," says Lori. She also lost square footage because she wanted to be able to look up from the entry and see the balcony and the vaulted ceiling, but she is happy with the final appearance.

Lori didn't start looking for ideas for their log home until they decided to build one, but then she began going on home tours and browsing through dozens of magazines. "I would see features I liked," she says, "so I just designed the home around pictures." By the time she sat down at the computer, Lori had a long list of desired features.

"I definitely wanted a wraparound porch because I love the look," she says, "but it also protects the stain. Now our kids love it. It's like a racetrack for them. They get on their bicycles and go round and round." She pictured a spacious kitchen with plenty of cabinet space, and she wanted it to be bright enough not to require lights on during the day. Neighbor Bob Cowan built the custom cabinets of maple stained a very light color to match the walls. Lori positioned her double sink in the island facing the dining area instead of below the window so she could be part of activities in the living area.

Lori wanted lots of windows and access doors, and they came from Green River Door and Window Company as part of the Honest Abe log package. Lori had always dreamed of a large master bath, and so that room is as large as their master bedroom. With its spacious corner soaking tub, it is Mark and Lori's favorite room in the house. "I didn't want a whirlpool tub," says Lori, "because I didn't want to worry about the vents clogging up. I just wanted a big, deep tub, so I actually had the jets taken out."

For the exterior of the home, Lori wanted a Montana look. "I love the houses out there with those round logs inside and out," she says. Consequently, she and Mark chose round on round logs of eastern white pine, eight inches in diameter.

**BELOW:** Lori chose to position her sink in the island so she can keep an eye on what's happening in the living area.

**RIGHT:** Triangular windows flood the second floor with light and match similar windows on the other side of the home.

**FAR RIGHT:** Lori enlarged the dormers for more play area and larger windows in the children's bedroom upstairs.







**The master bedroom is decorated in a safari theme and overlooks farm fields and woodland. Lori and Mark's favorite room is as large as their master bedroom, and it contains a large corner tub and walk-in shower.**

The corners are interlocking, also called an over-and-under notch. Joe Isenberg of Isenberg Log Home Builders has built more than 500 log homes in the last 25 to 30 years. He and one employee framed up the house for the Ashlocks. He says the round on round posts for the porches were a challenge to cut and fit against one another.

To create a distinctive entry on the home's exterior, Lori chose double support pillars for the porch and a double roof for a steeple-top effect that guests often notice. "I saw both those features in pictures in magazines," she says, "and I wanted the front of the house to stand out, so I copied them." The house is built into a hillside to allow a walkout basement on the back side. Lori and Mark recently finished that lower level as a family room, and Lori painted two of the walls orange as an anniversary gift for her husband who is an avid University of Tennessee football fan.

The 4,200-square-foot home has three finished levels, and the basement has ICF (Insulated Concrete Form) walls. "That was a good investment for us," says Lori, "because it's insulated very well. We have three heating vents down there, and we have two of them shut off because it stays so warm."

As an occupational therapist, Lori is

very aware of the importance of making a home accessible. "We'd like to have all the living space on one level," she says, "so that when we get older we don't have to worry about going up and down stairs." She designed all the doorways to be three feet wide and tried to think about wheelchair accessibility. A wheelchair could navigate the entire kitchen, and the bathrooms are large enough for one to turn around in.

The only thing Lori and Mark argued about in building the house was the exterior stain color. "My goal was to have a light-colored stain because I didn't want a dark house," Lori says. "So we chose a Perma-Chink pickled white. Tony Huddleston at Perma-Chink convinced us to try it. I'd seen log homes in magazines that are stained that color, and I liked the look. And we knew if we didn't like it, we could stain a darker color over it." Although Mark admits he lost the battle, he's happy with their pickled white house color.

The wood-burning fireplace divides the living room from the kitchen and dining area on the main floor of the house. It is faced with cultured stone from Centurion in Nashville, and the Ashlocks chose the synthetic product because it didn't need additional support. Jeff Humes of Honest Abe Log Homes hand-hewed the timber mantel of white pine. Ash hardwood

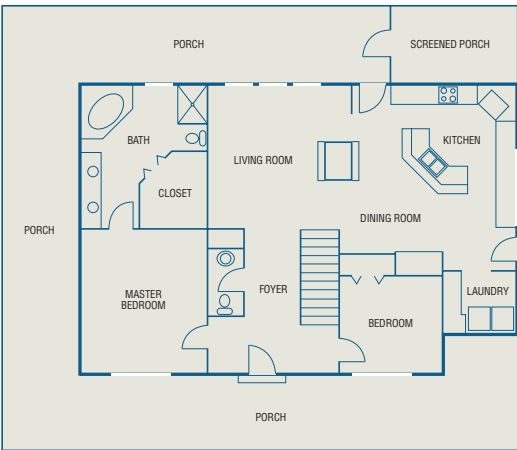
flooring covers most of the rooms on the main level, and the upstairs bedrooms are carpeted. Closets upstairs are large enough that their three-year-old daughter shares their five-year-old son's bedroom.

If Lori and Mark had it to do over again, they would make one change to their floorplan. Their living room is too small, a problem they plan to remedy this year with an addition on the other side of the kitchen. "I'll turn the present living room into a dining room," says Lori, "and I'll put the table in there and add a breakfast bar to one side of the kitchen island." The addition will also enlarge the laundry room and include a two-car garage on the lower level.

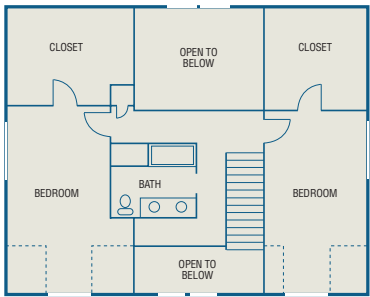
Lori and Mark are pleased with their log home, and since it is on the family farm they agree they'll probably own it forever. They enjoy the relaxed pace of country life after living in the city. "Here you can go out on the porch in your pajamas and nobody cares," says Lori. They can look out at her mom's pumpkin patch and watch deer grazing in the field. "We're fortunate to have what we have," she says. 🍂

---

**LOG HOME PRODUCER: Honest Abe Log Homes, Celina, Tennessee; BUILDER: Isenberg Log Home Builders, Celina, Tennessee.**



**Main Level**



**Lower Level**

**TOP:** Lori and Mark finished the exterior of their house with Perma-Chink stain in pickled white so it would be entirely different from the house next door.

**ABOVE:** An 8-foot-wide porch encircles the house, providing a racetrack for the children and protecting the exterior of the logs.