



PHOTOS AND STORY
BY ESTHER AND FRANKLIN SCHMIDT

Behind Every Great Man...

A great quiet spot for reading or iced tea, this porch overlooks the woods, a stream, and the pastures beyond. The porch is made of 6-by-12 eastern white pine with dovetail-cornered logs.



Light and sunshine pour in through Pella doors and windows all day. At right, a door leads to the wrap-around deck and porch.

Taking a hint from his mother, a stressed-out construction manager learns everything there is to know about building with logs and creates the perfect home for his family.

Scott Miller says he owes his success in the log home building industry and his terrific family log home to the women in his life, his mother and his wife Susan. Scott's involvement in the log home industry and eventual construction of one for his family is based on a variety of circumstances that, in hindsight, could have no other conclusion.

Scott was always drawn to building — and the propensity always seemed to be toward log. Even as a high school student, when asked to create a project for a shop class, Scott

prophetically designed and built a log home model.

In college, Scott earned his degree in construction management from Purdue University and spent the earliest part of his career overseeing multi-million dollar commercial and industrial building projects throughout the United States. It was a successful career, but one that took its toll in stress.

"In the early 1990s, my mother came to visit us," he says. "She took one look at me and knew I wasn't happy at work. She was right. I loved the construction business but I hated the politics of corporate building. She brought me a log home magazine and said, 'I think you should try building these.' She was right and the rest is history."



Leather and chenille-upholstered chairs and couch bring softness to the all wood surroundings.

Sadie, the Rotweiler, knows a good spot to nap when she finds it.

This space opens directly onto the kitchen.
Note the elegant Mission table and chairs.





The creative stone-faced hickory island adds another element of natural materials to the log walls and hardwood floors. The cabinetry is also of hickory.

That year, 1993, Scott formed a company called Miller Log Home and Timberframe Construction. Since then, he has built more than 160 log houses throughout the United States for eight different log home producers. By 2001, he and Susan, now the principal of the local elementary school, had two little girls and were more than ready to move out of a tiny apartment into their dream house. Scott had considerable time and experience in the log home business and was ready to build his family their own log home.

The Millers pored over log home magazines for ideas. Scott knew firsthand which company would best match his family's needs. That company was Appalachian Log Structures. Scott was impressed with the borax-treated logs that the company provided, as well as their methods of construction. Looking through the Appalachian catalog, Susan found a model called "Fair Oaks," which, with slight modifications, she thought was the perfect house. Of course, there was no question as to who would be their builder.

Set on more than two acres in the middle of pastureland in Piney Branch, Georgia, their log home, with its full rear deck and total wrap-around porch, is now "fun central" for the Miller clan. Scott says, "The whole family loves the open floorplan downstairs and we spend lots of time gathered around the kitchen island. It's where we eat our meals and hang out. We have a dining room, but it's more or less a once-a-year deal at Thanksgiving."

The house offers plenty of room for the family to spread out. It has 2,400 square feet of heated living space on the main and second floors, which are all log construction. There is also a large 1,600-square-foot finished concrete basement with pool table, bar, and large plasma television. The main floor holds the great room, kitchen, dining area, office, master bedroom, and bath. The second level is "girls' town" with two bedrooms, a bath, and a connecting loft gathering area.

This house has a 54-by-28 footprint with a 22-by-10-foot T kick-out for the living room. The Millers opted for 3¹/₄-inch oak hardwood floors in the public areas of the house and wall-to-wall carpet for the bedrooms.

With countryside views out of every side of the house, Scott utilized Pella windows and doors throughout, going for wood trim inside and clad outside, a practical solution for a low-maintenance residence.

The low-maintenance theme is furthered in the logs themselves. Since the logs are pressure-treated with borates, they are good for life; no regular treatments are ever needed. To maximize the beauty of the logs, the house was stained Warm Pecan by Woodguard and the family loves its rich color.

Beyond the country setting and the rich tones of the logs, among the reasons that the exterior of the house is so appealing and fits so well in its rural setting is the steep pitch of the rooflines that seem to match the surrounding hills. The main portion of the house is a 14/12 pitch

RIGHT: With its sliding door onto the side deck and old-fashioned furnishings, this space is a great get-away. To give a break in the architectural elements, Scott created some interior walls of Sheetrock, such as the wall at the head of the bed.

BELOW: Scott takes just a little time to unwind with family and friends on the weekends. The bar features log chairs.



and the upstairs offsets, which are in the girls' rooms, are 12/12. Roofing material is a 40-year Tamco architectural shingle.

From the time the family took delivery of the logs until they moved in was just over six months. The thought of moving out of a cramped apartment with two active kids was great incentive to get the new house livable. Scott says, "We really had no major problems or challenges during construction. Everything went smoothly and we were excited to be in our own new home." Clearly, there is something to be said for being one's own contractor — especially if you know what you're doing.

"I put everything I had learned about log home construction into building this house and talked to every supplier I knew to make sure we were getting the best materials available.," Scott says.

Scott also became a distributor for Appalachian Log Structures, establishing another company, Southern Impressions Log Home Sales. He says that, based on his experiences working with a number of log home producers, he is impressed with Appalachian Log Structures' quality of manufacturing and engineered building systems.

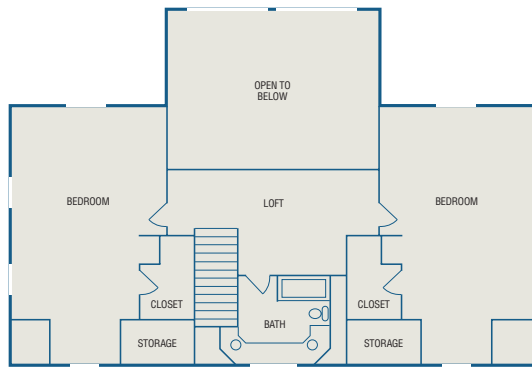
Running two companies, having a full household, and building his own home, Scott doesn't have time to talk about how he had time to do everything. As the old adage goes, if you want something done, give it to a busy person.

When it came time to furnish and decorate the house, the entire family wanted things to be casual and comfortable. Couches are for sinking into with a good book and a gas fire in the stone fireplace burns all fall and winter. "After having a log fireplace in another house, Susan opted for gas in this one," Scott says. "There is no mess and the girls can come home from school and just turn it on." The great room is the perfect spot to watch a movie on the large-screen television. On weekends, parties and cookouts for friends and family center around the basement play area.

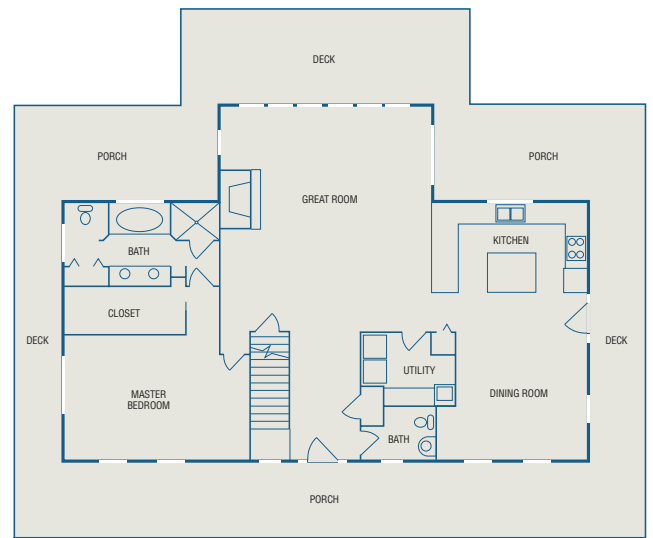
As is the case with so many houses built by busy, professional builders and contractors, it often takes years before all of the final details are put into place in their own homes. Scott and Susan are delighted to say that, finally, the house is truly finished. Every bit of trim is in place — all the small projects and "get around to's" have been gotten to.

Although Scott's mother passed away three years ago, the Millers are happy that she made that suggestion that began his entire business and eventually the family home and that she lived to see it all in place. It is said that behind every good man, there is a good woman. Scott is lucky, he has had two. 🐾

LOG HOME PRODUCER: Appalachian Log Structures, Ripley, West Virginia.
BUILDER: Miller Log Home and Timberframe Construction, Flowery Branch, Georgia.



Upper Level



Main Level



Up a quiet country road and then around a circular driveway and the family is home. With its three gables and warm wood tones, this house is the epitome of country architectural style.

