

*Natural
Wonders*



Town & Country Cedar Homes photos



A MICHIGAN COUPLE'S RETIREMENT HOME BECOMES A GATHERING PLACE FOR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

STORY BY Jacqueline N. Kennard • PHOTOGRAPHY BY James Yochum

For 17 years, Tony and Fran Fortuna enjoyed vacations with their five children on wooded, lakefront property they owned in Northern Michigan. So when they left their careers, it only seemed natural to retire there.

The Fortunas wanted their new life on the lake to be special, so they decided to build a distinctive home—a place that would fit with the enduring beauty and tranquility of their land, and a place they could pass on to their family. “With our children, and now 12 grandchildren in mind, we realized what an extraordinary opportunity we had to design and build a home with all the amenities of a lake-side resort,” Tony explains.

OPPOSITE: Lit up from inside and out, the home overlooks a 10-acre spring-fed lake. **ABOVE:** Highlighted by the intricately carved mahogany front door and half-log staircase, the foyer is a perfect melange of color and natural elements.

Natural Ambience

When considering a look for their new home, Fran and Tony both agreed that the structure would have to complement the naturally wooded surroundings. "For both of us, only one concept came to mind: logs," says Tony. And with logs in mind, the couple began researching possible styles. They

Fran and Tony chose logs so that the structure of their new home would complement the naturally wooded surroundings.

attended log home shows and visited model homes in the area. "I preferred a very rustic look and Tony was just not sure," Fran says. "When we had the opportunity to walk through one of Town & Country Cedar Home's models, it was everything we could have dreamed of and more."

The model they admired was a collaboration between the company and Meg Redli, ASID, of Interiors Inc. It offered a balanced combination of rustic furnishings with plenty of finishing touches, vibrant colors and special accents. After a thorough look, the Fortunas decided to choose Town & Country as their log home producer and hire Meg to advise them on the layout, design and decor.

With the help of Town & Country's professional design staff and Meg, the Fortunas started modifying the model's floorplan. Tony and Fran added rooms and special features to create their own custom design. "Fran had many specific ideas of what she wanted," Tony says. Her requests included a master bedroom with an extended bay window for maximum natural light and two kitchens—a central, larger kitchen on the main level and a smaller, more compact one downstairs to be used for canning.

Adjacent to both kitchens is a two-story turret, which is used as a casual dining area upstairs and as a game area downstairs. "We built the 'tower' or tur-

ret into our design as a means of breaking up the multitude of straight edges and corners," Tony explains. This also adds a strong feature to the home's design and provides the couple with great year-round views. Through the use of computer simulations, they were able to see an example of the finished product before construction started.

Split Decision

In addition to the design, Tony was impressed with Town & Country's innovative split-log system. Stephen Biggs of Town & Country Cedar Homes explains that the home started with solid, insulated framed construction, which was then covered with log siding. The siding was made by cutting full logs down the center with the exception of 3 feet at each end, which is left whole so the building crew could create full-log corners. The split logs were applied to the framed walls according to the Fortunas' preference. "Because of the extraordinary sturdiness of this system, we are able to build more complex log structures that can hold greater weights and incorporate a wider variety of materials," says Stephen. The Fortunas selected Town & Country's turn-key log home package, which included everything from windows to floors. When Town & Country was finished, so was their home.

The exterior logs are white cedar, a naturally insect-resistant and durable wood. The couple also opted to use chinking between the logs to maintain the rustic appearance. Most importantly to Tony and Fran, they had the assurance that Town & Country would be there through the entire construction period. "As the general contractor, we assign a project manager who is onsite to supervise through final completion of a project," says Stephen.

The couple then hired Kevin Wanstead of Mustang Builders to be the primary builder and carpenter. "Kevin and his team of professionals installed everything from the full-log rafter roof system, which was initially cut, peeled and fitted at Town & Country's yard, to the split-log siding and the windows and railings," says Tony.





Bold colors, impressive stones and commanding king post trusses add strength to the great room.

The kitchen features many bright touches, such as lighted glass niches and lighting both above and below the rustic cherry cabinetry.





This casual eating area in the main-level turret room is a perfect place to grab a bite. The miniature lampshades and greenery on the woven iron chandelier soften this focal point accessory while also complementing the view outside.

There were several components of the package that the Fortunas opted to provide themselves, including the two wood-burning fireplaces, granite countertops and a handcrafted front entry door from Hugo Mesa Studios. "I found Hugo Mesa while looking through a magazine for front door ideas," explains Tony. After viewing samples of his work, the couple commissioned Hugo to create their front doorway. The end result is a massive intricate carving constructed using a combination of mahogany and other exotic woods. "This is one of our favorite features and we even went so far as to add a foot to the entire house to make it fit," Tony remarks.

Insider's View

When it came to the interior design, Fran and Tony were open to suggestions. "Our design simply evolved out of our strong desire to incorporate our natural, wooded outdoor setting into the home using a va-

riety of furnishings, interior wall finishes, floor materials and art," explains Fran. Meg assisted the Fortunas in selecting several richly colored area rugs for the larger open areas that not only enhance the warm fruit tones of the wood, but also soften the overall appearance.

In the great room, the centerpiece river rock fireplace draws the eye up to the massive pair of king post trusses and the catwalk above. Accented by twig-styled railings, the loft catwalk overlooks the foyer from one side and the great room from the other. And, it's anchored by a bedroom/bath suite on either end. "We also have access to our grandkids' bonus room above the garage where they all gather and play," says Fran.

Downstairs, an environment for entertaining prevails amongst the lodge-like furnishings. This area includes a second river rock fireplace, a large cherry bar built around Fran's smaller kitchen



OPPOSITE: Richly colored floral rugs and fabrics create a regal ambiance in the master bedroom. **OPPOSITE LEFT:** Neutral stone tiles provide a backdrop for the master bath while color accents come from flowers and decorative window treatments. **OPPOSITE RIGHT:** Mural artists added small details, such as a squirrel that appears to be sitting on the branch curtain rod.

and a built-in home theater. "Because we are far from town, we really had to become self-reliant when it came to entertainment," Tony says.

The Fortunas were excited about the variety of interior wall finishes available to them, including the pine paneling they selected for many of the walls in the larger rooms. "We had the option to use split logs as we did outside, but the pine just seemed to have the character and charm for a more comfortable and lived-in feel," Tony explains.

Still wanting to expand on her outdoor theme, Fran accepted Meg's suggestion of hiring artists to paint murals in several bedrooms and in the turret room downstairs. "We painted the bedrooms using soft muted pastels that look wonderful against the golden hues of the logs, while at the same time providing ideal backdrops for the artists' work," says Fran.

Meg also advised the Fortunas on furnishings and provided the items they chose. "In my 27 years in the design business, I have never been in a home that is as comfortable and inviting as the Fortunas," says Meg. "I can't pinpoint exactly what it is that makes this house stand apart from the rest, rather it is the unique blending of the home's architectural style combined with distinctive touches commissioned by the Fortunas, especially the murals and the magnificent front entry," she says.

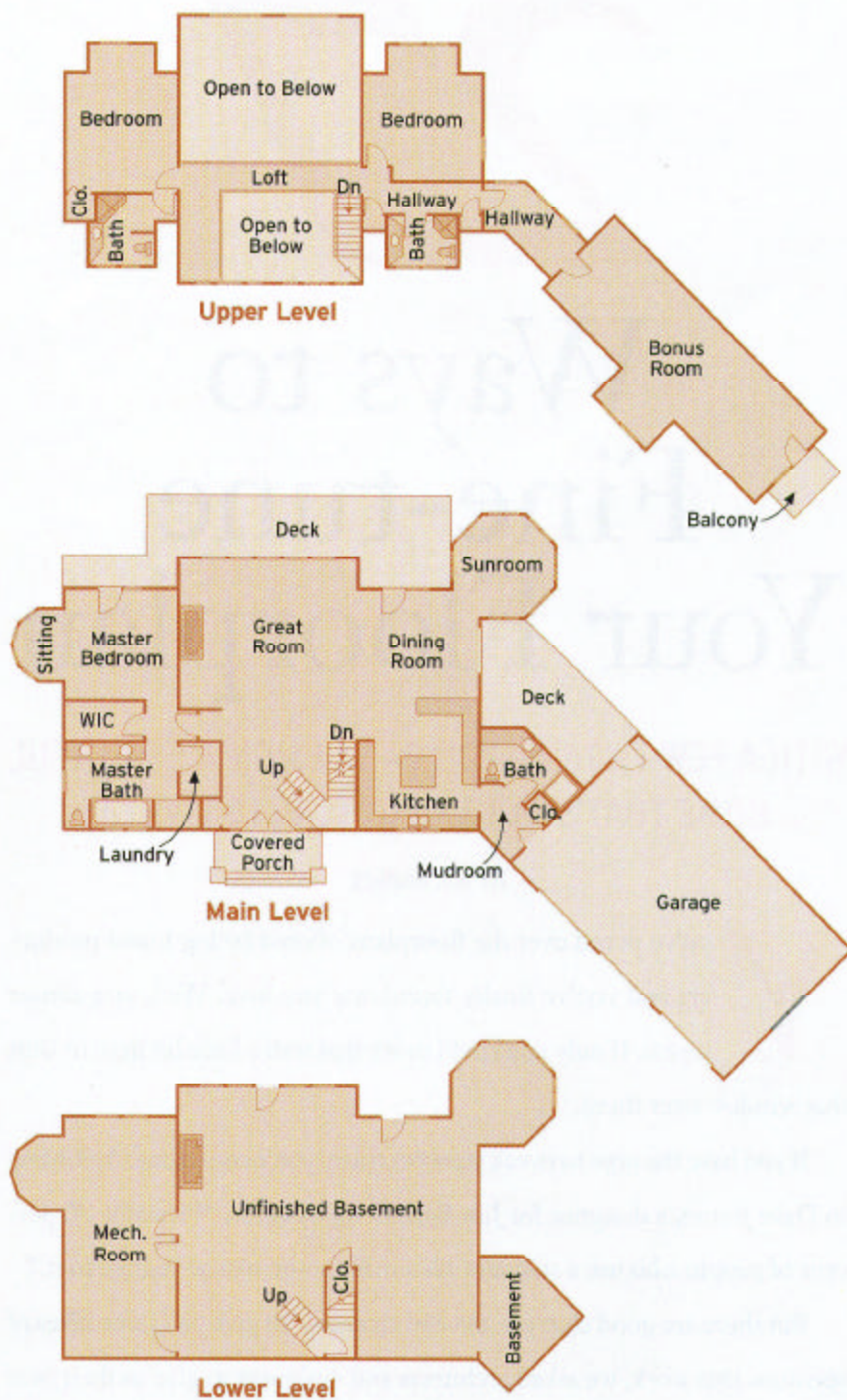
A wonderful blend of creative designs and traditional family values have combined to create a home that will last for generations. "Our house clearly reflects our love of life, passion for the outdoors and our desire to be with family and friends," Fran says. ■

HOME DETAILS

■ Square footage: 6,300

■ Log producer/designer: Town & Country Cedar Homes

For more information, see Resources on page 148.



RESOURCES

- FORTUNA RESOURCES -

Natural Wonders

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Bench in foyer: Bausman & Company Inc., 1520 S. Bon View, Ontario CA 91761; 909-947-0139

Chairs and armoire in great room: Lexington Home Brands, P.O. Box 1008, Lexington NC 27293; 336-236-5300; www.lexington.com

Chaise lounge in master bedroom: Pearson Company, 1420 Progress Ave., High Point NC 27261; 336-882-8135; www.pearsoncompany.com

Chinking: Sashco Sealants, 10300 E. 107th Place, Brighton CO 80601; 800-767-5656; www.sashco.com

Coffee table, table and chairs in breakfast nook: Flat Rock Furniture, 702 E. Russell St., Waldron IN 46182; 765-525-5265; www.flatrockhickory.com

Exterior stain: Cabot Stains, 100 Hale St., Newburyport MA 01950; 978-465-1900; www.cabotstains.com

Front door: Hugo Mesa Studio, 673 W. Hill Road, Craftsbury VT 05826; 802-586-7537; www.hugomesastudio.com

Hanging light in great room: Hammerton, 2149 S. 3140 W., Salt Lake City UT 84119; 801-973-8095; www.hammerton.com

Interior decorator: Interiors Inc., 1301 U.S. 131 S., Petoskey MI 49770; 231-347-5800

Interior stain: Coronado Paint, 308 Old County

Road, Edgewater FL 32132; 800-883-4193;

www.coronadopaint.com

Kitchen chair, dining table and chairs, leather chair in guest bedroom: Harden Furniture, 8550 Mill Pond Way, McConnellsville NY 13401; 315-245-1000; www.harden.com

Landscape designer: Brian Zimmerman & Associates, 434 Monroe St., Traverse City MI 49684; 231-929-7400

Leather chair and ottoman, bar stools and sofas: Hancock & Moore, 166 Hancock & Moore Lane, Hickory NC 28681; 828-495-8235; www.hancockandmoore.com

Log bed in guest bedroom: Old Hickory Furniture, 403 S. Noble St., Shelbyville IN 46176; 800-232-2275; www.OLDHICKORY.COM

Log producer, designer, loft railing: Town & Country, 4772 U.S. 131 S., Petoskey MI 49770; 800-960-3178; www.cedarhomes.com

Masonry: Ron Way Masonry, 5016 Walker Road, Rapid City MI 49676; 231-258-2578

Roofing: CertainTeed, P.O. Box 860, Valley Forge PA 19482; 800-782-8777; www.certainteed.com

Table and dresser in great room, bed frame and dresser in master bedroom: Century Furniture, 401 11th St. NW, Hickory NC 28601; 828-328-1851; www.centuryfurniture.com

Tile flooring: Virginia Tile, 24404 Indoplex Circle, Farmington Hills MI 48335; 248-476-7850; www.virginiatile.com

Windows and doors: Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork, 1323 S. 11th Ave., Wausau WI 54401; 715-842-5666; www.kolbeandkolbe.com

Redefining Rustic

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Bed frame in master bedroom: Ethan Allen, Ethan Allen Drive, Danbury CT 06811; 203-743-8000; www.ethanallen.com

Exterior stain: Continental Products, 1150 E. 222nd St., Euclid OH 44117; 216-531-0710; www.continentalprod.com

Floor and wall lamps: Hunter Lighting Group, 11660 Central Parkway, Jacksonville FL 32224; 904-642-4340; www.hunterkenroy.com

Interior trim and finishing: Precision Builders of M&M, 1712 7th St., Menominee MI 49858; 906-864-2671

Interior stain: Velvit Products, P.O. Box 1741, Appleton WI 54913; 920-722-8355; www.velvitproducts.com

Kitchen cabinets: Holiday Kitchens, 120 W. Allen St., Rice Lake WI 54868; 715-234-8111; www.holidaykitchens.com

Kitchen countertops: Romanite Building Products, 2400 Racine St., Racine WI 53403; 262-634-5439; www.romanite.com

Landscape designer: Parthie Landscaping, Highway 41, Marinette WI 54143; 715-732-0646

Log producer, designer, drum table, antler light fixtures: Wisconsin Log Homes, 2390 Pamperin Road, Green Bay WI 54313; 800-844-7970; www.wisconsinloghomes.com

Red leather sofas: Natuzzi, 130 W. Commerce Ave., High Point NC 27260; 800-262-9063; www.natuzzi.com

Rocking chair in great room, dining table and chairs, chair and loveseat in sunroom:

Q. HOW DO I SAVE TIME & MONEY ON MY LOG HOME?

TOP 10 REASONS TO JOIN

Log Home Living Institute provides its members with one central source of practical, unbiased answers on every aspect of appraising, financing, buying, building, maintaining, renovating, furnishing, decorating, living in and enjoying log homes. Answers that save you time and money.

- 1 **www.loghomeliving.com/institute** – This “member’s only” section of the web site contains everything you need to plan your dream home.
- 2 **Q&A Service** – Questions? We have answers. Use us as your own private librarian.
- 3 **Consumer Resource Library** – Do your own research by using this searchable database of full-text articles.
- 4 **LINKS Home Products Savings Program** – Save hundreds, even thousands, of dollars on log home related products.
- 5 **Log Home Living Magazine** – Save when you join LHLI and purchase a 12-month subscription to *Log Home Living* magazine, the official magazine of LHLI.
- 6 **Log Home Living Home Shows (\$5 family discount)** – These three-day log home shows feature all of the products and services you need to build and make your log house a home. FREE workshops, financing companies and much more.

“ Thanks for the incredibly prompt response. The LHLI site has a wealth of information for someone like myself. I feel like I've already gotten my membership's worth of help and data.”

– Jeff, LHLI Member