

A Florida FOREVER HOME

A couple constructs their ideal log home in central Florida for themselves and their cherished Irish Setter, Lucy.

BY CHARLES BEVIER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
JOSEPH HILLIARD, HILLIARD
PHOTOGRAPHICS

Inspiration for a new lifestyle can sometimes come from the most unlikely of sources. For Barry and Beverly Grimm, it was an issue of Southern Living magazine. "I have always liked the look of log homes," recalls Barry Grimm, "and the only reason we built this new home is that my wife saw an interior image of a log home in the magazine. She turned to me and said, 'Boy, I would love to live life in a home like this.'"

THE GREAT ROOM NEVER FAILS TO IMPRESS VISITORS WITH THE QUALITY OF WORKMANSHIP THAT WENT INTO THIS RUSTIC MASTERPIECE.



For many years, the Grimms have called Apoka, Florida home. The area has seen significant growth in recent years, including the addition of a new expressway and a toll road.

“We joke that if any more people move here, Florida may sink,” Barry says. They contemplated relocating. Their existing home was located near a road that was seeing heavy traffic. But with that home set on a seven-acre parcel, they thought of building a new home in the pine woods behind it.

CHOOSING A LOG HOME PRODUCER

The couple took their ideas to Bill Mathews, the founder and owner of Log Home Guys (Lake City, FL), which specializes in custom-engineered homes built from heart-cut cypress. The owner and the entire team at Log Home Guys take pride in creating log homes that are engineered to withstand extreme weather conditions. “We don’t walk anywhere near the gray line,” Bill says. “If codes call for screws at 24 inches on center, we design them at 16 inches. Our goal is to build the strongest home in the market today.”

With their General Contractor, John Madison of the Nona Construction Group (Orlando, FL), the Grimms chose The Brahma floor plan, from Log Home Guys’ New Signature Series of Country-Style Log Homes. Construction

started in July of 2023, and wrapped up in May of 2024.

This was John Madison’s first log home. He credits the success of the project to the training that Bill Mathews and his team provided to his construction crew and subcontractors. “This home is heavily engineered,” John says. “If a hurricane ever hits this area, this home is the one I am coming to.”

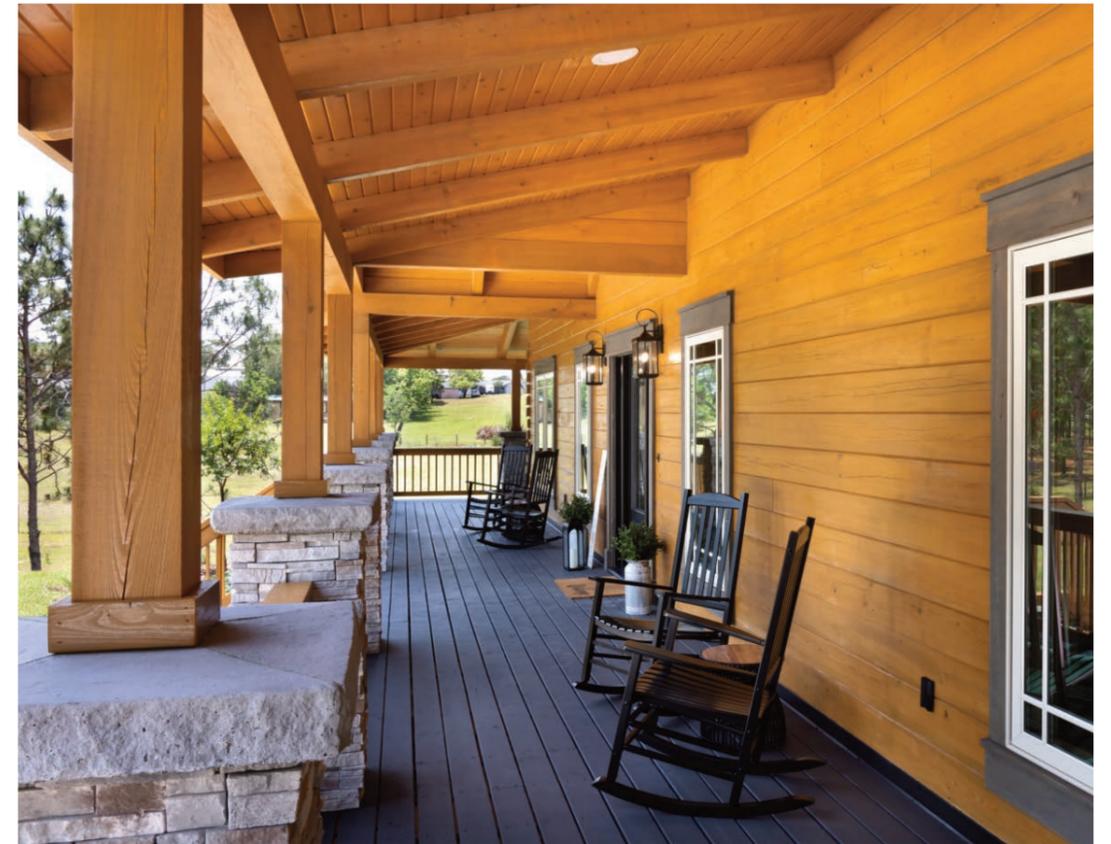
An enclosed breezeway serves as the laundry room, taking the noise out of the home and making better use of space. The large three-vehicle garage is equipped with 12-foot-tall garage doors, to allow larger vehicles, among them is a John Deere tractor. Barry utilizes it to tame Florida’s relentless flora.

FAVORITE SPACES

Barry and Beverly say their new home is 2,000 square feet, but it feels much larger. “The loft is my hideout,” Barry says. “There’s a large window with great views. Very calming,”

Beverly’s favorite space is the wrap-around porch system, complete with rocking chairs. “Lucy loves to romp around the porch,” Beverly says.

It was Lucy’s needs that required changes to the original design. The original floor plan features a spiral staircase. It was swapped out for a traditional staircase, to accommodate Lucy’s age—she’s 11. Her daily diet of



ABOVE: THIS 2,000 SQUARE FEET LOG HOME IN CENTRAL FLORIDA BRINGS A SENSE OF TRANQUILITY TO ITS OWNERS, BARRY AND BEVERLY GRIMM. THEY OPTED FOR COUNTRY-STYLE EXTERIOR FINISHES. THIS INCLUDES A BLACK METAL ROOF WITH GRAY TRIM, BOARD AND BATTEN, AND SHAKE SIDING.

RIGHT: THE WRAPAROUND PORCH PROVIDES A COMFORTABLE SPACE FOR SOCIALIZING WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY.

TOP RIGHT: WITH THEIR GC, JOHN MADISON, BARRY, AND BEVERLY CHOSE MODERN WHITE SHAKER-STYLE CABINETS WITH WHITE QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS AND BRIGHT BLUE CABINETS BELOW, TO PROVIDE A BRIGHT CONTRAST TO THE COMFORTING SOLID WOOD CYPRESS WALLS.

fresh fish, and sweet potatoes keeps her well- fueled for fun. “She plays like a puppy, she has all her favorite toys,” Beverly says. “Lucy is so active.”

UNSURPASSED ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Cypress wood is heavier and denser than many other wood species, due to the species' tight growth rings. This makes for less settling, checking, and twisting after construction. Cypress also has a naturally occurring preservative within its cells, which makes the heartwood of the tree more resistant to insects, decay, and requires less maintenance. Bonus—Cypress also provides unsurpassed energy efficiency.

“It’s the best insulation in the world,” Barry says. Even with the challenges of Florida’s environment, “Our energy costs are less than one-quarter of our previous home,” Barry says.

The hearth, on-demand water heater, and cooking are all powered by natural gas. This is backed up by a gas generator, for peace of mind in Florida’s storm seasons.

Surrounded by sprawling oaks and bird songs, this rustic property blends the warmth of a mountain cabin with the convenience of the community they know so well. “We still get to enjoy our Magic season tickets,” Beverly says. “Our grocery store is only three minutes away.”

“We love living here. It’s just the three of us, and it’s very comfortable and homey,” Beverly says. “When people first enter our great room, they are just always so impressed with the quality of the workmanship.” 🌿

Log Home Producer: Log Home Guys of Florida

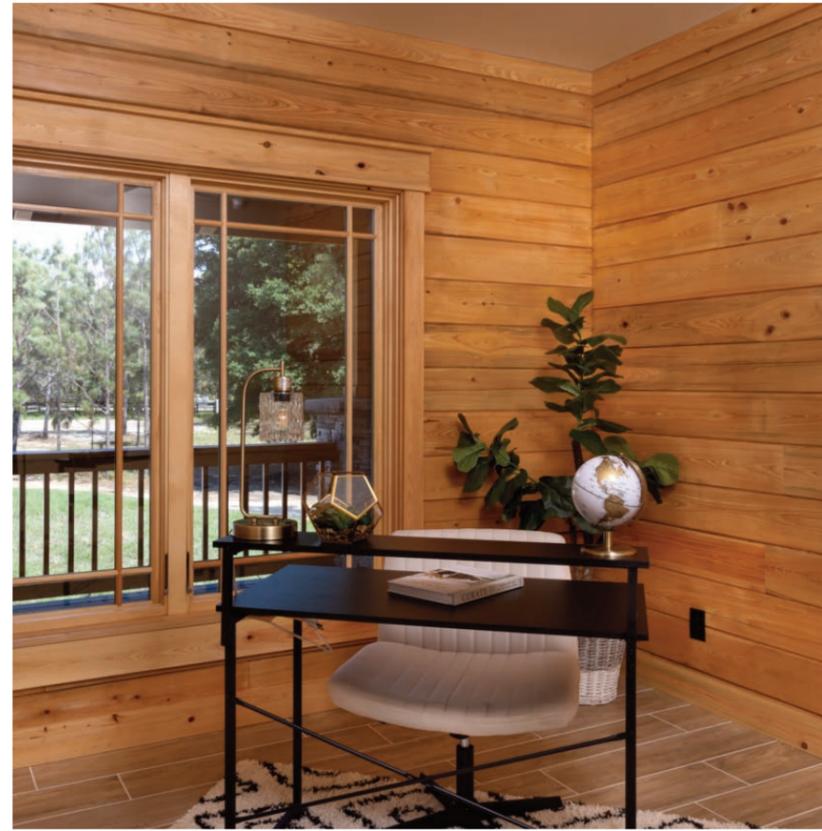
Log Home Builder: Nona General Contracting

Two story home

First Floor 1,740 sq.ft. 🌿 Loft 190 sq.ft.

Covered Wrap-Around Porch 1,664 sq.ft.

Three bedrooms 🌿 Two baths



TOP LEFT: WHITE QUARTZ COUNTERTOP IN THE MASTER BATH VANITY PROVIDES A SENSE OF CONTINUITY TO THE HOME, ECHOING THE KITCHEN COUNTERTOPS.

TOP RIGHT: THE ENTRANCE TO THE MASTER BEDROOM, WHICH FEATURES A VAULTED CEILING AND PLENTY OF DAYLIGHTING.

LEFT: LEFT: CLERESTORY WINDOWS (NOT SHOWN) HIGH ABOVE THEIR HEADBOARD, ALLOWS BRIGHT LIGHT TO STREAM IN, BOTH FIGURATIVELY AND LITERALLY, FROM A HIGHER SOURCE.

OPPOSITE TOP: A QUIET WORKSPACE FOR TAKING CARE OF DETAILS.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: THE LOFT IS BARRY’S HIDE-OUT, A CALMING SPACE.