

Log Home Love

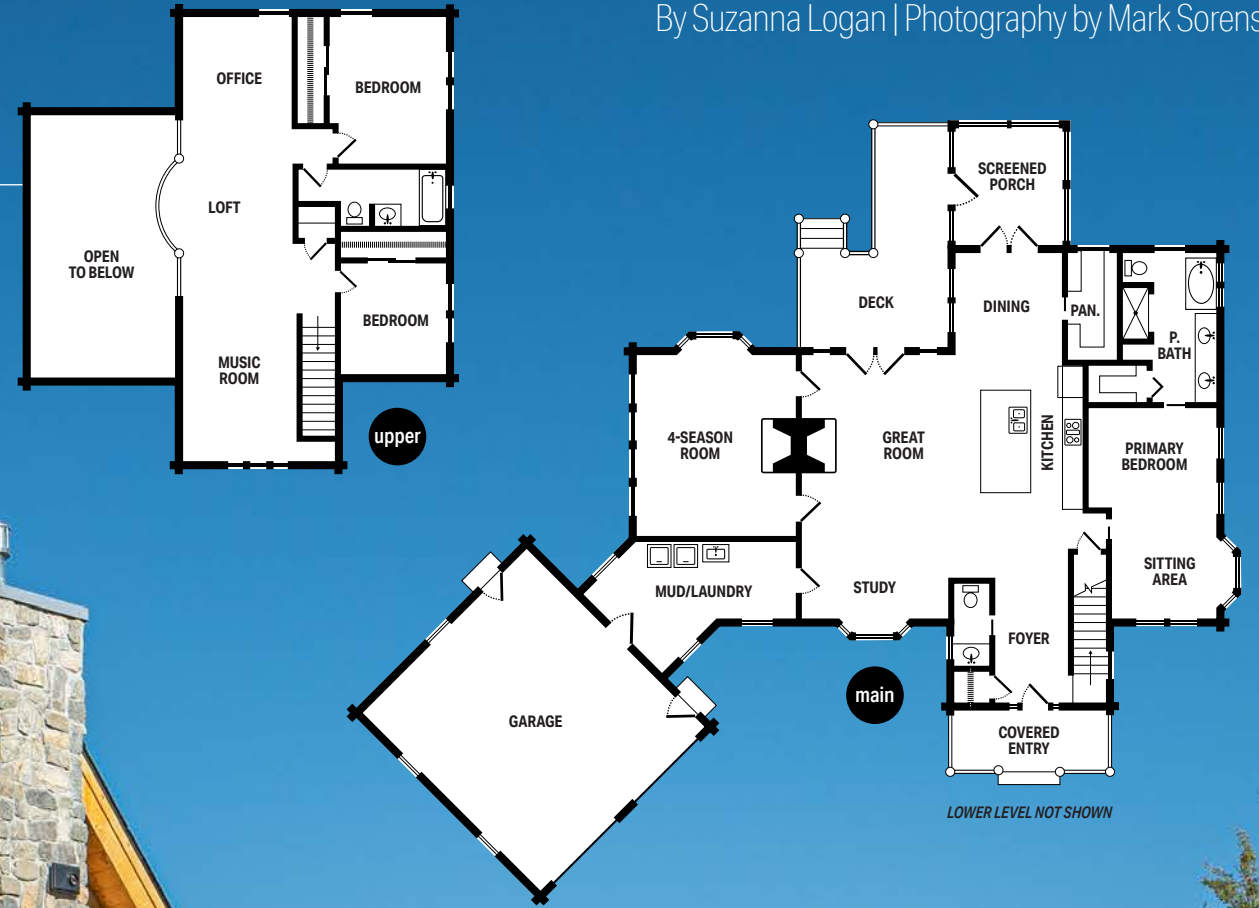
A couple headed towards retirement found a perfect match — in their log home and each other.

HOME DETAILS

SQUARE FOOTAGE
3,961

BEDROOMS 3 BATHS 2 FULL, 1 HALF

LOG PROVIDER/DESIGNER
COVENTRY LOG HOMES
coventryloghomes.com



By Suzanna Logan | Photography by Mark Sorenson

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Southern exposure and floor-to-ceiling windows keep the four-season room cozy even through the long New Hampshire winters. “It’s where we like to have our breakfast and morning coffee,” says Diane.



left The home's entry, punctuated by a king-post truss and a series of stacked gables, creates serious curb appeal. "The rooflines are just stunning and drew us in first thing," says Diane. Next, the couple says they were won over by the clear sightlines through the house. "You can open the front door and see all the way to the view in the back," she says.



right The foyer makes a warm first impression, with a bench for removing shoes and a display of family portraits.

below Flanked by glass doors to the four-season room, the dual-sided gas fire-place cozies up multiple spaces at once. "You can light the fire, and enjoy it from the living room, four-season room and kitchen," Diane shares.

Kevin and Diane Havens' log home story is about much more than building a house. In many ways, their journey to log home living parallels their story about finding love in their later years. After the couple met at church (he was the worship leader, she was in the band), it didn't take long for sparks to fly. They each knew they had found their person — the one who ticked all the boxes on their wish list, the one they could rely on long into the future.

In the same way, when the couple first decided to pursue a forever home together, they knew they wanted a place they could depend on for years to come, and it needed to check off the right boxes, too. Much like in their

relationship, sparks quickly grew into flames when they took a tour through a house by Coventry Log Homes. "Kevin had always wanted a log home, but I didn't know what it was all about," explains Diane. "We went over to Coventry and walked around. I instantly fell in love and knew I had to live in a log home."

At the time, both Kevin and Diane were living in Northern Virginia, but these New Hampshire natives wanted to return to their roots. They began searching in the White Mountains for the right spot to build their new home. The very first property they saw was a looker, but it fell above their budget. "We dismissed it because we thought it was out of our price range," shares Diane. "But a few days after we saw it,

our flight back home was canceled as we were driving to the airport." With some prompting from Kevin's mom, the couple decided to take another look. They couldn't pass up the beautiful mountain views a second time. They put in an offer, and it was accepted.

Next, the couple dove headlong into the design process with the help of Kris Still Arnold, a sales associate with Coventry. The first step was to pick out the perfect plan for their log home that would be built with eastern white pine D-logs with butt-and-pass corners. "We poured over the catalog, and both loved the 'Ironwood' plan," recounts Diane. "We wanted first-floor living as it was going to be our full-time retirement home, and the plan just spoke to us in so many ways."





left This musical couple needed a creative zone, so the upstairs loft provides practice and storage space for their many instruments. Plus, thanks to raised ceilings and hardwood floors, you can't beat the acoustics.

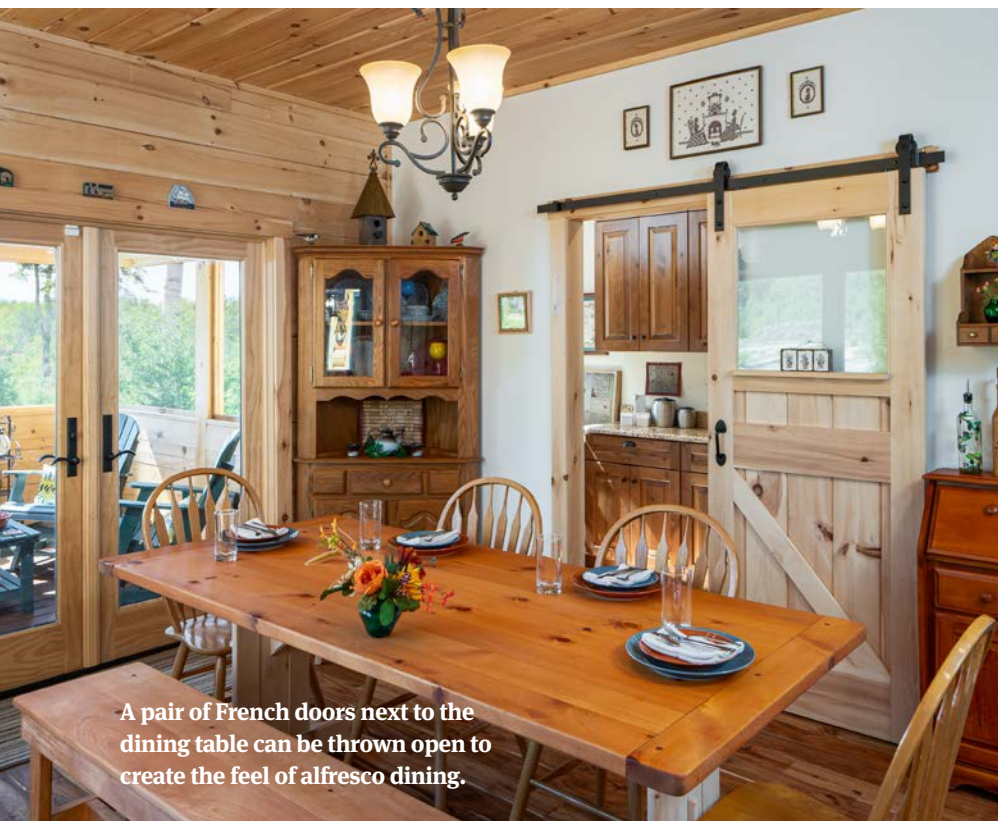
right A half-moon bump-out gives the loft a small but mighty boost of extra square footage.

below The kitchen's massive central island is ideal for the casual get-togethers the couple loves to host.





Illuminated, glass-front cabinets up top allow the Havens to showcase prize pieces with plenty of functional storage below.



A pair of French doors next to the dining table can be thrown open to create the feel of alfresco dining.

Using the stock design as a starting point, the couple began making the changes that would turn the plan from a house into their forever home. Most of their decisions hinged on one point: Creating an easy connection to the outdoors. “As we started talking about the house, it went like this, ‘If there is a wall, I want a window. And if there is a small window, I want a bigger window,’ Diane explains with a laugh.

They gave that bright and airy feel a bit of a boost by including an additional course of logs. “Adding that extra log row raises the ceiling and makes the interior feel even more spacious,” shares Kris. The increased height had the added benefit of making the loft space more usable. “We are musicians and wanted a studio, so we expanded out the loft,” says Diane. A half-moon bump-out not



With Adirondack furniture and a grill, the screened-in porch has the essence of an open-air deck but with the benefit of having an overhead fan to stir up cooling breezes and screens to keep pests at bay.



left Connecting to the great outdoors was a key part of the couple's design mantra, as seen in the four-season room where massive windows and skylights provide views in every direction.

bottom left A large bay window across from a 10-by-10-foot sitting area in the primary bedroom delivers a quiet place to read while feeling engulfed by nature.

below Diane insists "a mudroom in New England is a must," so the couple expanded the laundry room and situated it with easy access to the garage and kitchen. A sliding barn door conceals the hard-working space from the main living areas.

bottom right A palette of white and gray brings a fresh feel to the main-floor primary bathroom. Recessed mirrored cabinets keep countertops clear of clutter, while a freestanding soaking tub turns the space into a retreat.



only adds more square footage but also helps to soften the angles of the logs. To achieve balance, the couple added a few stretches of drywall throughout the house to "break up the wood" and provide more space for artwork. Other functional inclusions: the garage and mudroom, plus a lower level for storage and a casual rec-room to house a Ping Pong table made by Diane's father.

But of all the changes they made, the couple says their best decision was to turn one part of the open-air deck into a screened-in porch and the other into a four-season room. The porch offers a place to grill and enjoy the breezes, pest-free, while the four-season

room earns the prize for the favorite spot in the house. Cozy furnishings, floor-to-ceiling windows and a fireplace bring comfort to the space that is their go-to for relaxing, entertaining and wildlife watching. "We have several black bears, deer, moose, coyotes — and we've even heard a bobcat," says Kevin.

In addition to the cozy furnishings, beautiful mountain views and animal sightings, there is another factor that makes the space even more special: "We got married one month after we moved in — in our four-season room, surrounded by family and close friends," shares Diane. "It was a really neat thing."

