

Retreat center gets help for new log cabin

By: Shirley Cox
Framing a log cabin in Rockcastle County wilderness may seem an unusual way to promote cooperation and teamwork within a Cincinnati-based construction company, but that is precisely what happened during a two-day retreat at clefRock Retreat Center in Mt. Vernon, September 7-8.

When two construction companies, JFP and Epic, merged on June 15, Jeff Jacobs, Director of Business Development and a partner in the new company, recognized a merging of two different work crews. While attending his church's family retreat at clefRock this summer, Jacobs heard Bob Fields talking about building a log cabin and decided that this would be a perfect chance to unite the construction crew.

"This is a team building project, a way to give back to clefRock Retreat Center and spend time together," Jacobs said. "Half of our work in the office. This is also a way to find the guys' leadership abilities and get to know each other," he said.

The crew spent the first morning of the retreat in a "Low Ropes" course, led by Lee Bivins, a retired missionary and board member at clefRock. The course uses non-competitive games to encourage unity, problem solving and working together, the kinds of issues one encounters in the work place on a daily basis. Bivins has been teaching Ropes classes for five years, the same

course that Toyota uses as a training tool.

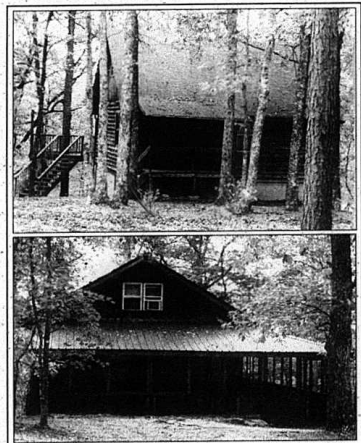
The crew's goal was to frame the cabin, located 1 1/2 mi. from the main retreat center, within two days. The cabin is being built of pine logs, 10 in. wide and 6 in. thick, salvaged from trees killed by the Southern Pine Beetle. The logs were milled by Bob Fields and hauled to the top of a mountain that Fields calls a "near little knoll." The 20 x 36 ft. cabin will have a living room, two bedrooms, two baths, a front porch and a back one that overlooks the Rockcastle River.

"This will be a place for people to come to meditate and pray, a place for the second half of prayer," Fields said. "All communication is stimulus and response. Prayer is communication with God. We do a lot of stimulus, begging or telling God, but this is not completed until we stop and listen for His response. This will be a place of rest, for being quiet and listening," he said.

The second day of cabin building, Giuseppe Bellayuto, a Project Manager who normally divides his time between office work and on-site management, said, "It has been a wonderful experience. I think we have found that everybody can be a leader. Everyone can work inside or outside. Everyone can take someone else's place. It's nice to get away from the other distractions and concentrate on one thing instead of five jobs at once," he said.

Since 1974, when Bob and Eddie Fields finished a ten year missionary assignment in Israel and came back to Kentucky with three children and a God-given vision to build clefRock Retreat Center, literally thousands of people from all parts of the world have been blessed by the peace and solitude found in 450 acres of isolated wilderness. clefRock now averages 50 Christian retreats each year. Bob and Eddie actively participate in the ministry by serving on the board of directors, leading retreats and giving prayer support and encouragement to missionaries and all others who come there. Fields also operates a private counseling practice, "Roots and Wings Counseling" with offices at clefRock and London, Ky. But for a man of vision, it seemed the completion of a log cabin away from all activity offered a fresh new joy. As he watched the men lifting the logs into place, he grinned and lifting a hammer, said, "My grandpa's hammer."

The construction crew plans to ensure the building project is completed by lending a hand in the future. "Hopefully, this is a project that we can come back and see to the finish," Jacobs said. In a short time, I feel like I know these guys better."



Retreat cabins at clefRock



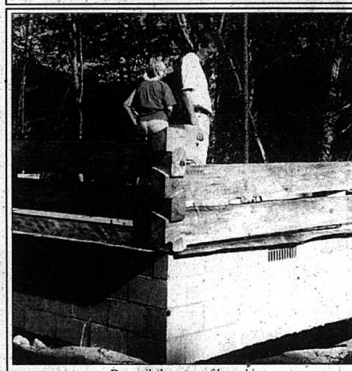
Bob Fields hauling logs for log cabin



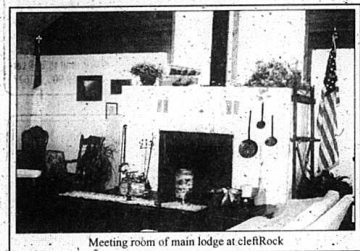
First day of cabin building



Second day of cabin building



Dovetailed corners of log cabin



Meeting room of main lodge at clefRock

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