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BY TIFFANY HORTON, HORTON DESIGN STUDIOS

"It's only an hour and a half from Texarkana, which made the decision to purchase much easier. This was really the only place Brian felt he could just really kick back, relax and detach," Holland said. The Harris family enjoyed the close proximity to home, as well as to the city of Hot Springs. "You literally have the best of both worlds here. You can go to horse races or dig for diamonds in Murfreesboro or just kick back and hang out on the river, and you can even float. The cabins are located in a gated community

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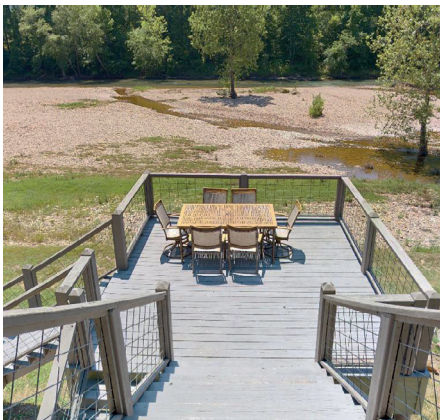
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that offers a large stocked pond! We also have a large rope swing that has become a main attraction for those floating! Because there were once Native American villages along this area, residents and guests have found some noteworthy arrowheads and artifacts along the river,” she continued. “If you walk right across the river, there’s even a natural spring. It’s pretty amazing because the water it puts out is so cold. We have a lot of wildlife; deer roam and we’ve even seen bald eagles.”

Though the Harrises purchased the land in 2014, it was 2016 before their cabin, dubbed “Highlife Ridge,” was completed. They tried to spend any time they could enjoying the space, but they soon discovered the busy schedules of their kids didn’t allow them as much time at the cabin as they would have liked. It was then they began to receive rental inquiries and they liked the idea of sharing the space so other families could enjoy quality time together. With this idea, they decided to give short-term renting a try. Highlife Ridge quickly became a popular place for people to stay. “I feel like we really market to larger groups, such as family reunions, birthday get togethers or just gatherings with friends. Our cabins were designed to hold three to four families,” explained Holland. “We’ve even had weddings, reunions and retreats.” Brian and Holland loved sharing their cabin with other families so much that they built two more and just recently started preparing for the fourth. “Most people just say it’s so peaceful. It’s a great place to kick back and detach from everything that’s going on. It has offered guests a place to come unwind and regroup. It also forces kids to put their games away and step outside and families a place to make lasting memories,” said Holland, noting that the floor plans of each cabin really lend themselves to family togetherness. Although each is different, the general idea is the same: king-size beds in the bedrooms for the adults with a bunk room and loft space for the kids, but the majority of space in each cabin is reserved for the living area, fun game room spaces, and expansive patio and porch areas.

This past summer, the Harris family faced the unexpected when Brian passed away one night in his sleep at only 49. “We had a friend that was turning 40, and we

went [out of town] for a birthday party. We went to bed, and I woke up about 3:30 in the morning and he was still in bed. That next morning when I woke up, Brian was in the recliner. I just thought he hadn’t slept well. Brian was always working, and I knew he was probably super tired from going nonstop. It wasn’t until I went to wake him that my entire world just crumbled. It feels like a nightmare that we all can’t seem to wake from,” explained Holland. She explained how Brian’s love for the cabin projects means so much to her and how she plans to continue fulfilling his vision of creating spaces for other families to get away and enjoy each other’s company and the simple joys of nature. “I’ve always felt a connection to him [at the cabin]. Honestly, I feel him more in those moments than I do at our house because this was a true passion and love for him.” “His primary focus was making sure that the cabins were equipped and operated correctly, but even more importantly, our guests left there feeling like they wanted to come back again. That was so important to him, and so a lot of his design was making sure those little details were met so that it would be functional for our guests.”

Brian and Holland had also recently started a project in nearby Murfreesboro, Arkansas, developing an area for cabins along the Little Missouri. Because of the connection that Holland feels for Brian in the area, she plans to continue with the project and looks forward to seeing his vision come to fruition. “He worked very hard for his family, and these cabins were something that he wanted to be able to leave behind for his family. Now we certainly didn’t think it would be at this point in our life, but you know, I think he was just building a foundation for his kids,” said Holland. “I call Brian the provider. He took so much pride in his work, what he did and every little detail.”

The Harrises have always hoped that the cabins would give other people a chance to spend quality time together. A project that grew from their love for each other has truly evolved into so much more. Holland looks forward to more families having the chance to cozy up and leave all the distractions behind, to enjoy the small details and nuances of nature, just the way Brian did. ❶



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