

LESSONS IN ENERGY-EFFICIENT DESIGN

# Fine Homebuilding

DESIGN • BUILD • REMODEL

## Beautiful ceilings with big beams

Build barn-style  
rolling doors

Simple math  
for perfect  
baluster  
layout

Choose  
the right  
caulk

Better  
PEX  
plumbing

SEPTEMBER 2016 NO. 261  
[www.finehomebuilding.com](http://www.finehomebuilding.com)

Get the timber-frame look  
for less with this smart  
framing approach p. 36

Our House “Navajo Gulch” was featured in an article in the September issue of Fine Homebuilding Magazine. Here’s the cover. The article is on the next page as well as a few additional pictures of our place.

Dave & Caroline



**Time travel.** Entering the courtyard transports visitors back in time to the town of Navajo Gulch, complete with a livery stable and blacksmith shop, the Lost Canyon Woodworks, the Navajo Gulch Bank, the Silver Dragon Saloon, and the Bluebird Cafe.



## Fine town-building

One of the first submissions to our 2016 HOUSES awards was this panoramic view of an Old West town submitted by Caroline and Dave Nelson, who also submitted a photo of a log cabin. Looking at the photos, we thought the cabin must be situated near some quaint Old West tourist town. It turns out that this Old West town is not just near the Nelsons' house—it is the Nelsons' house.

Since 1978 Caroline and Dave have been partners in life and in business. Through their custom architectural-woodworking firm, Lost Canyon Woodworks, they have designed and built many one-of-a-kind items for their clients. After 35 years of fulfilling others' desires for fanciful woodworking creations, they decided to fulfill their own dream and designed this

3448-sq.-ft. house and workshop on 14 mountaintop acres with an incredible view of Pike's Peak.

Requiring only minimal assistance with some of the framing, drywall, and setting of the rocks for the courtyard's pond, the Nelsons built the house themselves. The living area is approximately 1850 sq. ft., with a studio and shop taking up the rest of the square footage. The post-and-beam house is set on a concrete slab with radiant-floor heat. Locally sourced materials such as hand-peeled half logs were used inside and out. Photovoltaic panels provide almost all the electricity needed throughout the year. Solar-thermal collectors tie into the in-floor heating system. Two 120-gal. insulated storage tanks provide all the domestic hot water and a portion of the heat in the winter.



**Cozy cabin.** The roof is heavy-gauge corrugated steel with a beautiful rusty patina. The gate is rough-sawn beetle-kill pine; the arbor is scrub oak and willow.



**Well-done dinners.** The Nelsons designed and built a "chuck wagon" to house their gas and charcoal grills. The courtyard patio is stamped concrete in a fieldstone design. The view of Pike's Peak enhances the enjoyment of alfresco dining.

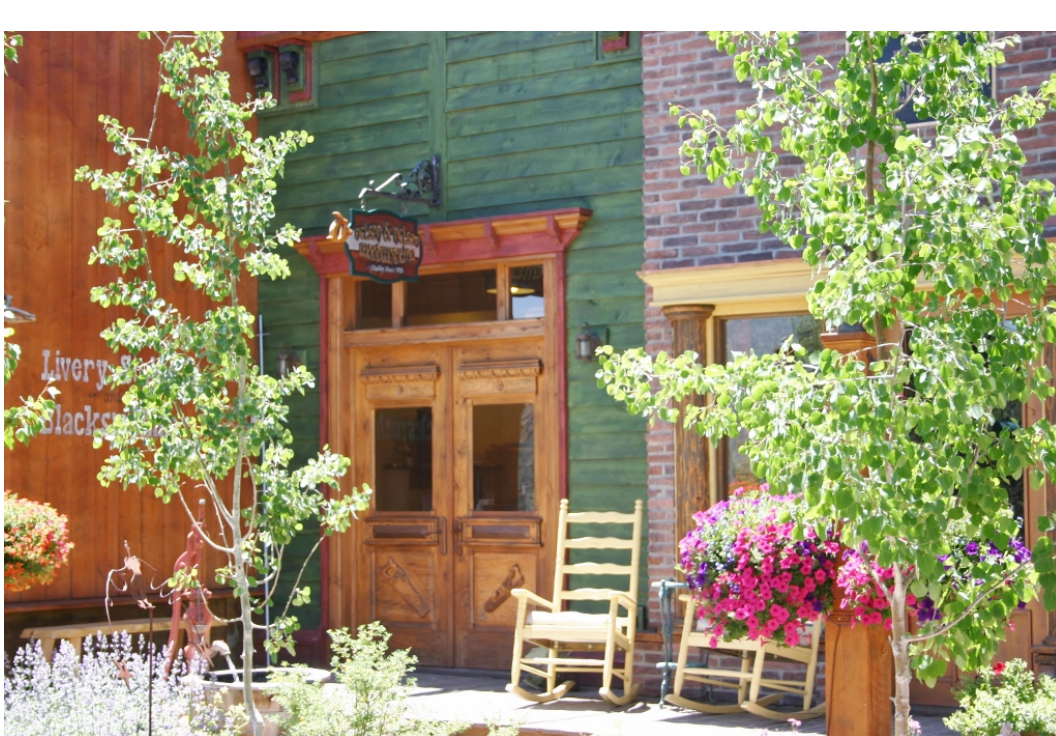


**Plenty of fun inside, too.** In addition to the house, the Nelsons also built the jukebox and the billiard table. The door next to the jukebox is one of 13 custom interior doors the couple designed and built.

**Design and construction** Caroline and Dave Nelson, Florissant, Colo.; [lostcanyonwoodworks.com](http://lostcanyonwoodworks.com)

**Woodcarving** Charles Hensley, Manitou Springs, Colo.; [charleshensleywoodcarving.com](http://charleshensleywoodcarving.com) **Photographs** courtesy of Caroline and Dave Nelson





These doors lead to the shop area that can be converted into additional bedrooms and bathrooms



Front entrance leading to what looks like a small log cabin



This is the front gate and the entrance to Navajo Gulch



Here's the bank on the boardwalk and next to it is the Silver Dragon Saloon





View of kitchen island looking toward the fireplace and dining Inglenook



Inglenook: Norwegian inscription over fireplace  
"Good Food, Good Friends, Much Laughter, Cheers"



Looking at back side of island with custom 4 door refrigerator, to the right is entrance to master bedroom



Part of the shop area - its's great to have it connected to the house



