

# THE PINE VALLEY RAILROAD



**N**ovember 18<sup>th</sup> Ted & Blanche Pulles opened their Pine Valley Railroad for a tour, the most enjoyable I've attended in a long, long time. Although construction only started in March of last year, progress proceeded at an amazing pace thanks in part to expert help from Ted Nutting, Don Benz and Bob Lorenz. (That's one of the wonderful things about belonging to a club — help and good company can be found at any meeting, sitting just a few feet away!)

The layout lives in a room adjacent to the basement steps (photo left). Ted built a viewing window along the steps, complete with a padded arm rest, allowing more guests to comfortably enjoy the action. The control panel, wired by Ted Nutting, folds down when not in use. It powers Peco switch machines with a capacitive-discharge circuit. Multicolor LEDs will soon indicate route direction.



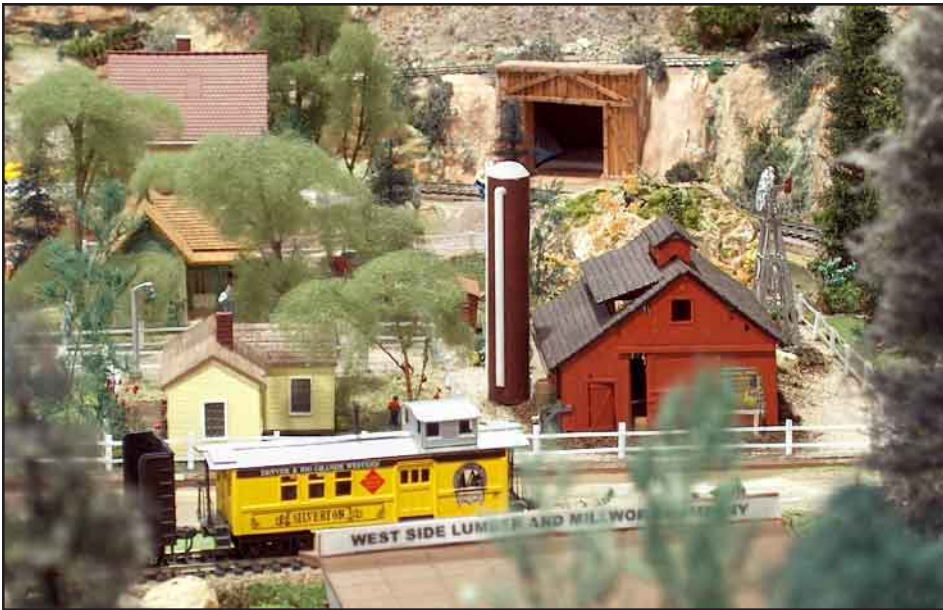
One of the layout's most striking features is the way that Blanche's scenery and beautifully hand-painted backdrops work together to dramatically extend the size of the 9x10 foot layout (center left). Her eye for color is amazing. She repeats colors from the 3D foreground rocks in the ones painted on the backdrop. Rocks are cast in hydrocal plaster, using both commercial rubber molds and homemade molds produced from crinkled aluminum foil. I heard at least 3 visitors ask Blanche if she would be willing to do a scenery/backdrop clinic.



Trains are powered by a Lenz Set 02 DCC system. The Rio Grande switcher (bottom left) has working lights and a decoder-driven strobe on the cab roof.

## PINE VALLEY RAILROAD

Era:	Mid 1990's to present
Track:	Code 100, 18 inch minimum radius
Roadbed:	Cork
Subroadbed:	Wafer board and 1/4 inch plywood
Scenery:	Hydrocal on screen wire



This view, from the access hatch, shows some of the variety of trees on the Pine Valley, built using various techniques and materials. The differences in texture and color lend realism to the scene. The placement of trees divides the scene into different layers, with partial view blocks that add visual depth.

Randy Ditton left the tour with a smile on his face, clutching prized samples of unfamiliar foliage material given to him by Blanche.

Layout regular Don Benz troubleshoots a new DCC sound equipped steam locomotive that he brought over for the day. The mountain to Don's left disguises the house circuit breaker box. It is covered by a flexible canvas panel, painted to match the surrounding hillside.



Here's the view from the window along the basement steps. The city can be removed for access to both the layout and breaker box.



Thanks to our hosts — Ted and Blanche Pulles — for a wonderful layout tour. 🙏