

The Battlement Mesa Service Association
Battlement Mesa: A Covenant Protected Community!

By Keith Lammey, President, Battlement Mesa Service Association

We've all seen the slogan, "Battlement Mesa: A Covenant Protected Community." Some of you (probably about half) moan about how "little we enforce" the covenants and the rest of you (the other half) moan because we do enforce the covenants. What is the Battlement Mesa Service Association (BMSA) to do?

Most people tell me that they decided to buy in Battlement Mesa because we are a covenant protected community. Generally, I find that most people believe that we "need" the protections that are provided by our covenants. Unfortunately, I have also felt a strong undercurrent from those who believe that covenants should only be more vigorously enforced if the enforcement is applied to "the other person." I sometimes refer to it as the NIMBY syndrome. You're probably familiar with that abbreviation, Not In My Back Yard!

To our critics I say, "we didn't write the covenants." "It is just our job to enforce them." I am also quick to point out that, if you own property or even just live in Battlement Mesa, you have agreed to live within the boundaries of the covenants.

To the segment of the population who criticizes the BMSA for not enforcing every small detail of every covenant, I typically reply: "So help me understand. Is it true that if you were guilty of the same small infraction, you would want the BMSA to enforce this regulation in the most strict interpretation of our covenants?" As you would expect, the answers that I get to this question vary widely.

And then there is the other problem that comes up on a fairly regular basis. It usually begins with an innocent question from a resident about why the BMSA isn't taking enforcement action on a particular activity of critical importance to the person asking the question.

In the second phase of the conversation, I usually answer, "Well, because, to my knowledge, that isn't against the covenants!" At this point, the voice tone of the questioner increases fairly noticeably, and I hear, "Well, why isn't it against the covenants?" The only honest answer to that question is, "I really don't know. I didn't write the covenants."

My BMSA experience has taught me that covenant enforcement is like life, or at least like the way I view life. I think that life is about balance and, likewise, covenant enforcement is about balance. Further, I have found that if you can remove the emotional ties to a covenant issue, you will have much better acceptance of the governing covenant regulations.

Right or wrong, I have concluded that balance is tied to reasonableness. If I had been stopped for every time that I drove 76 MPH in a 75 MPH speed zone, I'd likely still be in jail, somewhere. On the other hand, I have never been arrested or charged with reckless or careless driving. I am often reminded that getting to my destination on time while getting there safely is the right balance. Balance is usually a good thing.

I have also figured out that it is much easier to educate than it is to enforce. You have to do both, of course: educate to the maximum extent possible yet enforce as necessary. One practice without the other isn't very effective.

So, I am pleading here for your help. Like it or not, if you live here, you agreed to abide by our covenants. So instead of waiting until you are cited for violating our covenants, do everyone a favor. Take a few minutes soon and

read the regulations. You may be surprised at what you'll find and besides, it avoids a lot of turmoil for a lot of people...for you, for your neighbors and for all of the rest of us who are charged with the enforcement duties and dealing with the aftermath of enforcement. Please don't wait until you receive one of the one hundred plus letters that the Covenant Protection Officer sends out every month before you educate yourself on what is and isn't permitted by the Battlement Mesa covenants.

You can find the BMSA covenants online at www.battlementmesacolorado.com.

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