

Despite uphill battles- 2016 Onsite “Manager of the Year” displays mountain climber’s determination



Scott Ellison CMCA, AMS accepts 2016 National Onsite “Manager of the Year” Award.

As a long-time resident of Colorado, Scott P. Ellison knows what it is like to climb uphill. And so, when Ellison became the on-site manager of the Flying Horse Community in Colorado Springs, he saw immediately a “mountain” of issues needing prompt attention.

Equipped with professional skills honed over the course of a career that started in the outdoor resort industry, Ellison took up Flying Horse’s challenges with the same determination that had taken him to other mountaintops—one well-planned step at a time.

The first and most apparent challenge at the Flying Horse Community was to build trust. Four prior managers had come—and left again—in just two years, so Ellison’s first task was to break the pattern. With nearly a thousand homes clustered into more than ten separate villages, Flying Horse is not an easy place to build community. Ellison first focused on communication, sending emails every other week to everyone. With

his encouragement, the Association Board invested nearly \$30,000 in fun activities, including concerts, a community BBQ, and holiday parties. Gradually, these steps and others built trust among the residents and with their manager.

Trouble with Association finances posed a second challenge. Ellison immediately began revamping the Association’s books, creating separate operations statements for each village and getting a handle on expenses. Then the auditor raised a warning flag. Because of inaccuracies and other problems, the audit and tax filing fee would be increased by 65%. Ellison convened a meeting of all parties—including the auditor—and developed a two-page plan. In the end, the audit went smoothly and the auditor thanked Ellison for his support. As Ellison the mountain climber puts it, “I scaled another fourteener.”

A third challenge facing Flying Horse Community was the deterioration of its outdoor landscaping and amenities. Not coincidentally, the association’s maintenance reserve

funds had also eroded to a dangerous extent. One village had not increased its assessments since it was founded in 2008—with the predictable result that a once-stellar outdoor environment was starting to look ragged. Ellison and his Association’s board addressed the situation by increasing assessments and by finding ways to reduce costs.

A close look at maintenance practices soon revealed some cost-saving opportunities- acres of wood mulch that had to be purchased and refreshed annually. Ellison replaced it all with locally-sourced, long-lasting Rocky Mountain rocks. A costly tree replacement program soon was supplemented by a program of intensive tree care. Pruning, fertilization and insect control have already begun to conserve one of the Association’s most valuable and attractive assets—its trees—and in the process, reduced substantially the cost of tree replacement.

Challenges continue at the Flying Horse Community, and so, we trust, will the energetic and professional leadership of Scott P. Ellison.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016 NATIONAL "MANAGER OF THE YEAR" WINNERS!

ON-SITE MANAGER

SCOTT ELLISON

FLYING HORSE HOA
GREENWOOD VILLAGE, CO



Front Row (L-R): Lynelle Glysson, Michele Gracia, Scott Ellison, Dean Lerner, Matthew Kopchak, Mary Arnold
Back Row (L-R): Richard Egan, Paige Daniels, Robert Nordlund, Julie Adamen, Janett McMillan, Kurtis Peterson

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