

Camelot, the HOA

*by Dennis Payton Knight*

*The rain may never fall till after sundown*

*By eight, the morning fog must disappear*

Frederick Loewe wrote the lyrics and Alan Jay Lerner set them to music for the play, Camelot, that opened on Broadway in 1960. It is a lively musical about Camelot Gardens, a popular homeowner's association where King Arthur is the honcho of the board of directors and chairman of the one-man policy committee. He keeps some knights around the table to take work orders, post violation notices and tend to the shrubbery.

The rules are simple in Camelot. Not only is daytime rain forbidden, but heat waves in July and August are against policy, and there is a legal limit to the amount of snowfall. Winter cannot come until December and must exit March the second on the dot. Rain can only fall after sundown, and yet by nine p.m. the moonlight must appear. All to assure there never will be a more congenial spot for happily-ever-aftering than what Camelot has to offer.

In Camelot, an upholstered Barcalounger that adds congeniality to a living room is verboten on a lanai, as is a refrigerator to chill a fellow's stout. The King says it's only a coincidence that his cousin Sir Percival is a lobbyist with the Ajax lawn chair and ice bucket company.

It is also against the congeniality of the good king to hang out on the lanai one's unmentionables or any other item of clothing or bedding. The reason for this rule is also uncertain, baffling the population of Camelot who grew up sleeping between sheets that had been dried on clotheslines in the great outdoors. But then again, Sir Percival also lobbies for the Acme washer and dryer outfit and he is personally very attached to the notion of happily-ever-aftering. Just saying.

One of his recent decrees came the day after Arthur's bull terrier Spike got his automatic leash caught up in the king's carriage and retracted the old man back to his Barcalounger in the turret at Centerpoint. Henceforth, all canines, whether royal or plebian, must take their walks on a congenial but non-retractable six-foot leash. Velvet is optional.

Camelot! Camelot! I know it gives a person pause, but in Camelot, Camelot, those are the legal laws.

In Camelot, our congenial feathered friends, the birds, are always welcome. They may perch, warble and tweet musically in the trees, but must mind their manners, specifically about where they drop their – forgive me -- droppings, avoiding at all costs jeweled carriages and crowns.

There are, however, limitations on what *are* birds; for instance, in Camelot, geese are not considered birds nor are ravens. Woodpeckers are, but are asked to do their pecking elsewhere or risk a citation.

Squirrels are welcome, too. Their scampering is congenial to observe, although the King has never understood the object of said darting about. If he knew they were scampering off with his royal nuts he might not be so congenial.