



July 2008



The BuzzLetter



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Dog Days of Summer (July 3rd - Aug 15th)

In 1813 Brady's Clavis Calendarium described Dog Days as an evil time when the sea boiled, wine turned sour, dogs grew mad, and all creatures became languid, causing to man burning fevers, hysterics and phrensies.



Though named after the Dog Star Sirius, our current canine friends had nothing to do with the original designation. In ancient times people believed that the star caused hot, sultry weather combining with common summer diseases of the Age making it very unhealthy and uncomfortable in July and August.

All that, of course, was before air-conditioning and modern medicine that has pretty well eliminated the worst diseases of both man and dog. But hot weather can still get you down in July and August, Dog Days or not.

Note: *Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky.*

~

Fireworks aren't all that light up a July night!

Little Johnny, and his grandfather entered the vacation cabin, and kept the lights off until they were inside to keep from attracting pesky insects.



Still, a few fireflies followed them in. Noticing them before his grandfather did, Little Johnny whispered, "It's no use, Grandpa. The mosquitoes are coming after us with flashlights."

Midsummer Night Itch

*Mosquito is out,
it's the end of the day;
she's humming and hunting
her evening away.
Who knows why such hunger
arrives on such wings,
it's the nature of things.*

~N.M. Boedecker



If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito.

~ Betty Reese

July Project



Charcoal Crystal Garden

Put several pieces of charcoal briquettes in a bowl. Mix:

- 1/4 cup (60 ml) water
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) laundry bluing
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) table salt (not iodized)
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) ammonia

Stir well and pour over the briquettes, making certain they are sticking up from the liquid. If you want, sprinkle with mercurochrome, colored inks, or food coloring. Wait - and watch as the crystals grow into amazing colorful mounds.

~

Getting Technical Segway used for security



The upright "scooter" known as the Segway Human Transporter has been a hit with police and security forces, with more than 100 departments signed on as customers and many others testing the device.

At the Los Angeles Union Station parking garage, thieves used to break into about five cars a week. Security officials bought 19 Segways and solved the problem. According to the head of security, "The first day that one of the security officers was on the Segway was pretty much the last day there was a break-in."

CHALK TALK - Signers pledged all for freedom!



America's founding fathers faced a dangerous future when they signed the Declaration of Independence that July in 1776.

Eventually, some of the signers would lose their lives in the war of revolution. Others would suffer the loss of their families, their security, and their fortunes. But they valued liberty above material things and personal safety. They pledged: "For the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of the Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor."

Few Americans are aware of the sacrifices they made. Nine of the 56 signers fought and died from wounds in the war or shortly thereafter. Five signers were captured by the enemy as traitors and were tortured before they were killed. More than one lost his wife and mother of his children in the war. Two lost sons, and the sons of two others were captured. Twelve had their homes ransacked or burned. Several lost personal fortunes in the war and died penniless.

They were selfless, these lawyers, businessmen, and farmers. While we do not know the fate of every signer of the Declaration of Independence, we do know that many paid a very dear price for our freedom.

~ Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Historians

Education Matters

TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS

Children need good social skills in order to succeed; otherwise, those without manners will lose out and never know why. Students are learning manners from us whether we are teaching them or not. As Robert Fulghum (*All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*) said: *Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you.*

Here are two simple behaviors to start teaching:

1. **Being polite goes a long way** toward making and keeping friends and diffusing hostilities; e.g.,
 - smiling, saying please and thank you
 - holding the door for someone



Have your child give examples of polite behavior and ways they have been polite and role-play situations in which they should make an effort to be polite. This teaches awareness.

Have them practice in real life and discuss the outcome. Does it make them feel more comfortable, happier, safer? When *they* are being polite? When someone is polite to *them*?

2. **Acting appropriately for the situation** can help teach your child to succeed in reaching goals, get better grades or be invited to social events and later on, better jobs and promotions. Brainstorm appropriate behavior for various settings:

- Teach them to listen/speak when spoken to, not talking about private things in public, and looking at the person they are speaking with.
- Teach them to focus on making small talk about appropriate, positive topics, giving a compliment, and receiving a compliment graciously.
- Ask/suggest ways to remember to smile, stand up straight, or get rid of the chewing gum when they want to be taken seriously.

Teach and practice even while traveling.

Teaching Summer Fun Activities

* **Seed spittin'** - How far can you spit a watermelon seed? Lee Wheelis, world-champion seed-spitter, sent one sailing 68 feet 9 inches. Quoted in *Better Homes and Gardens*, he tells how to do it: Relax with legs slightly bent, one foot a little ahead of the other. Hold your arms out to help balance. Bend back at the waist while keeping your body aligned. Aim your head up.

Take a deep breath and hold it. Fold your tongue into a U-shape for a launching chute. Form a small

tight-cheeked "O" with your lips. Then blow hard and fast. It takes some practice, but watermelons have lots of seeds.

* **Catching fireflies** - Help your kids make delightful firefly lanterns for the picnic table. Give each one a jar with holes punched in the lid for air, then show them how to gently catch fireflies.

Fireflies are harmless nocturnal beetles that prey on aphids and other garden pests. Release them unharmed after a while, which teaches kindness.



Travel Log/Tips:

Most popular places to visit in the U.S.

(based on figures from the National Park Service):

The Mall of America, MN, 35 million
Disney World, FL, 29 million
Great Smoky Mtns. Nat'l Pk, 9 million
Grand Canyon National Park 4.4 mil.
Statue of Liberty 4.3 million
Holocaust Museum, Wash. DC, 2 mil.
Mackinac Island, MI, 1 million
Isle Royale National Park, MI, 24,843

Where would *you* like to go?

Packing Tips

- ◆ **For boating:** Soda crackers. They calm stomachs.
- ◆ **For hiking:** A bandanna. Soak it in water and put it around your neck to stay cool.
- ◆ **For camping:** Local emergency numbers. In some remote areas, 911 doesn't work.

Mobile emergencies!

The worldwide Mobile Emergency Number is 112. If you find yourself out of the coverage area of your mobile network and there is an emergency, dial 112 and the mobile will search any existing network to establish the emergency number for you, and interestingly, this number 112 can be dialed even if the keypad is locked. Try it out.

Hidden Battery Power

Imagine your cell battery is very low. To activate, press the keys *3370#. Your cell will restart with this reserve and the instrument will show a 50% increase in battery.

This reserve will get charged when you charge your cell next time.

Free Cell Directory Service

Cell phone companies are charging us \$1.00 to \$1.75 or more for 411 information calls when they don't have to. Most of us do not carry a telephone directory in our vehicle, which makes this situation even more of a problem. When you need to use the 411 information option, simply dial: (800) FREE 411, or (800) 373-3411 without incurring any charge at all.