

The Dog Days of Summer

By Kathryn Tatnall Youth Services Librarian

Did you know the term “Dog Days” refers to the heat and humidity of the mid-summer months of July and August here in the Northern Hemisphere? Most sources agree that Dog Days occur in mid-to-late summer, but the exact dates can vary from source to source because they are tied to the dawn rising of the star Sirius, also known as the Dog star, and they change over time. The Old Farmer’s Almanac considers the Dog Days to begin on July 3 and end on August 11, which is typically the worst of the summer’s heat. I always picture a dog lying out on the front porch or on cold tiles of the kitchen floor trying to stay cool whenever I hear the term. Which led me to plan a dog-themed storytime last week. It also led me to want to share some books about dogs that you might enjoy during these “Dog Days” of summer.

Short Dog, Long Dog: a Book of Opposites by Anna Hrachovec a picture book filled with the author’s knitted creations. Hrachovec is a designer and artist who has knitted the most colorful and adorable collections of dogs to convey the concept of opposites. My favorites include “Hot dog, cold dog, cheerful or dour” dogs towards the back of the book.

Some Dog! by Mary Casanova tells the tale of an old basset hound named George. George has a good life. He has a place to rest his head as his owner reads the paper, the scent of a thousand things to smell as the other owner chops wood, and when they go fishing still and steady George never rocks the boat. And then a stray dog shows up and changes everything.

When Digz, the dog, met Zurl, the squirrel, she teased him, and he chased her down until he saw the fear in her eyes. Three years earlier he had been a small pup in the shelter feeling the same way until Mrs. Pritcher adopted him. Now he is the king of the garden barking and baring his teeth at a little squirrel. In that moment he knew he didn’t want to hurt Zurl, so he apologized. Zurl apologized for letting her temper get the best of her and for teasing him and they became friends. *When Digz the Dog Met Zurl the Squirrel* by Chris Pine is a heart-warming story about friendship and love. The library owns it in picture book and Wonderbook formats.

Baily is no ordinary dog, in fact, he is the top dog at Champlain Elementary School. He loves to read, and math is his favorite subject, along with lunch and recess. When he’s around, school can be a bit unpredictable. If only he could learn not to eat his own homework! If you’re looking for an imaginative and funny book, pick up *Baily* by Harry Bliss.

If you are looking for books with more words and less pictures check out a series called *A Dog’s Purpose Puppy Tales* by author Bruce Campbell. There are several books in the series all about puppies. All the stories are written from the puppy’s perspective. *Toby’s Story* is about a beagle puppy who is the last of the litter to be adopted because

he is not as active as his litter mates. That doesn't bother his new owner, Mona. She takes Toby to the nursing home where her mother works. As he comforts the residents of the nursing home daily, Toby slowly discovers his purpose in life. This heartwarming series includes illustrations by Richard Cowdrey. These are sweet stories that dog lovers will enjoy.

Cat Warren was thrilled when the breeder called to let Cat know that her dog had given birth. Cat and her husband would soon have a beautiful German Shepherd puppy. They were so happy they celebrated. The first night Solo was home with them Cat cried all night. Solo wasn't her dream dog; he was a nightmare. He flunked out of every obedience class and had a terrible time around other dogs. Cat had no idea what to do with him until a trainer asked her what she wanted Solo to do. The trainer who had asked the question also answered it by testing Solo's ability as a Cadaver dog. *What The Dog Knows* by Cat Warren is about Solo's journey, the training, and the science behind scent work and how dogs use their noses to do amazing things.

The last book on my list is *The Dog Encyclopedia* by Merriam Garcia. This book features over 100 ACK registered breeds as well as dog breeds that are known but non-registered breeds such as the Goldendoodle and the Puggle. The pages feature facts about each dog and special considerations for the breed. It also features beautiful photos of the dogs as puppies and at full size. My favorites are the Bernese Mountain Dog and the Newfoundland. Well, really, I love them all!

Please ask at the Children's desk if there is something you're looking for and can't find right away; we're here to help. Check out our monthly programming calendar too. We offer a variety of activities for all ages, from story time to anime club for teens. You can find more information on our website at www.newulmlibrary.org on the Library Events page.

The library is located at 17 N. Broadway and is open to the public Monday-Thursday from 9:30 a.m.-8 p.m. and Friday- Saturday from 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.