

Hello *Friend of Maddax Woods*,

A bit of trivia to give you an excuse to take a break.....

As August burns bright (and hot), the 'dog days of summer' bring images of panting pooches, but the phrase originates from the ancient civilizations that tracked seasons by watching the stars. The ancient Greeks noticed that summer heat was more intense during 40 days in early summer when Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, rose and set with the sun. According to Greek mythology, Sirius was the dog of the hunter Orion. Figuring that the daytime heat with the addition of the extra warmth of Sirius (Greek for 'glowing or 'scorcher') was the cause of the extreme heat.

The Romans placed the star in the constellation Canis Major ('Greater Dog'). The Romans thus referred to the sweltering period when the rising sun and Sirius converged as the 'dies caniculares' or 'days of the dog star'. By the 1500s, the English began to call this summertime phenomenon as the 'dog days'.

The earth wobbles during its rotation, causing the position of the stars in the night sky to change slightly and over thousands of years those 'early summer' hot days are now 'late summer' days - falling mid July and August.

And not trivial at all.....the heat of summer has dried the many flowering plants and is causing those with seed pods to 'pop'. If you take a moment in the Woods to 'sit a spell' and are very quiet in a grove of plants or brush up against a plant, you may be able to hear them. It is also a good time to gather seeds. Wait until the pods are completely dry (brown and dry) to be sure that the seeds are viable for growing next year.

As the plants and small ponds are drying, our forest critter friends are scavenging where they can for food and drink. The scavenging also results in distribution of seeds and berries in new places - hence the many plants that appear voluntarily next spring that you did not plant yourself. Monthly work parties - the third Saturday of each month - August 17 - are keeping the weeds at bay and the gardens fresh.

The West Linn Arts & Culture Commission is seeking entries for this year's '*Inspired by West Linn*' program. This curated show will be held at the West Linn Library during October 2024. Open to all ages and media, the work will showcase art inspired by locations throughout West Linn. [Deadline to apply is August 31! Check the West Linn Arts & Culture Commission for more information.](#) Maddax Woods has many interesting viewpoints and features that inspire. Take a walk through the Woods and see how creative you can be!!!!

And lastly, a safety note.....with the receding river water levels it is possible to walk across the channel to Goat Island. The herons have now departed so the area under the nests is no longer restricted. Volunteer work groups have used this time to trim the ivy from the bases of the trees that hold nests. Remember however, that the river is affected by the tides as the ocean pushes up the Columbia and the Columbia River pushes up the Willamette River.....this change in water level can catch the casual visitor unawares and result in a wet return to the mainland.

We look forward to seeing you *'In The Woods'*,
Board, *Friends of Maddax Woods*

Next Work Party - Saturday August 17 - 9:00am - Noon

*Next Board Meeting - Thursday, August 22 - 3:30pm - 5:30pm - West Linn Library/Trillium
Room*