

Poly Prep Country Day School Parents' Association

August 9, 2010

Hello Everyone:

August is the biggest vacation month of the summer. If you are going on vacation and are planning on spending some leisure time at the beach, in the mountains or at the lake, please consider looking at our reading list and enjoying some of the books that our teachers and parents have enjoyed and recommended. Reading is the perfect activity for a hot humid summer day.

Here is the Poly PA's suggested summer reading list for parents. Gail Karpf (Middle School English Coordinator and holder of the Williams Chair) compiled this list along with several of her colleagues and a few Poly parents. Thank you for all for your contributions.

- *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand
- *Outliers; the Story of Success* by Malcolm Gladwell
- *The World Is Flat* by Thomas Friedman
- *The Big Short* by Michael Lewis
- *The Girl With The Dragon Tatoo* by Stieg Larrson (first in a trilogy)
- *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan
- *Holy Cow* by Sarah MacDonald
- *What Love Comes To* by Ruth Stone
- *The Secret History* by Dona Tart
- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Gina Prince-Blythewood
- *French Lessons* by Peter Mayle
- *French Impressions* by John Littell
- *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Stout
- *Travels With Charley* by John Steinbeck
- *Let the Great World Spin* by Colum McCann
- *Gold in the Water* by P H Mullen
- *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford
- *The Help* by Kathryn Stockett
- *Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Luis Zaffon

(Reading List continues on next page)

- *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides
- *The Brief, Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz
- *Newton's Tyranny* by David H. Clark
- *The Elegance of the Hedgehog* by Muriel Barbery
- *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson
- *No More Push Parenting* by Dr. Elisabeth Gutrie
- *Odd Girl Out* by Rachel Simmons

I thought you might also enjoy a little summer trivia!

Trivia question: DO YOU KNOW WHY JULY AND AUGUST ARE CALLED THE "DOG DAYS" OF SUMMER?

The star Sirius is called the Dog Star because it is the largest star in the constellation Canis Major and is the most visible during the months of July, August, and September, after its heliacal rising. It is thought to have been the cause of very hot weather throughout recorded history.

References to the Dog Star and its connection to heat have been made in ancient Rome, Greece and Egypt with various stories to go with each civilization. The first sighting of the Dog Star in ancient Egypt was generally just before the flooding of the Nile, and it was thought to be the "watchdog" for the gods.

The feast of St. Roch (the patron saint of dogs) is on August 16, right in the middle of those dog days. The Greeks had a theory, the Europeans had a theory, but I am just glad to see it. So thank you Sirius for these lazy, humid, hot, and oh so wonderful days at the beach!

According to the Guinness Book of world records "The highest temperature ever recorded in the U.S. was in California's Death Valley. The temperature reached 134 degrees. The hottest record on Earth took place in El Aiziza, Libya. That temp was 136F."

On the next page, please find a chart provided by *The Guinness Book of World Records* of the hottest temperatures in various regions of the earth.

Table 1

[Region]	Place	Date	Degrees Fahrenheit	Degrees Centigrade
World (Africa)	El Azizia, Libya	Sept. 13, 1922	136	58
North America (US)	Death Valley, Calif.	July 10, 1913	134	57
Asia	Tirat Tsvi, Israel	June 21, 1942	129	54
Australia	Cloncurry, Queensland	Jan. 16, 1889	128	53
Europe	Seville, Spain	Aug. 4, 1881	122	50
South America	Rivadavia, Argentina	Dec. 11, 1905	120	49
Canada	Midale and Yellow Grass, Saskatchewan, Canada	July 5, 1937	113	45
Persian Gulf (sea-surface)		Aug. 5, 1924	96	36
Antarctica	Vanda Station	Jan. 5, 1974	59	15
	South Pole	Dec. 27, 1978	7.5	-14

Have a great summer and please email me with any ideas that you would like to see your Parents Association implement, and if your PA can help... we will. Stay cool and happy reading!

Regards,

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