

The Artist's Almanac

February 2007

*The ways deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off
The very dead of Winter*

Journey of the Magi- Lancelot Andrewes

Winter, at last.

We thought you'd never arrive. Yet here you finally are, with real snow, leaden skies, a fire on the stone hearth to warm the backside and hot chocolate to warm the kids who come in from sledding.

Pity those who live in perpetual springtime – theirs is the bland oatmeal of sameness. In Sam Johnson's words, *The great source of pleasure is variety. Uniformity must tire at last, though it be the uniformity of excellence. We love to expect; and, when expectation is disappointed or gratified, we want to be again expecting.*

Floridians fly to Vermont for the snow, New Englanders to Miami to escape it. We in Middle Tennessee wait for spring to come to us, our anticipation heightened by the late arrival of our winter. The mournful cedars and rock-hard ground set a perfect stage for the display of February Gold to burst forth in two weeks.



photo by Jack Masters

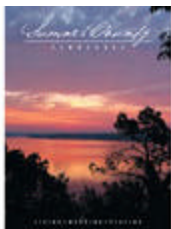
The artist locates at last the 1784 pioneer trace crossing above Hendersonville, with the old Burwell house in the background.

Ash Wednesday looms, and on Fat Tuesday we shall savor the last of the fruitcake our Kentucky cousin sent us for Christmas. A Greek restaurateur I knew observed Orthodox Lent with a Black Fast, taking only enough solid food only on Sundays to keep him alive. What an Easter he had!

For the artist the long quiet winter afternoons are precious – a seedtime, to plan and plant ideas. What will the year hold, when flowers and colors overwhelm us with their abundance and every child of our gardens demands its due admiration?



A few copies of this book with stunning pictures of Sumner County and its people are still available. The best way to order is through the link below, though for local natives they are still available at Treasure Island Books on the square in Gallatin, tel.451-7315.



Sumner County: Living Working Playing

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Art directed by legendary creative force Chuck Creasy, and photographed by award-winning cinematographer Jim Spitler, *Sumner County: Living Working Playing* documents in words and images the rich and dynamic beauty of life in Sumner County, Tennessee. Essayist Bill Puryear introduces the volume in the evocative voice that fans of his weblog www.billpuryear.com have come to know and love, while prolific news columnist Tena Jamison Lee brings her comprehensive knowledge of Sumner County and its residents into exquisite focus.

Upcoming Shows

March 9-10 – Junior Service League of Gallatin, Bluegrass Country Club,
Hendersonville, TN

November 30-December 2 – Fine Art In Brentwood – Brentwood Academy, Brentwood,
TN

www.billpuryear.com