

The Artist's Almanac

February 2010

*Winter lies too long in the country towns;
hangs on until it is stale and shabby, old and sullen.*

Willa Cather

February is the quiet month, unless you are in New Orleans for Mardi Gras. Lent begins the 17th, against a somber background here of weatherbeaten countryside. Piles of dirty salt line the roads, evidence of three snows in as many weeks. On one day this week there was snow on the ground in 49 of the 50 states. Quiet snow softens both sounds and the landscape, until it melts and the mud takes over.



Global warming continues its retreat, even as good wife hobbles across the frozen ground to refill the bird feeders. She hobbles because she got too frisky with a sled in the snow, lost control and rammed her foot into a tree. Luckily she didn't go down head first. Grace tried to dissuade her at the top of the slope and here demonstrates her doubts: *are you sure you know how to do this, Grandma?*

Afterwards we built forts and had pitched snowball battles, then retired to the house to dry out before the fire and sip hot chocolate with marshmallows. A great winter day.



Winter is popular in our house, as a season for reading good books and long walks in the woods, when it is not too cold or wet. For some birds and people winter is time to migrate. As T. S. Eliot wrote,

I read much of the night, and go south in the winter.



Arizona Biltmore

I went to Phoenix four days this February, as I do every winter for a conference of foundation investment managers. But I was glad to get home from paradise to the familiar sight of our barn in the snow. I am thankful we have four seasons.

The Almanac this month features a video presentation of a walk and interview in the woods on a bright day last November along the major old pioneer road featured in our recently published book, *Founding of the Cumberland Settlements*. Join us in this ramble on ***Tennessee Crossroads*** on the following television channels at these times

- WNPT Nashville – Channel 8 - Thursday Feb 25th at 7PM and Sunday Feb 28th at 10AM
- WKNO Memphis – Thursday February 25th at 7:00 AM
- WLJT Martin – Thurs. Feb 25th at 8:00PM and Sat. Feb 27th at 11:00 AM
- WCTE Cookeville – Sat. Feb 27th at 9:00 AM
- WETP Knoxville and Tri-Cities – Sat. Feb 27th at 6:30 PM
- WCTI Chattanooga – Friday Feb 26th at 11:30PM

For those of you beyond the signal of these stations or who miss the broadcast, the video will go to YouTube a week or so after the air date in Nashville. To access YouTube, you can go through the web site www.tennesseecrossroads.org. Once the show has been successfully uploaded to YouTube, there will be a link button beside your info listing. Or, just go to YouTube and enter Tennessee Crossroads and that should take you to their YouTube channel. It takes a week or so after the airdate to get it uploaded. Once the show is uploaded we will put a link on this web site to the Tennessee Crossroads page or the YouTube site.

We look forward to you joining us on this voyage of exploration.