

Summer is over. Midafternoon today, September 22nd, was the beginning of autumn, or fall, the three months of progressively later sunrises and earlier sunsets.

This is a fact of Nature that is distressing for many people. They view the shorter days and lower temperatures that mark the season as depressing. Some of these folks probably are afflicted with SAD (seasonal affective disorder). A “happy light” that beams full spectrum light into a person’s face helps some of the people with this disorder. Physical activity, getting out into the cold, fresh winter air, also seems to alleviate symptoms for some. And, I can sympathize with these folks.

Most warm weather people, though, just plain prefer spring and summer. And an even greater number love the colorful autumns we experience in this part of the country. I accept that fact, but I really don’t understand it.

Once the leaves have fallen, the country opens up, and we have more dark weather. I’m not ashamed to admit that this weather, and the snow of winter are “my seasons.” I wonder why. more people don’t feel this way. I love black and white photographs, and the stark beauty of a bare maple tree with a winter moon shining has the same effect. From the first of November until the first of March, I am nearly always happy with the weather.

Recently, I read something that may provide a little insight into this preference. Winter lovers, someone said, are introverts who would rather huddle in a corner with a good book to read or a cat to pet than interact with others.

I plead guilty to that charge. But, it is also the crispness of a beautiful winter day, or the power of a snowstorm that is compelling. A clear winter night with stars that seem to draw our eyes to the heavens is nothing to sneeze at, either. And cold-weather activities seem to be good for us. We can eat more without gaining weight—after all, it takes calories to keep warm—and many of us also find that winter provides us with a calmer, less frenetic lifestyle. That doesn’t hurt, either.

But, then, of course, to those of you who think I’m completely nuts—here’s the proof you need—I like the smell of skunk, too.