

*The following article appeared in The Springfield Republican and on MassLive.com on August 20, 2008.*

## Scott Prior

Scott Prior is one of the very talented artists that add to the rich cultural life of the Pioneer Valley. Originally from a small town north of Boston, he came here to attend the University of Massachusetts as an Astronomy major. However, after struggling with the math requirements of the program, he shifted gears to art, something for which he had always displayed a natural gift: “It was fun and I was good at it!” In summers during college, he worked as a dishwasher on Cape Cod – until he found that he could sell watercolors to passers-by and make a much more lucrative income.

Scott graduated from UMass Amherst with a degree in printmaking in 1971, and after graduation, chose to stay in the area. He started out working part-time while he took commissions for artwork, and participated in local gallery shows. He also met some other artists living locally who became good friends – a kind of support group. Gradually, Scott’s artwork became more and more profitable as he received notoriety beyond the Pioneer Valley, to the point where he no longer needed to work part-time – he was a full-time artist.

“I suppose I could have moved to Boston or New York City, but the Pioneer Valley has always been comfortable for me,” said Scott. And clearly living here hasn’t held him back... Scott has shown extensively in one-person and group shows in the U.S. and abroad, and is represented by galleries in both Boston and New York. Scott also has exhibited in the Fine Arts Center at his alma mater, and in 2001 was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus by the UMass Amherst Alumni Association.

Now, son Ezra is at UMass Amherst – majoring in English. Scott said he didn’t try to influence his choice, but acknowledged “I had a good experience there, and thought it was a good choice for him.” The Pioneer Valley attracts many gifted people who choose to reside here, like Scott. Between the beautiful surroundings, the rich cultural life, the academic community, and diversity of both people and employment opportunities, it’s a place that many of us choose to call home. Like Scott said, “It’s comfortable here.”



*Scott Prior*

*Prepared by the UMass Amherst Alumni Association. For more information go to [UMassAlumni.com](http://UMassAlumni.com).*