



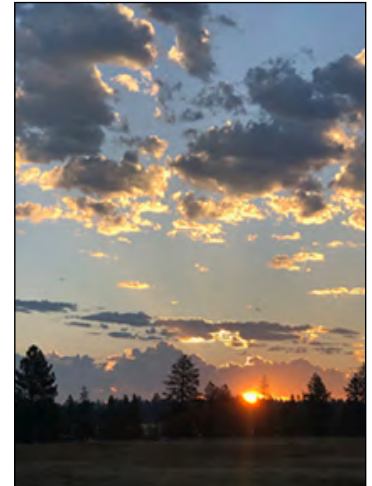
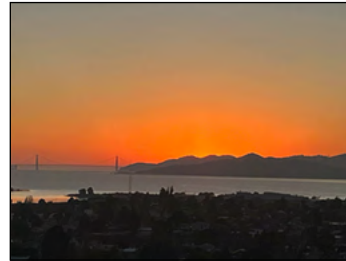
# Community Outreach — Oakland Veterans

## Big Sky Painting

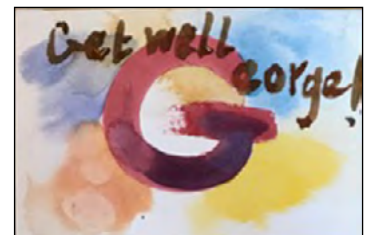
Dramatic big skies was the project for the Oakland Vets. We had four photographs of dramatic skies as possible subjects. Michael Friedland warned us that they would be very challenging and they were. The problem is moving from dark to light in smooth transitions, small spaces, and maintaining soft edges. Then surrounding these billowing shapes in a continuous lost and found edged sky. In addition, we painted “get well” cards for a group member who was in a rehab facility with a broken leg.

We chose our big sky source photos and began painting with the lightest of drawings. A big sky means a low horizon line, at least two-thirds the way down the paper. Sheila recommended wetting areas and leaving dry spots in the middle for soft edges leading to a white section of a cloud. Each attendee focused on their particular source photo. It would have been easier had we worked together on one source photo and done a “paint along.”

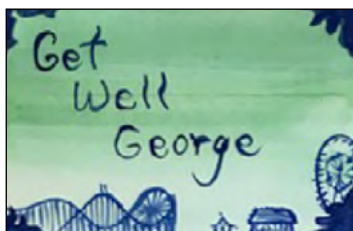
Source Photos



However, the vet’s paintings came along. There was a general discussion about destinations for seeing migrating birds. One of the vets was planning to see the sandhill cranes that number 30,000 and make stopovers at Eisenberg Sandhill Crane Reserve in the delta. This inspired another vet’s “get well” postcard with a charming little painting of two cranes.



We put up our paintings and each spoke about theirs. One painter had a wonderful result that looked like a river in the sky. Some vets felt we should try the big sky again. If we did, we’d use a solo reference photo and work together to paint the big sky.



*Sheila Cain*

Co-Director, Community Outreach