



Community Outreach

VA Martinez update May 17, 2020

Let's have some good news!

The VA Martinez Recreational Therapy Department is the site where CWA Outreach has held the twice a month watercolor studio for several years. It is centrally located in a building that has three hospital units. The VA staff acted early to establish protocols to protect patients and staff. As of this writing, there are no known cases of COVID-19 in this area.

I have been having phone communications with Darlyn Phillips, our contact with the Martinez VA, as to what we can do to continue our goals of creating art for these vets in these challenging times. The postcard project (see last month's newsletter) was well received and she is working with her painters to reciprocate with postcards created by VA patients for CWA. In true military fashion we are calling this "Operation Brush Buddies." Hopefully we will soon be receiving veteran created postcards which will be posted in subsequent issues of this newsletter.

Why is art important?

Seems like an odd question to ask an artist. In the context of healing it can be an integral part of the road to wellness. A key factor is the art of imagination, that is, creating an intention then going through the steps to bring it to fruition. As artists, we all know that imagination plus planning and implementation are what we do to create a painting. The same holds true for the process of imagining wellness, creating a plan and then doing the work to achieve it. What inpatients learn often is continued once they are home, e.g., dietary plans for diabetes or exercise regimens.

On this principle, we are working to create take home packets of basic art supplies so that the veterans can continue their art once discharged. Sheila has supplied some designs that will be part of this project.

We'll keep you posted!

Maggie Metcalf

Join "Operation Brush Buddies"



Postcards for the VA

You can use your painting skills to cheer up a veteran and engage he or she in painting postcards. Cut some 4" x 6" cards from watercolor paper and paint a postcard. On the back include an upbeat message for example "We're in this Together, Separately," "We've Got This, Life is Good."

Put your postcards in one envelope and mail to the address below. The Recreational Therapy Department will distribute them. This is a great time engage our hospitalized vets in this postcard exchange program.

Mail masks postcards to:
Martinez Veterans Hospital
Recreational Therapy Department
C/O Darlyn Phillips
150 Muir Road
Martinez, CA 94553