



Community Outreach

CWA Outreach and Veterans Paint the Desert at the Vet Center



As of December 2022, CWA Community Outreach signed an agreement to work with veterans at the Oakland Vet Center on the first Friday of the month and to paint both in person and virtually on Zoom. The Oakland Vet Center is one of many Vet Centers found in major cities. Vietnam veterans felt the Veterans Administration was not addressing their problems. They organized amongst themselves and established the Vet Centers in 1978. These centers offer a whole range of assistance to veterans outside of the VA.

Our gathering on November 4, 2022, gave us a sense of their largess. We had requested a long list of materials including pigments, palettes, paper, brushes, resist fluid and resist removers...lots of stuff not dreaming that we'd receive it all for the class. However, there was a huge box with a majority of the materials we requested waiting for us upon our arrival. What a windfall! And what great hospitality we're experiencing from Vet Center director, Glynis Banks.

Once we filled the new pallets with pigments we got down to business.. The photo source we worked from was taken near Moab in Southern Utah. After a quick pencil sketch, Michael Friedland led the "paint along" by presenting a glazing

technique to create soft clouds in the sky. (Some were actually jet streams). Once the glazing was dry it was painted a second time with a second blue pigment. With the second wash still wet the clouds were lifted out with a clean, wet, thirsty brush leaving the glazed color below forming the clouds. From there we all worked down the paper, painting the rock walls then the highway and desert floor.

The class concluded with each participant commenting on their work. One liked the glowing rock walls, others their clouds. All were totally drawn into the project and lifted out of their normal life. We left with a smile on their faces.

Sheila Cain

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