THE GREAT AMERICAN PAINT IN

Artists sharing their pandemic stories

Barbara Teusink, South Carolina
HOPE

I love the intensity in this dog's hopeful gaze. Hanging onto hope has certainly felt challenging this year, but I believe hope is essential. It helps us all to have a positive outlook. Wikipedia says, "Hope is an optimistic state of mind that is based on an expectation of positive outcomes with respect to events and circumstances in one's life or the world at large." As a verb, its definitions include: "expect with confidence" and "to cherish a desire with anticipation." For me, this definitely rings true. I think there is little better to represent the concept of hope than a dog. Dogs are eternally hopeful, and I love them for that. My dogs have always been hopeful they will get to go along for the next adventure: every time I stand up, put a coat on, pick up car keys, or look outside, they are on their feet and at the door. They never get resentful or disappointed when their hopes don't come true; they just wait until the next reason to be hopeful again. They hope they will get a treat, they hope they will go for a ride, they hope it is feeding time, or time to chase a ball. They hope to be scratched or petted; they hope to go for a walk. They hope to have something to bark at. They are always hoping for something and are never disappointed or angry when they don't get what they hoped for, which happens much of the time. I love dogs and I love the hopefulness of dogs, and I try to integrate this wonderful trait into my own worldview. I am hopeful too, every day. When I look at the news, I always try to not lament our world, I hope for a better one. When I am sick, I hope to be well, when I hurt, I hope to be free of pain. When I see bad news, I hope for better news. As with many tough times faced before, we will get through these rough times too. I am hopeful it will be soon.

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