

JKß – JOY KROEGER BECKNER – JKß

classical Realism, from hounds to humans & and more!

NEWS & JOURNEYS OF JOY! :: VOL. FOURTEEN, NUMBER ONE :: JAN. 2018

*One of the real joys of the Holiday Season
is the opportunity to say
"Thank You"
and to wish you the very best for the New Year!*

Please excuse my tardiness. A commission for a 48" white oak acorn came from a classmate in late October after our 55th high school reunion on September 24th.

Nov. 14, 2017: The foam enlargement of the acorn arrives and I become a very busy girl!

Meet "A Mighty Oak".



The real White Oak Acorn – 1½" Long



The crate for the raw foam enlargement inside



DEC. 2, 2017, SATURDAY: Neighbors help us get my “17-day wonder-acorn” into my Suburban.

DEC. 3, 2017, SUNDAY: We awaken to a dead battery! AAA jumps the battery. We head for Auto Zone in Columbia, MO, where a new battery is installed. We head west for Loveland, CO, my headquarters for all things sculpture. The weather is perfect. We arrive about 8:30PM, order an Arte Pizza, and hit the sack.



“A Mighty oak”

APPROX. 24”H x 45”L x 25.5”W, BRONZE, ED. 5 & 1 AP ©2018, APPROX. 200 POUNDS

DEC. 4, 2017, MON., LOVELAND, CO: Dan Ochs, says he can start the mold later in the week. Great!

While in Loveland, I see [Nancy Palm](#) to check metals, take metals to [Dale Cisek](#) for patina, see [Mel Schockner](#) to photograph "Life's a Ball!" MS, see [Ben Cordsen](#) about a two small molds, and, see [Sheree Lambert](#) for custom foam-in place-boxes for big pieces to ship or take home.

[DEC. 7, 2017, THUR.:](#) We head east toward home and overnight in Salina, KS.

[DEC. 8, 2017, FRI.:](#) We are home and exhausted. What a whirlwind trip! Speaking of wind, this windsock is along I-70 at Arriba, CO. There are [Red Flag Warnings](#) almost ALL of the 950+ miles home!

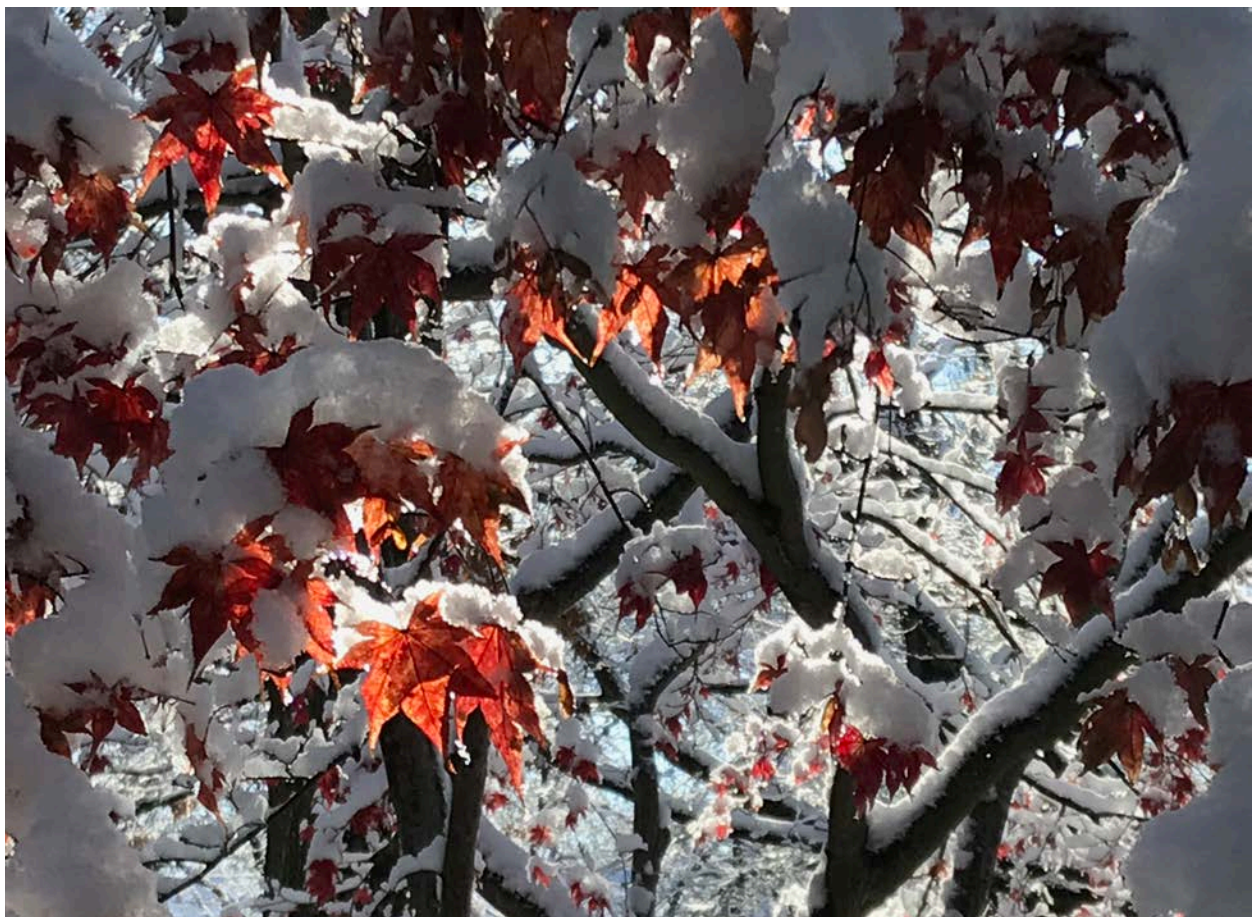


[DEC. 22, 2017:](#) The acorn has been molded. I wait to learn the wax weight from my wax pourer so I can hopefully find out that the crate that fits only through our garage door can be returned to my Loveland, CO, shipper to use to ship the bronze acorn to my classmate-customer. "A Mighty Oak" it is!

[DEC. 23, 2017:](#) Three inches of snow arrive by morning!



My first glimpse of snow out of our bathroom window. I am all smiles.



Our Japanese Maple in sunshine around noon.

Merry Christmas!



Daffodils are confused this year.

This COLD weather makes me grateful!

DEC. 27, 2017, WEDNESDAY: At around 6:45am the temperature is .9 degrees - almost one degree! By 8:11 am the temperature is 1.1 degrees!

These cold temperatures make me feel very lucky. I remember that in the late 40s, my maternal grandparents lived in a small frame house in the country, in Clinton County, IL. They had a wood stove in the kitchen to heat the house and a hand pump to draw water by the sink. Yes, they had an outhouse. We are incredibly fortunate to live with a well-insulated house with indoor plumbing.

In 1929, my parents built a \$6000 brick home with 13" thick walls. The walls allowed for some insulation. It had a coal shoot and a coal-burning furnace. I remember how happy they were to install a gas furnace so the house would stay cleaner. The coal shoot room became my dad's workshop where he made copper outdoor lanterns for customers including our small subdivision. I helped by using his brake to bend the corner pieces and I cut many glass panes.

News of the Acorn

Today, I finally learn the wax weight of the acorn is 21.5 pounds. This translates to approximately 200 pounds metal weight. Thanks to Shippers Supply, FedEx will pick up the crate for return to Loveland to reuse to ship the bronze acorn to my client in May. Yay! I get my garage space back!!!



"Dreaming of Tomatoes II"

SMOOTH, 1:6 SCALE, 2 7/8" L x 1" H x 2" D, BRONZE ED. 50 & 5 AP ©2017

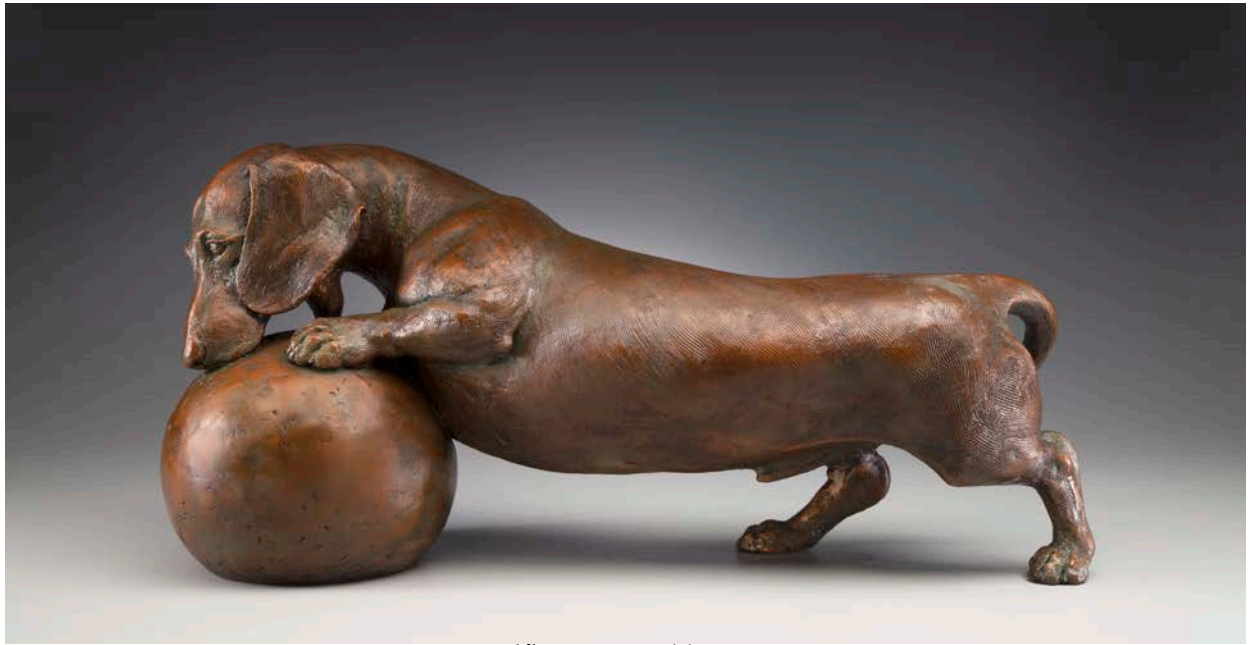


"Her Life's a Ball!"

1:6 SCALE, 4.5"L x 2 1/8"H x 1 5/8"D BRONZE ED. 50 & 5 AP ©2017
Professional photos will be taken in March.



Life's a Ball, MS



"Life's a Ball!" MS

LIFE-SIZE MINIATURE SMOOTH, 25.25"L x 11.75"H x 8"D BRONZE, ED. 5 & 1 AP ©2017

"Life's a Ball!" MS photos are by Mel Schockner.

Here the dates start to jump around a bit...



"Dear to my Heart"

Bouvier des Flandres Natural Ears

1 11/16"W x 1 3/8"H x 1"D, STERLING SILVER, ED. 5 & 1 ARTIST'S PROOF ©2008

OCT. 8, 2017: A NOVA SCOTIAN BOUVIER LOVER MAKES HER FIRST PAYMENT ON HER PENDANT!



DEC. 12, 2017; The Frank C. Wright Medal of Honor, and a welcome check for \$500 arrive. The American Artists Professional League awarded it to me for my portrayal of Lizzie as "Sweet Roll" in their 89th Annual Grand National Exhibition that was On Line.



Award for "Sweet Roll" SS, from the American Artists Professional League



"Big Heart"

HALF LIFE-SIZE, 20"H x 8"W x 12.5"D, BRONZE ED: 20 & 2 ARTIST'S PROOFS ©2009

DEC. 28, 2017: WOW! "Big Heart" earned the Betty King Wright Award of \$750 in the 16th Annual International Juried Art Exhibit at the Red River Valley Museum, in Vernon, TX! I was so busy I just opened the box today. What a nice surprise! Thank you to the sponsors and to Juror, David Band! Yes, this number, AP2/2, is available for adoption!

- About the Secondary Market -

When you or a loved one decides to downsize, kindly allow me the opportunity to buy back any of my sold out sculptures. I will give you more than an auction house and you will know you are helping the creator of the piece you have loved for many years.

A few personal musings from earlier this year...



AUGUST 18, 2017, 7:30AM: Mama, Papa, and Baby deer greet us in our circle.

(DEC. 29, 2017): Many deer here. Seven females and several fawns, cross the road as I try to exit my street!)

The Eclipse

AUGUST 21, 2017: We are in the "Path of Totality." Around noon, the Moon begins its Journey between the Earth and the Sun. By 2:39pm, just a sliver of the moon remains to the left of the sun as the 2017 Total Eclipse of the Sun concludes. What energy!

Two weeks of window painting

AUGUST 23, 2017: Pella arrives to replace our bay window as well as one of my studio doors, and two three-window panels in my studio. And, I paint sashes and our mailbox, seemingly forever. It's a two-week project!

Two weeks of painting and improving our mailbox!



SEPT. 2, 2017: Our mailbox.



SEPT. 3, 2017: SKIM, my dad's good wire brush and thick rubber garden gloves help me work magic!



Skim bubbles the four coats of oil paint.



Brian power washes the box in preparation for paint.



SEPT. 12, 2017: Our mailbox is finally clean of four layers of oil base paint. Why DID I use oil before???
The old handle is shown above.



Overnight Protection!



Thanks to my good local welder, Mike at Contractor's Welding, our mailbox has a pretty new handle!
I found the brass drawer pull at Habitat for Humanity. Our box is ready for paint!



SEPT. 18, 2017: Whew! This over two-week project is finally complete. I wait another week for the paint to cure in the 90+degree heat and, I water my thirsty vinca ground cover.

SEPT. 28, 2017, 2:22PM: Hooray! Sewer Pros just finished cabling our toilet vent from the bottom and then from the roof; both upstairs toilets now work without any sewer gas coming from the tub! Yesterday, our

plumber installed new PVC access pipes on our 1972 cast iron vent stacks. The accesses needed to be rotated so the Sewer Pros could cable. It's good to have that problem solved.

It's cool, literally! In the 70s! Today, 16 small waxes arrive from Ben Cordsen, my wonderful, relatively new, mold maker and wax pourer of 1:6 scale waxes. Yay!

Physical Therapy

OCT. 5, 2017: Last fall, while pruning invasive Japanese Honeysuckles, I fell and landed on my right knee. My knee seemed to have healed. In May, in a Pilates or yoga class with a substitute teacher, my right hip popped. It was painful, and did not feel good until this past week. It did not occur to me that my body was out of alignment, but thought the pain was from switching from one supplement to another.

In August my magical chiropractic/acupuncturist told me my hips were rotating in opposite directions front to back. By September I'd asked my chiropractor and my primary care doctor for a recommendation for a physical therapist. They both recommended Peak Spine and Sport. A referral is necessary in Missouri.

Finally, I have relief! After five bi-weekly sessions with Angela, and much exercise follow up at home, as well as daily Pilates or yoga, I can sit on my desk chair without it feeling as if a nail is coming up into my hip. A tennis ball under my right hip, while driving, and sitting anywhere helps to loosen the tight hip fascia. Yesterday I added a folded towel to my office chair and will do so in my studio, too. I need to get those waxes chased and sent to the foundry!

OCT. 10, 2017: Today brings good news and sad news. The good news: My physical therapist says my legs are the same length and my hips are level.

Sad: I learn my first husband's brother died this past Saturday while doing what he loved, piloting a small plane. Second, my kindergarten girlfriend Shirley's older sister Anita passed from cancer yesterday, Monday.

The beginning of the acorn – "A Mighty Oak"

OCT. 30, 2017: A 48" long ACORN is in my future! After my 55th high school reunion, a friend tells me he and his wife saw a large stone acorn and have an interest in a large bronze acorn for their Des Moines, IA, garden. Today they confirm and say a deposit check will be in the mail today. It's hustle time!

NOV. 3, 2017: The huge harvest moon is glorious as I drive to Mia Sorella, a favorite restaurant, for carry out: a yummy salad of shaved Brussels sprouts and yummy Fruta de Mare'. I wish I had my phone for a picture of the moon! Normally, my hair is the color of the moon, but tonight? I'd have to be a golden blond for this huge Harvest Moon.

NOV. 5, 2017, 7:14AM CDT, 64.8 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT: It is highly humid; the forecast is for thunderstorms this afternoon and evening.

I am so LUCKY to have two really GREAT DOCTORS!

NOV. 7, 2017: My primary care doc gives me a great bill of health! I do need to do weight bearing exercises to increase bone density. Yes, I am doing 50-pound leg presses after Pilates and Yoga at Wellbridge.

Nov. 9, 2017: Today I get my second good report of the week! Dr. Andrew Krainik, my arrhythmia doc who performed my ablation two years ago in December, says all is well. He wants to see me in a year and says if all remains well then, I will be on an as needed basis to see him!

Nov. 28, 2017: A friend sent me these wonderful words:

"Love should be like breathing.

It should be just a quality in you, wherever you are, with whomsoever you are, or even if you are alone. Love goes on overflowing from you. It is not a question of being in Love with someone, it is a question of being Love."

DEC. 1, 2017, AROUND 6PM: I finish my 17-day marathon sculpting of the big acorn for a high school classmate. A bit later, Brian brings in the mail and I learn from the AAPL annual show catalog that I am a Fellow of that organization. I had no idea! I am honored.

DEC. 7, 2017: 1:50PM: Brian comments that he enjoyed our whirlwind out & back trip to Loveland, CO.

Yes! And, unlike our trip in June, a bucket of shit was NOT dumped on my car! (When he rode his motorcycle home from Colorado in May, someone dumped nastiness off an overpass that hit Brian's left hand and slid up his arm. He is lucky it did not hit his helmet!) He learned that his ballistic motorcycle jacket nearly repels bullets, even when the wind is blowing at 35 mph out of the south. In Limon, he power washed his jacket and learned that it acted as an evaporative cooler and that he could get 40 miles to a washing in 103 degree heat before having to recharge it with water. We met in Hays, KS, and he left at 4-5am to beat the 100+ degree heat on the way home. With the wind, he could only average 60mph to Lawrence, KS. What a trip we had.

Tonight, we overnight in Salina, KS.

DEC. 8, 2017: In Boonville, MO, the price of gas is \$2.09 versus nearly \$2.69 gallon for regular in Loveland. Actually, in Loveland, the spread was \$2.69 to \$2.23 gallon, which is what we paid two days ago. At this rate, gas should be less than a dollar along the east coast. Wishful thinking!

Six hours after leaving Salina, KS, we are nearly home... 37 degrees. Bo's talking; it's time for a walk. It won't be long, darlin'.

DEC. 29, 2017: I finally learn the potential metal weight of the acorn. Shippers Supply says they can reuse the crate to ship it to its finally destination and arranges for FedEx to pick it up with a liftgate truck tomorrow. YAY! I can get my Suburban back in the garage!

Join us for driving adventures in Mexico

Since San Miguel now has soooooo many tourists, we drive to San Miguel de Allende a day later than usual to avoid the maddening crowds.

DEC. 31, 2017, SUN.: We drive to Sherman, TX, where we dine at Longhorn Steak House, I love the smothered chicken, without gravy or cheese, a baked sweet potato, and, this time, apple sauce. Excellent!

JAN. 1, 2018, MON.: Just after we arrive in Laredo, TX, the state shuts down I-35 due to icing. In addition, the city shut down the airport, where we saw no icing, but it was 30 degrees.

JAN. 2, 2018, TUES., 34 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT, 7:17AM: We depart the LaQuinta for Bridge One to cross into Mexico. Pedestrians on the bridge and workers in the Immigration Building are bundled warmly as the Immigration Building has no heat. Clouds blanket the sky.

Occasionally sunflowers bloom along the recently repaved 4-lane Libre (free) Road, Mexico 85. While not up to US standards, it is much improved. Brian drives 85mph.

9:09AM: We enter the Autopista, the toll road that is similar to our interstates. We are on the route of the Monarch butterflies to their winter home in Angangueo [ang' ang' eo] in the state of Michoacan. It is located in high, rugged, forested mountains, with the town in a small canyon.

Our first rest stop...

9:53AM: After paying our first Cuota, (toll) Brian takes the first Retorno (turn around) to the first rest stop across the highway. WOW! We find this wood fired oven, beautiful baked goods and coffee!



Empanadas to the left have a sort of cinnamon-like, gooey, delicious filling.



At the rest stop, musicians strum upbeat Musica on their guitars. How happy is this at 10:00 am?



Freezing fog blankets everything! It's 31 degrees. We've never seen freezing fog. The car did not ice over, but all of the plants, yuccas, cactus, mesquite trees, and grasses are covered in ice.

The temperature briefly drops to 30. The fog lifts and the beautiful grasses glow a golden yellow again. I LOVE that Mexico does not mow grass along most of its highways!



Can you see the left arrows? Each has a little solar panel attached and they blink intermittently to alert drivers that the highway slowly turns left. They're functional - and - pretty!



Brian's new ride: a 2008 Toyota FJ Cruiser

Oops! A truck overturned under an overpass. Plan B. Slight detour. Follow the truck in front of us, turn around and get back on 85.

10:36AM: We are through Monterrey headed for Saltillo on Autopista 40. It is 34 degrees and foggy. The highway is smooth.

On this chilly, drizzly day, highway workers clean up trash. Fog reappears, as does the temperature of 32 degrees. Everyone's flashers are on.



Around Monterrey we run into snow, which probably happens once ever 50 years. Many Mexicans pull over to take pictures of it.

Oops! We miss the exit to Saltillo and are headed back to Monterrey, in fog.

II:06AM: We come upon a retorno in the form of a left traffic signal. We take a tiny tour of Monterrey, make a U-turn and are headed back to the Autopista toward Saltillo. Fog persists.

II:21AM: We pay another cuota and are headed to Saltillo.



II:28AM: Here comes the sun! It's 34!



II:33AM: It's 35! Spanish Dagger Yuccas are happy the ice is melting. We turn into a valley and it's 37! Happy plants! Five minutes later it is 39 and we need sunglasses. The exit to Mexico 57 is a washboard.



11:42AM: This is as warm as we've been in two weeks, **41 degrees**! Life is good!

12:02AM: Between Monterrey and Saltillo, a distance of about 45 miles, and an upward change of altitude of 1,000 feet, we suddenly are in front of the cold front and the temperature goes from 30 degrees to 50 degrees. After freezing for two weeks it feels like the tropics.

It's **48 degrees**! We must be on the south side of the cold front. Sunglasses are on.

The Mophie charger Brian got me for Christmas works perfectly! I can charge my iPhone through the Mophie.

"La vaca" is a female bovine in Espanol. A "vaquero" is a cow herder. While a goat is "la cabra" in Espanol, Brian coins the word "goatero". We pass a goatero who is herding goats in a field next to the highway.

1:10PM: We leave the bustling busy San Pedro rest stop. Brian declares we are half way to San Miguel. Bo rests in sunshine in my lap. Mexicans speed by us as we drive 85mph.

we are warm – and – we are all happy here!

3:37PM: Mucho traffico! Everyone must be going home today. It's **70 degrees**. Brian finds a gas station with hardly a waiting line. Plus, I'm excited to find Pemex has 2 charging stations for electric vehicles! Pemex in Mexico is ahead of the curve! It's **71 degrees at 3:59**. We've gained 30 degrees in just less than four hours!



We pass a Mobil gas truck heads our direction. We thought there were only Pemex stations in Mexico.

4:49PM: At least 9 semi trucks loaded with crates of live chickens are bound for where?



4:55PM: We turn toward San Miguel de Allende.



The narrow two-lane road to San Miguel



Leafy greens grow along the road to San Miguel.

5:05PM: We enter little Los Rodriguez, home of the famous unmarked topes (to'-pays). Topes are speed bumps.



An unmarked tope toward the bottom of the photo



Two trucks block the road. It's a Mexican stand off!



5:09PM: Bo is letting us know it is “feed me” time. It will be just a few more minutes, sweet Bo,



The Salida a Queretaro into San Miguel. We are getting close!



5:36PM: A tiny alley leads down hill to Calvario.



JAN. 2, 2018, TUES., 5:38PM: We arrive at Calvario 8, our rental home away from home. Brian and I quickly unpack the vehicle and he drives across town to park and walks half an hour back. We feed Bo, try to get into our favorite little first night restaurant, El Pagaso. When the line there is long, we walk to another favorite, Berlin, and it is closed on Tuesday. We end up at a new place for good pizza.

We walk home and, oh, do we sleep!

upcoming Events

JAN. 14 - FEB. 4, 2018: MASF, 43rd Annual International Miniature Art Show of the Miniature Art Society of Florida, at The Dunedin Fine Art Center, 1143 Michigan Blvd., Dunedin, FL 34698. The Collector's Preview is January 13,

MAY 2 - 5, 2018: The Dachshund Club of America National Specialty, Columbus, OH.

Burr oak acorns are a gift from Brian's hair cutter



coming in May... "A Mighty Oak"

WHITE OAK ACORN, APPROX. 24"H X 45"L X 25.5"W, BRONZE, ED. 5 & 1 AP ©2018

*"There is no medicine like hope,
no incentive so great,
and no tonic so powerful
as expectation of something tomorrow."
Orison Swett Marden*

Many Thanks for being in my life!

*Please keep in touch!
Be well.
Peace*

Joy

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