

MM — Moments High and Low... May 24, 2018
'This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.'

TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO TODAY...

I was in a waiting room in the Albany Hospital. Jean was in the maternity birthing room with Karen and Lynn (our daughter and son-in-law). I forget who else was waiting. Granddaughter Lauren and grandson Kyle were there. It was a long wait.

A nurse came to tell us that the baby had been born. In due time we were allowed to go in to greet the baby, one at a time. Each was sworn to secrecy about whether it was a boy or girl.

It turned out that it was a boy. They named him Max James Peters. He became our youngest grandson.

Jean remembers May 25 as a high moment to be present at Max's birth.

ONE YEAR AGO TODAY...

I was in the emergency waiting room at Stanford University Hospital Medical Center in Palo Alto.

A few minutes earlier Jean had been at the foot of our motel stairs. I heard the thud of her head hitting the concrete landing. The low moment for me was holding her bleeding head while calling for help. The high moment was when Jean opened her eyes asking where she was, what happened, why was she there? She was very unhappy which she continued to express when the ambulance medics arrived. No she didn't want to be strapped to the stretcher! No she didn't want to go in the ambulance! No she didn't want to go to a hospital!

Jean was alive and kicking, I knew she would live.

I followed the ambulance to the emergency entrance. I stepped out of the car in the middle of a turn-around area. Someone came and took my car somewhere.

They didn't let me go into the emergency room but led me to the waiting room. A nurse mistook me for a patient because I had so much blood on my hand and arm. They cleaned me up. I sat down with a dozen others to wait.

It was a long afternoon for her in the emergency room while all sorts of doctors did tests and ex-rays and neurological examinations. I waited, had lunch. A nurse came out and gave me an update on what was going on. They would call me.

Meanwhile, Patrick, a grandson who was doing some post-doctoral work at Stanford University showed up. He was in time to go in with me to see Jean who was now awake with a bandaged head. A bit foggy, but aware and alert. They were waiting for a hospital room. She would be staying overnight.

It's been a year of living with what they call a "concussion and mild brain injury." She has done remarkably well. It's a slow process. She has come a long way from that scary moment but it remains an on-going journey.

Tonight we celebrate Grandson Max's 25th year. We also celebrate Jean's year of recovery. And we'll go out to the driveway where we walk 3 or 4 times a day for about 10,000 steps. She used to have to walk with a cane or walking sticks. Now she doesn't need them. We'll talk about the high moment and low moment. Sometimes she holds my arm. I like that.

Art Morgan, May 24, 2018