

Candlemark

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Time marches on.

Me, I tend to sort of stumble along behind.

Speaking of stumbling, my life took a little detour two years ago when I managed to fall off a ladder, landing square on my butt. One might have thought the amplexness of said gluteus was sufficiently maximus to cushion the fall. And one would have been wrong in that assumption.

Recovery from the seriously broken back I incurred in that little adventure was painful and lengthy; in fact, some things I used to do without thinking will never again be part of my repertoire. Fortunately, the thinking parts were not affected. I'll leave it to you to decide whether that's a good thing.

My wife and oldest daughter have been wonderful throughout my recovery. And my brother came from California to help as we moved to new digs. (And to share wine and conversation with Mary in the evenings – a wonderful respite for a care provider.)

It's been two years of changes. And now, the virus. We'll get through it to the extent that we act wisely. And meanwhile...

I've always liked the image of candlemarks, the color rings they used to put on stick candles marking the hours as the flame advanced from one to the next. They always seemed to me a metaphor for life. Once a ring was burned through that part of the candle was gone, never to return. But not forgotten, as they say. The record of the time passed lived on - if not in its original shape, then at least in the growing patterns of melted wax and the lingering scent of the burning candle.

We measure time in minutes and days but we mark its passing in the memories left behind. The memories I'll keep of the two years just past involve the pain of my injury and the loss of some good friends and family members. The stumbles of a society at odds with itself and the reality of a pandemic. But for me, selfishly speaking, they also include the pride and joy in one daughter returning to her beloved stage and another marrying the love of her life. My beloved and I moving forward into our new life in a new house that we love with space to be at once individuals and a couple. And each day I find myself leaning forward to the next ring.

The candlemarks are gone but the memories linger. And as this candle burns the memories left behind are precious.

My hope for you is that each ring is joyful and meaningful.