

“Also Lisa, hier muß du nur auf Englisch sprechen, sonst verstehen Sie Dir gar nicht.” In December 1992, exactly three months after returning from a year of study in Germany, I was in a serious car accident, giving me numerous broken bones and a **traumatic brain injury** that put me in a coma for 5½ weeks. I came out of that coma speaking the language that had been my host for 13 months, just three months previously. Thus I had to be told: Lisa, you have to speak only English here; otherwise no one will be able to understand you. I do NOT have any memory of coming home in August.

- - Three important months of my life completely lost.

My father tells me that about a month into my hospital stay, he was told to look for a nursing home for me, because I would never be self-sufficient. By God’s grace, broken bones heal and I have learned many memory helpers. However, one of the many difficulties that I continue to deal with is my struggle with safe driving. This is largely due to my double vision and trouble with depth perception. Nerves that control the movement in my left eye were damaged in the accident and the message from the nerves is not correctly translated in my brain. Also, due to the brain injury, my decision making is not swift enough to drive safely in heavy traffic. Because of the double vision I do NOT drive at night.

In 1991 and 1992, while I was a student in Germany, a country much the size of our state of MN, I depended **ENTIRELY** on public transportation and I was able to travel the country extensively.

While I was a student at the University of MN, Minneapolis I rode the transit busses often. There is a park and ride service in which I could drive to an outer Twin Cities’ suburb connecting to the transit system, however these transit lines are serviced only on **weekdays**. Thus I can’t get to weekend events in the Twin Cities. How to find the transit times and connecting bus numbers also needs to be made more easily available!

In 2018 when I went to the state capitol with my county's volunteer driver service it cost me \$180, round trip. This service is no longer available. Today I would need use the SMART Ride service of the **Sibley McCloud Auxiliary Regional Transit**. At \$2.50 a loaded mile, it would have cost me \$525 round trip to come to today's meeting to testify.

County Transit Systems need funding for capital and operating operations within Sibley and other counties. And you need to allow these systems to cross county lines. Rural Transit is lacking in MN. It needs more funding!

Transit is a small portion of the General Fund balance. I've been advocating for more funding for rural transportation systems since 1995. I've always been told that you support funding transit. I ask you today to "Put your money where your mouth is:" Please grant county transit systems more funding!

**HELP Me GET There!**

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