

Introduction

Tom Turba left the following for me to share with his former co-workers. He said that maybe reading this might help others recognize when they should seek help – sooner than later. After this, Tom's 2nd stroke, he told me that the next would be the last – it was. LABenson

What It Felt Like to Have a Stroke

By T. N. Turba, 2/15/2010

As you all know, I had a stroke. I'm doing well, all things considered. There's a long road to recovery ahead, but it's better to be on that road than the alternative. Each stroke is different. I'm lucky that I do not seem to have lost any memory or cognition. My right eye has a long way to go to get back to normal. One of things I have done is to write down what I remember leading up to the stroke.

Friday, Jan 22, 2010, I sort of woke up and realized that I had been having a dream about having a stroke. My left arm felt tingly like it was asleep, but the tingliness did not go away as quickly as I thought it should. I went back to sleep and dreamt about other things. I didn't think about it until later. After my wife went swimming, I got up, turned the computer on, did my morning business, checked email, got on the treadmill, took a shower, and ate breakfast. Everything felt fine.

I went down to the Scout Office to drop off some checks and a plaque which we had gotten from the Costa Rican Scouts during their visit here over the holidays. After leaving the Scout office, I turned North onto Western Ave. and went to the stop sign. There was a lady already at the intersection to my left, it seemed to take her forever to go ahead and make the turn. After she did, I went forward but seemed to be approaching her too fast as she came to the next stop sign across the bridge. I put on the brakes quickly, stopped, and waited a long time for her to turn left again. We went forward to the intersection with Dale and went through the green light. I thought, Oh No (as she got on the I-94 ramp), I have to follow her. I felt relieved as she merged left, while I was going to take the Snelling exit on the right.

Once on Snelling, I drove up to Midway Parkway by the State Fair grounds where I turned right to go to a house where I was to pick up an answering machine and some VHS tapes for the Scouts. When I arrived, I saw the lady outside, waved to her, then turned onto the side street as I could not park on the street in front of the house. It was then that I wondered what to do. Should I park and walk over to the house, turn around and park on the other side of the street, or park in her driveway? A simple set of choices, but I wasn't sure which to choose. I parked in the driveway, but there was no clear way to get to where the lady was. I walked on the sidewalk around to the front, then walked on the icy, snowy pavement to the ladies door and got the box and bags of stuff. Returning, I was being very careful on the icy pathway. The thought came to me that I looked like an old man carefully walking on ice. Which is what it was, it felt surreal.

When I got to the car, everything felt fine. I threw the stuff in, drove up Snelling, then over on Hwy 36 to meet some friends for lunch at Davanni's. Lunch was fine talking about the most recent people that had been laid off, how things were going for everyone and just things in general. After a while I decided it was time to leave as I was planning to meet someone else at the VFW in Roseville.

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When I left Davanni's, I decided to take the back way on Co. Rd. C to the VFW. Although it's quicker to go on Hwy 36, I just didn't like the idea of faster traffic and merging. After going across Snelling on Co. Rd. C, I was in the right lane and approaching the next stop light. The light changed just before I got there. I stepped on the gas and went by the two cars in the left lane as I have done many, many times before. This time, however, I had the distinct feeling that I was taking a chance as neither of the cars was speeding up. I could tell that everything was safe, but it just didn't feel that way.

When I got to the VFW, I went inside via the back door as usual and went to the corner of the bar where my friends were sitting. There was an empty place on the corner but no chair there. What should I do? Either I get one from a table, take from the corner (which is closer, but not one that I want), or maybe there is another option I'm not thinking of. One of the guys said he's leaving, and I can have his chair, so the problem is solved.

I sat down, ordered a beer, and pulled out some money. When the change came back, I notice that I can't see what it is, but it does not seem right. I pick it up and see that it's two twenties, a five and some ones. I thought I had put down a 20 but must have put down a 50. It's not the first time I have done that. We continue talking and after a while I notice I can't focus on the face of my friend on the right. I can see the people across the bar fine, the guy to my left, and the Dow Jones numbers on the TV in back of me. It then all seems to clear up.

At about 3:00 p.m., after the Dow had closed, my friend left and I got up to go to the bathroom. I feel like I have had much more than two beers. I finish in the bathroom, get a drink of water and feel better. When I go outside I feel funny but got in the car anyway. I'm not sure if I should drive home. I close one eye and everything pops back to normal.

I drove out of the parking lot, carefully entered the traffic on Lexington and drove the few blocks home. By the time I get home I can see fine, I park the car, put the stuff from the back seat in the garage, tell my wife I'm home, put my coat away, activate my computer to check email, and start reading messages.

After deleting the first piece of garbage mail, I start reading a message from a guy that has some speakers for me and some other stuff. I get the overwhelming feeling that something is wrong, and I should not go out of the house. I tell my wife something does not feel right. She comes in, looks at me and calls the doctor to see if I should be brought in. It is quickly decided that an ambulance should be sent!

It seems like almost instantly they are there. They look at me and decide that I should be brought to the emergency room. They ask if I can walk, and I say "Sure". I walk out of the house with them, down the icy steps, across the icy driveway and hop on the gurney. They put me on oxygen, put in an intravenous line, and drove me to Regions Hospital. When we get there, I'm feeling fine. Everything seems perfectly normal, but once they get me in the emergency room everything seems to start going bad.

My vision is getting worse, some noises seem extremely loud, and I started losing function on my left side. They did a CT scan then the doctors whisked me away to the operating room where they do angiograms. They proposed to do an angiogram to find out where the problems may be located. They told me of the dangers of the procedure and that they might be able to find the spot and dissolve it. I told them I was not afraid of a reaction to the dye, as I had had an angiogram 8-years ago for a heart attack. I was not sure of the other dangers.

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The only thing I remembered is that I had heard that they should start treatment as soon as possible to remove any clots. They did the angiogram, found a blockage, but did not try to dissolve it as they could not tell how old it was and could make it worse by trying to clear it.

They ended the angiogram, removed the access entry from my right leg, but then had to wait for the site to stabilize before giving me the blood thinners. For me, it may have been better if they had just given me the blood thinners, but we will never know.

In looking back, I feel that I should have started recognizing things sooner, probably when I arrived at the VFW. In thinking about strokes and recognizing when someone is having one, I never thought about self diagnosis. Education has been focused on recognizing symptoms in someone else, and the kind of symptoms I was having were not what I normally would think of as a stroke. I also felt a primal instinct that I should go to the safe place of my home. I'm sure this was influencing my decision-making process.

Epilogue:

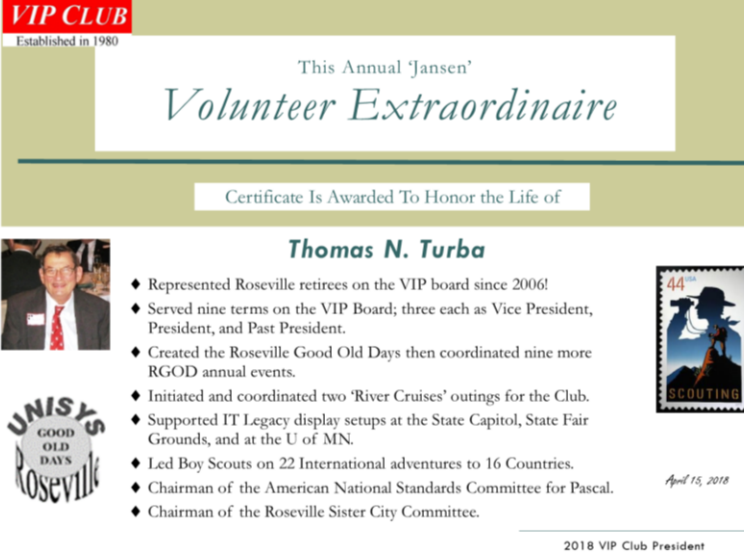
From the Club's May 2018 newsletter: "Tom passed away on April 5th at age 74 with his beloved wife Virginia by his side. After retiring from UNISYS Roseville, Tom joined the VIP Club Board as Vice President. He then served us as President for 2009/10/12 and Past President for 2011/13/14. In 2007 he initiated the Roseville Good Old Days event then coordinated those through 2017 even as a 2nd stroke limited his mobility."

"Mr. Turba was a cold war veteran; he was graduated from the Defense Language Institute as a Spanish Linguist then worked with the Naval Intelligence Services and National Security Agency (NSA). After developing special crypto systems for NSA; he joined Sperry/UNISYS for a 34-year career that included several software patents."

"Tom and Virginia raised their sons in Roseville where Tom volunteered as Boy Scout leader. This leadership continued for a couple of decades after their sons graduated, including the Silver Beaver award from the North Star Council and representing MN on international scouting committees.

In recognition of this community service, on April 4th, 2018, the VIP Club had resolved to present Tom with a Volunteer Extraordinaire award. Sadly, presented posthumously to Virginia at Tom's April 15th celebration of life at the Roseville VFW.

Tom, we will miss your wisdom!
LABenson"



The certificate is titled "This Annual 'Jansen' Volunteer Extraordinaire" and is awarded to Thomas N. Turba. It lists his achievements, including his service on the VIP board, his role in creating the Roseville Good Old Days event, his leadership in Boy Scouts, and his support for various community events. The certificate is dated April 15, 2018, and is signed by the 2018 VIP Club President.

VIP CLUB
Established in 1980

This Annual 'Jansen'
Volunteer Extraordinaire

Certificate Is Awarded To Honor the Life of

Thomas N. Turba

- ◆ Represented Roseville retirees on the VIP board since 2006!
- ◆ Served nine terms on the VIP Board; three each as Vice President, President, and Past President.
- ◆ Created the Roseville Good Old Days then coordinated nine more RGOD annual events.
- ◆ Initiated and coordinated two 'River Cruises' outings for the Club.
- ◆ Supported IT Legacy display setups at the State Capitol, State Fair Grounds, and at the U of MN.
- ◆ Led Boy Scouts on 22 International adventures to 16 Countries.
- ◆ Chairman of the American National Standards Committee for Pascal.
- ◆ Chairman of the Roseville Sister City Committee.

April 15, 2018

2018 VIP Club President