

# March More Voices: Motor-Vehicle Accidents

Category: Motor Vehicle Accidents  
written by Paul Gross | March 1, 2026

Dear readers,

I grew up in New York and have lived and worked in and around the city my entire life. Some news outlets and politicians like to paint big cities with a broad, scary brush, so that many people think that New York subways are a dangerous way to travel, akin to taking your life in your hands.

Statistics prove that there are far more dangerous ways to travel, and that's been my lived experience, which is this:

I can name five relatives, all under twenty-five, who were killed in motor-vehicle accidents.

- A teenage Belgian cousin hit by a truck while riding his bicycle.
- A Canadian cousin riding as a back-seat passenger in a car crash.
- Another Belgian cousin as a passenger in a car crash.
- A cousin's son in a head-on car crash.
- My oldest nephew in a car crash.

It's a gut-wrenching toll. For this reason, every time I get behind the wheel, I am acutely aware: *This is the most dangerous thing I will do today.*

Years ago, a carful of teenage boys ran a stop sign and crashed into my car's rear door. My car and I spun around several times before coming to rest on someone's lawn. Had the other driver struck a split second sooner, he would have crashed directly into *my* door—into *me*. Would I still be alive—and with how many healed fractures and what head injuries?

When our two daughters reached driving age, I tried not to let our family's tragic history weigh too heavily on them. I coached them as best I could on the principles of safe driving, while realizing that I could not protect them from someone else's intoxication or carelessness—or their own teenage imperfections.

Once they got their licenses, I held my breath each time I handed them the car keys.

As I write this, it so happens that I'm in the market to replace my twenty-seven-year-old car, which has 265,000 miles on it. (Given my acute awareness of the risks of driving, you'd think I'd have a car with the latest safety features, but I also happen to have a frugality gene, which is another story.) I am considering purchasing a six-year-old car with 69,000 miles and a track record for reliability. It has bells and whistles I don't need, including a moon roof and a button that starts the car remotely.

While I'm thrilled at the prospect of driving a rust-free car whose gas tank doesn't leak and which has a five-star overall rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, I have no illusions that it will guarantee my safety when I pull onto the road. If I happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, and moving at high speed, bad things can and will happen.

As my ancient vehicle suggests, the romance of a new car, and ad images promising freedom and featuring cars whizzing around hairpin turns, don't turn me on. I think of my young relatives who lost their freedom much too soon. I think of the incalculable grief inflicted on their parents. I think of the guilt experienced by the driver whose crash caused my cousin's death.

All things considered, I feel safer on the subway.

March's *More Voices* theme is [Motor-Vehicle Accidents](#). What's been your experience of being in a motor-vehicle accident, in caring for an accident victim or in being impacted by someone else's motor-vehicle accident?

Share your story using the [More Voices Submission Form](#). For more details, visit [More Voices FAQs](#). And have a look at last month's theme: [Longing](#).

Remember, your story should be 40-400 words. And no poetry, please.

We look forward to hearing from you. And thanks for being a part of the *Pulse* community.

Warmly,

Paul Gross  
Editor