

# SOUND OFF

“...the snarky, snotty observations by Metra’s customers about fellow commuters ... offer some of the best free entertainment around.” - SouthtownStar, March 13, 2009

## What a crock

Last month on the Milwaukee West there were very few seats on an express train heading into Chicago, and that morning was worse than normal. There was a woman with a giant handbag, a backpack and up and over a seat, a crock pot in a tote bag filled with something. Those of us who get on this train regularly have no shame about waking people up, handing them their bags if it’s taking up a seat, or making people move over so we can sit too. The crock pot lady was flabbergasted that anybody would touch her precious crock pot! “Well I never, that’s my crock pot!!!! Where do you expect me to put that? I’ll just leave it in the aisle so people can trip over it!”

This really made me laugh and I told her (very sarcastically) “That’s so thoughtful of you!”



Crock pot lady, you are a crackpot. Next time, buy your crock pot a ticket, or leave it at home!

Jill

*Thanks for the letter – we always wanted to use that headline and you gave us the perfect opportunity. We don’t think we’ve ever sold a ticket to a crock pot before. We’ll leave it up to you, our riders, to say if we’ve ever sold one to a crackpot.*

## Don’t they know?

I was on the 5:02 University Park train, sitting in the first car in a seat next to the window. Before we left the Randolph station a lady came and sat with a man who was sitting behind me. She started asking him all sorts of questions about how he was feeling, how were his kids, etc., etc. I thought to myself, “Well, she’s kind of nosy and a little loud to boot.” But I was able to drown them out somewhat so I started reading. At the Van Buren stop another lady got on the train and sat beside me. She turned herself sideways facing me but started talking to the two people behind me. The three of them began an ongoing, nonstop dialogue of everything they could talk about.

Why do people think that it’s OK to sit with you, turn facing you when they don’t even know you, and hold a loud conversation with the person or people sitting behind you? I wanted to get up but there were no other seats. And I’m sure that was exactly what they wanted me to do – get up so that they would have the seat to themselves. Don’t these obnoxious people know that conversations such as theirs can be had over the telephone, or at lunch, or some other visit?

Can we please remind these people that they don’t own Metra and only pay a fare just like I do? And, just like they feel that they are entitled to talk loud, etc., I feel as though I’m entitled to peace and quiet.

Maybe one day these people will get it through their heads that respect is a two-way street.

Jerry

*Some people do seem to think*



Not so cool on the train, though.

*that traveling on public transportation somehow gives them a license to be rude. But most people – maybe a dwindling number, but still most – know that traveling on public transportation means you should make an extra effort to be courteous. It should be the default position, and then we’d all get along.*

## Hard to swallow

To the lovely lady on my BNSF train every morning who eats hard-boiled eggs and other gooey things with her mouth open: You have no idea how disgusting the smell, noise and look of you glom-glomming your breakfast is to those of us who sit around you. Please chew with your mouth closed and consider granola bars. Never thought I’d have to say that again after my kids turned 7.

Audrey

*“Glom-glomming” – what a great expression. We wonder if the crock pot woman might have had something gooey going on there, too.*

## Thanks for the assist

Many thanks to the compan-

ion somewhere on the second car a few Monday mornings ago! A dark sleepy morning, and I dropped an envelope (a bill, with a check) somewhere in the train while exiting. At the Union Station mailbox, the letter was missing from my pocket. A search of the train came up empty, so the hope was that someone had found the letter and done their good deed for the day. Cancel the check or hold on to a hope? Routine online visits to my account offered some suspense – identity theft nightmare – and 10 days later the check had cleared. So, thank you to my North Central companion, and know that my children cheered when they heard the happy ending to this story. As the Fab Four said, we get by with a little help from our friends.

Steve

*We wanted to run this letter to again remind everyone that there are kind and considerate people out there. Maybe they don’t outnumber the crock-pot-bearing, conversation-inflicting, hard-boiled-egg-eating-with-their-mouths-open masses, but they’re out there, and thank you for that.*