

September 26, 2007

Deb,

I took the train because I couldn't find a round trip flight for less than \$700 and the train cost only about \$400. And there were other advantages. I could park my car at the East Lansing station for free, so I needed no one to drop me off or pick me up. And the train station in Denver is downtown, so Amy only had to drive a few blocks to pick me up. But I wouldn't do it again. The trip took a full 24 hours, and I can't sleep sitting up. My butt can't handle my weight that long. The trip would have been faster, but Amtrak doesn't own the tracks in the midwest, so every once in a while it had to stop for several minutes while a freight train passed. Also, coach gets pretty messy by the end of a long trip. And there were too few electrical outlets to serve all of us who needed to charge our cell phones. I could have gotten a sleeping unit, but that would have reduced the cost advantage. And between Chicago and Denver, there is no spectacular scenery. If you were an alien from outer space, you'd think Earth was covered in corn and soybeans.

On the way back, when I switched trains in Chicago and was stowing my luggage, there was Neil and Betty Norcross. They'd been to Mayo Clinic in St. Paul. Neil is being treated for cancer and were on their way back to Kalamazoo. He said the cancer was shrinking.

Steve