

DEAR TRIPADVISOR

Requesting to switch seats

By Lesley Carlin
TripAdvisor.com

Q: I boarded a flight recently to find someone already sitting in my seat (a window in first class). I said, "I think you're in my seat," and showed her my boarding pass. She said, "Oh, my friend's on this flight, and she got upgraded to first class, but I didn't. ... We thought maybe you wouldn't mind taking my seat instead." I must admit, I thought something unprintable, but I said, "No, I'm sorry, I have a first-class ticket and would prefer to sit in my assigned seat rather than in coach."

She was surprised and offended that I didn't agree to switch. And she not only wanted me to switch from first class to coach, she was already completely settled into my seat. What's the etiquette for asking someone to switch seats with you?

A: Well, I would've thought this should be obvious, but you have to ask. You can't just plant yourself in

someone else's seat — and spread all your stuff out — before you know if they're up for changing seats with you.

Second, you simply cannot expect someone to take a significantly inferior seat. No one wants a middle seat in the back of the plane in exchange for an aisle seat in the front, no one wants to give up an exit-row seat for a regular one and absolutely nobody wants to give up a seat in first class for one in coach. And I agree that it doesn't matter if you bought your seat or got upgraded — it's your seat.

If those women really wanted to sit together, they should have asked the person sitting next to the woman in coach if they'd mind taking her friend's first-class seat. I'm sure the other coach passenger would have been more than happy to oblige.

Email travel-etiquette questions to Lesley Carlin at deartripadvisor@tripadvisor.com.



BEACH CLEANUP

More than 200 volunteers from The Boeing Co. braved "carmageddon" to help the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy remove debris from more than one mile of rocky shoreline at Abalone Cove Beach on July 16, helping to clean up an area that serves as a critical Southern California marine refuge.

It's not impossible to find scholarships in the summer

By Steve Rosen
McClatchy Newspapers

The father of a college freshman had a request: Is it still possible to find scholarship money to pay the tuition bills for the upcoming school year?

The short answer: Good luck.



STEVE ROSEN
Kids & Money

costs, I turned to Chany and Mark Kantrowitz, publisher of the scholarship search sites FastWeb.com and FinAid.org. Here's their advice:

If you haven't already, go to the U.S. Department of Education's Web page at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> and fill out the FAFSA — the Free Application for Federal Stu-

has developed, such as a medical hardship or job loss that will make it harder to pay for college.

"The process is driven by documentation," Kantrowitz said. So be prepared to provide third-party documentation of your financial circumstances.

Surprisingly, some companies extend this benefit to an employee's children or even grandchildren, Kantrowitz said.

Most schools offer tuition installment plans that spread out the costs over nine to 12 monthly payments. While there typically are enrollment fees, this could buy you