

## **CHARLIE PELLETT "STAND CLEAR OF THE CLOSING DOORS"**

LORI HOFFMAN | So let's talk about how Bloomberg people, Bloomberg radio, including Mr. Charlie Pellett ended up being the voice of the New York City subway system.

CHARLIE PELLETT | What an honor to be able to say, "Stand clear of the closing doors please." To be able to say it every single day to millions of New Yorkers. There's nothing I'm going to do for Bloomberg radio, for this industry, that will ever eclipse that one line. "Stand clear of the closing doors please." It's an absolute honor to be able to make that happen. I love New York City trains. I love the subways. When I first came to New York, I wanted a job as a subway motorman. I applied, but they wouldn't take me on a part-time basis. I wanted to be in broadcasting part time and drive subway trains. So 20 years later, to be the "Stand clear of the closing doors" guy, that's pretty cool.

LORI HOFFMAN | And how did it even happen?

CHARLIE PELLETT | There were two former co-workers who had the idea. They have gone onto bigger and better things. And they thought that it wouldn't be a bad idea to see if we could improve the quality of the announcements on the subway system. And they talked to somebody who talked to somebody. Bottom line is, somebody at the Transit Authority, which is what it was called at the time said, "You know what? Can you send us over some samples of who you've got? And we'll figure out if we can use it in our brand news trains that were coming out."

And myself and a couple of other employees here, we went ahead and recorded these subway announcements. And you can imagine my surprise when it stuck. When I got a call one day saying, "Listen, we've got this brand new train at a yard up in the Bronx. Do you want to come up and hear what it sounds like?" Now, you have to realize that this subway train was so new that it still had plastic on the seats. It was like picking up a new car at the dealership.

And the engineers played the sound and I couldn't believe it. And I thought, "My God, this could really happen." And one by one, they rolled out the trains. It was a novelty when that first train came out. And then, you know, years later, on the four, five, six, the one, two, and three trains, you know, on the N and the R lines now, and also the C line and the E line as well, you get these new trains that are coming out. And yeah, they're all Bloomberg radio voices, which a lot of people don't realize.

LORI HOFFMAN | I have to ask you, what's it like being on the 6 train going downtown or uptown or wherever and hearing yourself?

CHARLIE PELLETT | Funny story. I was riding the train one day and there was (BACKGROUND VOICE) an announcement that had played a couple of times. "Stand clear of the closing doors please." "Stand clear of the closing doors please." And there was a wise guy kid sitting there saying, "Shut up, Mr. North Dakota." And I'm thinking, "Mr. North Dakota?" Now, I've lived in

Brooklyn for 25 years. I assure you, I am not from North Dakota. I wanted to say something. I bit my tongue. But you know what? Most people don't care. I think the only people that care are my colleagues here at Bloomberg radio and my immediate family. For anybody else, it's another voice just telling you to, "Stand clear of the closing doors please," or, "Ladies and gentlemen, we apologize for the unavoidable delay."

LORI HOFFMAN | But there are those people, when they find out that you're the voice of the New York subway, what's that reaction like when they do find out that you are the guy?

CHARLIE PELLETT | I had a bunch of fourth graders in here one day. And it's not something I brag about or boast about, you know, because there are so many other things around here to keep us busy. But the fourth graders, they thought that was the coolest guest of all the people that they spoke to here at Bloomberg. They were most thrilled by that.

And another story, there was an intern here at Bloomberg who found out that I was the subway guy. And she wanted to write an article about me for the college paper. And we found time to do it. And at the end of the interview, she said, "You know, you're the most famous person I've never met." And I said, "You've got to set your sights a little bit higher than that." And she left.

Five minutes later, I got a call from her. Actually, an e-mail and she said, "Charlie, I just wanted to correct myself. You're not the most famous person I've ever met. That was the winner of the women's hot dog eating contest at Coney Island. She's the most famous." So that certainly puts it in perspective, doesn't it?