

\$43,932.46!

What's this business of not reporting a purpose for spending so much money? President Saunders, are you above accountability?

Hey, let's fly to Manassas, VA!

On March 30, 2009, USM Pilots' Trip Log reported that C. Burge—then VP for Research, Ronnie Shows—Former U.S. Representative from Mississippi's 4th District, 1999-2002 (Democrat), and Andrew Jenkins—unknown passenger, boarded N777AQ for a 3.1 hour flight trip to Manassas, VA. Shows and Jenkins returned to Hattiesburg, MS aboard N777AQ in a 4 hour flight on March 31, 2009. No details were provided about the costs incurred for hotel room, food, beverages, etc. The cost of just the flight aboard N777AQ was **\$43,932.46** (7.1 x \$6,187.67). That's right, the flight to Manassas, VA all by itself cost **\$43,932.46**. And, insult to injury, there was **no purpose given** and **no explanation** why this group flew to Manassas, VA. Rest assured, though, you—taxpayers, students, and faculty—paid the **\$43,932.46** plus hotel, food, beverages, etc. USM's Interdepartmental Invoice for this trip is different from USM's Pilots' Trip Log. It represents "7.1 hours round trip flight time to Washington, DC via Madison MS for Dr. Burge" and "7.1 hours round trip flight time to Washington, DC via Madison MS for Julian Allen." Did the flight proceed via Madison, MS? Were Ronnie Shows and Andrew Jenkins aboard the flight? Be assured of one conclusion: inconsistent records warrant concerns about the reliability of USM's records.

Since no purpose was given or note of accomplishments, we don't know if this was a joy ride, or simply a trip with a failed goal. We are not assuming that there was a successful result, because President Saunders would have made a worldwide public relations announcement about a successful trip.

President Saunders offers no reason for spending **\$43,932.46** of our money. Doesn't **\$43,932.46** rise to a level of importance that Dr. Saunders' records should provide some explanation for the trip? Do students think **\$43,932.46** is a lot of money? Do taxpayers think **\$43,932.46** is a lot of money? Do faculty -- particularly those who don't know if they will have a job next year -- think **\$43,932.46** is a lot of money?

Why should President Saunders and her bureaucratic minions care? The answer is, they don't. After all, it's not their money.

Original	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department Copy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Press to Play	

Date: 6/2/2008

CREDIT: Airplane Operations
(Default credit name)

5000 295-4130
500 PHONE NUMBER

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SPR APPROVAL, IF REQUIRED _____ DATE _____ PROVOST APPROVAL, IF REQUIRED _____ DATE _____

ACCOUNTING INFORMATION	ACCOUNT	FUND	DEPT	PROGRAM	PROJECT/GRANT	AMOUNT
BUDGET STRINGS TO CHARGE FOR SERVICES OR MATERIALS RECEIVED	804121	14942	100006	02001	0600054	\$883.00
APPROVED DEPARTMENT SIGNATURE DATE						
BUDGET STRINGS TO CHARGE FOR SALES OF SERVICES OR MATERIALS	804121	10115	100011	08000		\$883.00
APPROVED DEPARTMENT SIGNATURE DATE						

JOURNAL NUMBER: _____
JOURNAL DATE: _____

King Air N777AQ Trip Log

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Destination(s)</u>	<u>Passenger Name(s)</u>
3-27-09	Reserve, LA	
Ldgs <u>2</u>	Cycles <u>2</u>	Pilots <u>Allen, Price</u> Bus. <u> </u> Trng <u> </u> Maintenance <u>✓</u>
Hobbs Mtr	In <u>1630.7</u> Out <u>1629.6</u> = <u>1.1</u> hrs total	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Destination(s)</u>	<u>Passenger Names</u>
3-30-09	Manassas, VA	C. Burge, Ronnie Shows, Andrew Jenkins
Ldgs <u>2</u>	Cycles <u>2</u>	Pilots <u>Allen, Price</u> Bus. <u>✓</u> Trng <u> </u> Maintenance <u> </u>
Hobbs Mtr	In <u>1633.8</u> Out <u>1630.7</u> = <u>3.1</u> hrs total	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Destination(s)</u>	<u>Passenger Names</u>
3-31-09	Hattiesburg, MS HBG	Allen , Ronnie Shows, Andrew Jenkins
Ldgs <u>4</u>	Cycles <u>4</u>	Pilots <u>Allen, Price</u> Bus. <u>✓</u> Trng <u> </u> Maintenance <u> </u>
Hobbs Mtr	In <u>1637.8</u> Out <u>1633.8</u> = <u>4.0</u> hrs total	

(Remember, usmnews.net's computation of cost per flight hour does not include or amortize the \$907,053.85 balloon payment due on the 60th month. If that amount is included, the cost is substantially higher than \$6,187.67 per flight hour.)

Context

If you are a new reader of this series, catch up by reviewing [A Brief History of Saunders' "Lease" of airplane N777AQ During a Recession, Part 1](#). That report provides background information concerning the actual costs for the first 17 months of an airplane N777AQ leased by President Saunders for a 60-month period. For example, USM documents report total actual cost of **\$591,231.71 and 95.55 flight hours** during the first 17 months of airplane N777AQ operations. Therefore, the ACTUAL cost per flight hour is **\$6,187.67**, i.e., \$591,231.71 total actual cost divided by 95.55 actual flight hours.

Interdepartmental Invoices for 30 flights were provided in an initial response from USM to a MORA request concerning the airplane President Saunders leases and pays for with Mississippi taxpayer and student dollars.

Although the MORA request was for all records related to the plane, USM's response was incomplete. When legal counsel followed up concerning the inadequate response, the University produced more documents. usmnews.net reporters are currently reviewing the additional documents and there are reasons to believe the response was again incomplete.

WHO'S MONITORING THESE "PUBLIC SERVANTS"?

The incomplete response to our MORA request, as exemplified above, signals irresponsible accountability and questionable use of taxpayer, student, and faculty resources.

Is anyone holding USM and IHL administrators accountable? IHL members blessed the lease/purchase of the plane. Why not? IHL members are enjoying the use of the plane **at no cost**. So, do not expect the IHL to do its oversight responsibility and hold President Saunders accountable for this extravagant expenditure of USM student and faculty resources. **And, she's giving it away at the same time she's terminating USM academic programs and faculty**. Unless USM faculty and students take charge of their destiny, President Saunders will continue to implement her own vision which, increasingly does not include them.

Stay tuned to usmnews.net for cost analyses of the remaining flights aboard President Saunders' plane.