

Taxpayers Burned

Reporting on the ". . . Told You So" USM Plane Incidentals

The recent USMNEWS.net [report entitled](#) "Keeping the Home Fires Burning" details the 15-Sept-2010 trip to Atlanta made by USM president Martha Saunders and her husband, Joe Bailey. That trip was to attend a play written and produced by a(n unnamed) USM alum. USM's Airplane Operations auxiliary charged Saunders' USM office \$2,320 (see insert below, and linked report above) for what seemed to be a pleasure trip for Saunders and her husband.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	TOTAL
1	15 Day Round Trip to Atlanta, MS for Dr. Saunders and Joe Bailey	2,320.00	2,320.00
		TOTAL	2,320.00

Several of the USMNEWS.net reports and editorials on the USM airplane have pointed out that (1) the almost-\$20,000 per month lease payment and (2) the flight charges, like those above, are only *part* of the story concerning expenses associated with maintaining this type of convenience for Saunders. This particular report is one of what may ultimately be many that provides some official documentation relating to just how much the other incidental expenses are draining the university's coffers, which are, of course, replenished by Mississippi taxpayers each year.

USM associate vice president for research Julian Allen was the pilot for this particular trip aboard USM Air. According to his records, the trip was made on 16-Sept-2010. The insert below is a receipt for a taxi (or limo) that Allen took to an Atlanta-area Applebee's. The total is \$24. Somewhere in USMNEWS.net's pile of newly-acquired official records, there is likely a similar receipt for Saunders' cab ride from the airport to the site of the performance.

Atlanta's Best Taxi & Limo
 Dunwoody - Sandy Springs - Roswell - Alpharetta

Date: 9/16/10 Fare:

From:

To: Applebee's Tax:

Name:

Tips:

Total: \$24.00

We do business the old fashion way, we earn it!
 Tel: 770-960-0000 . Fax: 770-393-9807
 Email: ride@AtlantasBestTaxi.com

The date Allen recorded, 16-Sept-2010, was a Thursday, so Allen was likely able to catch a college football game on the big screen at Applebee's while waiting on the play to end. That would mean that a USM vice president was like some sort of intern, hanging around an Atlanta-area bar and grill while the USM president and her husband enjoyed an evening of culture in the capital of the south.

Julian Allen
Atlanta's Best Taxi & Limo
Dunwoody - Sandy Springs - Roswell - Alpharetta

Date: <i>9/16/10</i>	Fare:
From:	Tax:
To: <i>ATL Airport</i>	Tips:
Name:	Total: <i>\$25.00</i>

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Tel: 770-960-0000 . Fax: 770-393-9807
Email: ride@AtlantasBestTaxi.com

Finally, the insert above is a copy of a receipt for Allen's cab (or limo) back to the airport. The total for this ride came to \$25, making for an in-town transportation expenses total of \$49 for Allen on this particular trip. If the Saunders/Bailey total is also \$49, then the taxi (or limo) costs for this particular evening reached at least \$98. This amount may represent 10% or more of a USM faculty's travel allowance for an entire year. Of course, the revelation of two separate dates for this event may mean that two days – 15-Sept and 16-Sept – were taken care of on this pleasure trip to Atlanta. In that case, hotel and other meal/entertainment expenses would be involved. Perhaps a future report will cover such a possibility.