Kansas schools secretive about flight plans

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LAWRENCE - When it comes to finding out where a business jet is headed, the University of Kansas and Kansas State University are more secretive than the governor's office.

Since January, the University of Kansas has participated in a service that shields real-time flight plan information from the public for trips taken by its Cessna Citation Bravo based at Lawrence Municipal Airport.

Kansas State has been blocking flight plan information for its two business jets from Internet tracking sites for six years.

"It is fairly common, for security, to not let the whole world know where your plane is going," said Todd Cohen, a spokesman for the University of Kansas.

But Gov. Kathleen Sebelius doesn't keep her flight plans secret.

"Our schedulers or security get on the flight tracking system and track the state plane regularly when needed," said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran.

Pilots regularly file flight plans with the Federal Aviation Administration prior to takeoff. Web sites then track the flights as they happen.

Federal law allows plane owners to request that information be blocked by the National Business Aviation Association.

"In the business community, some of the flights carry competitive and/or security concerns," said Dan Hubbard, a spokesman for the association.

"There may be a reason why the party making the flight feels the flight should not be understood in real time."

The schools use their planes for a number of sensitive trips, including coaches recruiting players, performing government-funded research that officials would like to keep quiet or transporting controversial speakers to campus.

Kansas' Cessna seats about eight and is used by officials at both the Lawrence campus and the KU Medical Center campus in Kansas City, Kan.

The university does not block flight information on a King Air C-90B, of which the school is a part-owner. That plane, based in Kansas City, Mo., is used primarily for medical outreach reasons.

Kansas State uses its two planes for general business travel and developed the policy blocking the flight information since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.
Program saves Kansas taxpayers money while improving lives

A young adult in western Kansas uses a power wheelchair to get to his place of employment. A woman in Russell has a patient care bed and no longer has to sleep in a chair to be comfortable. In Garden City, three people have received standers that improve their stability.

These are a few of the success stories of the Kansas Equipment Exchange, a project that accepts used equipment and matches it with Kansans who need it. Since April 2003, Equipment Exchange has saved Kansas taxpayers more than $2 million.

"Most of the recipients of durable medical equipment don’t have medical insurance," said Patty Black-Moore, Expanding Reuse Project Coordinator. "Kansas Equipment Exchange saves tax dollars while improving lives. We placed over a half a million dollars in refurbished durable medical equipment last year."

Since June 2002, durable medical equipment purchased by the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA) is used by the recipients as long as they need it. When the equipment is no longer needed, it is returned to the Equipment Exchange. Items in good condition are refurbished and then reassigned to another Kansan with a disability.

Not all of the equipment originates with the KHPA. "We’ve received patient lifts, beds, wheelchairs, communication devices and other items from individuals and families who no longer needed them,” Ms. Moore explained. “A lot of usable items are stored in garages and attics. We need and accept donations of durable medical equipment and assistive technology that will enable people to live more independently.”

With the increased concerns about electronic waste Equipment Exchange has added PDAs, hearing aids, navigational/GPS systems and electronic communication devices to its list. The project collects serviceable used items and passes them to Kansans with disabilities. "We’ve passed on Palm Pilots and HP iPAQs, Tom Tom and Garmin navigational systems, and Chat PC and Tech Talk communication devices,” Moore said.

Persons wishing to donate equipment to the Kansas Equipment Exchange can call 800-526-3648 toll free. Kansas Equipment Exchange is a statewide project guided by individuals with disabilities, family members and the KHPA. It is affiliated with Assistive Technology for Kansans, a program coordinated by the Kansas University Center on Disabilities at Parsons.
Provost touts advantages of a liberal arts education

By ANNE HASSLER
Sentinel Staff Writer

Speaking to the noon lunch crowd of McPherson Kiwanis, KU Provost Richard Lariviere was posed just one question from the crowd.

“I heard a person say once that the only true education is a liberal arts education and all other training is vocational training. I know your expertise in the past is a liberal arts education, so I’m going to ask you what the main purpose of higher education is,” Kiwanian Gerry Bley said.

Bley went on to read a passage from Robert Hutchins’ “University of Utopia” that detailed the different ways of thinking when it comes to higher education.

“There’s a lot of talk around higher education about the economic impact. The impact is far greater than any of us realize,” Lariviere said. “The real purpose of higher education is to prepare people to lead full, rich, satisfying lives. That’s the difference between higher education and vocational training.”

Lariviere said he is often questioned by concerned parents whose children plan to major in English or history that worry they will be unable to make a living.

RICHARD LARIVIERE

Over the course of a lifetime, the average worker changes jobs 10 times, according to Lariviere. Estimates for the generation being trained in colleges now, are closer to 14-19 job changes. Some of those jobs may not yet exist. Lariviere gave the example of Internet jobs that did not exist 10 years ago.

“It is impossible for any of us to predict that what you study is going to determine your job. In a liberal arts education -- math, science, rhetoric, literature, history -- that education will give you adequate preparation to be constantly adaptable,” Lariviere said.

One growing problem that Lariviere said he sees at universities from KU to Harvard is that students are more concerned with what will help them earn the highest starting salary.

As dean of the college of liberal arts at the University of Texas, Lariviere commissioned a study to see what the impact of higher education is on life-time earnings.

“What they found was choice of major had little impact on lifetime earnings. What they did find, however, was two factors that did have a profound effect -- how smart you are and how hard you work. I could have saved the $35,000 that that study cost me and just asked my grandmother who would have told me the same thing,” Lariviere said.

When it comes to the choice of what to study, Lariviere recommends students study what excites them the most.

Before the question-and-answer session, Lariviere gave a rundown of the state of affairs at KU.

The largest graduating class ever at KU, more than 6,000 graduates including 21 from McPherson and surrounding communities, matriculated in 2007, according to Lariviere. There are 132 McPherson County students at KU. McPherson students earn $268,000 in scholarships at KU.

Lariviere said the impact of the university on the economy is significant because on average, a college graduate will earn $1 million more over a lifetime than a non-college graduate.
The executive director of the Kansas Press Association will be among members of a board supervising development of a searchable Web site of state spending information. Gov. Kathleen Sebelius announced the appointment of Doug Anstaett, who has led the KPA since 2004, and three others to the board Friday, including state Secretary of Revenue Jean Wagon.

Denise Moore, the executive branch’s chief information technology officer, and Charles Jones, director of the Public Management Center at the University of Kansas, also were named.

The Legislature created the board this year to oversee the creation of a new central computer system and a searchable Web site for state agency expenditures and revenues, bonded indebtedness and other budgetary information.

Rep. Kasha Kelley, R-Arkansas City, and Alan Cobb, director of the Kansas chapter of Americans for Prosperity, are also among those who have been added to the 15-member panel.
Aircrafts’ flight plans for certain trips seen as top secret
By The Associated Press

LAWRENCE — When it comes to finding out where a business jet is headed, the University of Kansas and Kansas State University are more secretive than the governor’s office.

Since January, the University of Kansas has participated in a service that shields real-time flight plan information from the public for trips taken by its Cessna Citation Bravo based at Lawrence Municipal Airport.

Kansas State has been blocking flight plan information for its two business jets from Internet tracking sites for six years.

“It is fairly common, for security, to not let the whole world know where your plane is going,” said Todd Cohen, a spokesman for the University of Kansas.

But Gov. Kathleen Sebelius doesn’t keep her flight plans secret.

“Our schedulers or security get on the flight tracking system and track the state plane regularly when needed,” said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran.

Pilots regularly file flight plans with the Federal Aviation Administration prior to takeoff. Web sites then track the flights as they happen.

Federal law allows plane owners to request that information be blocked by the National Business Aviation Association.

“In the business community, some of the flights carry competitive and/or security concerns,” said Dan Hubbard, a spokesman for the association.

“There may be a reason why the party making the flight feels the flight should not be understood in real time.”

The schools use their planes for a number of sensitive trips, including coaches recruiting players, performing government-funded research that officials would like to keep quiet or transporting controversial speakers to campus.

Kansas’ Cessna seats about eight and is used by officials at both the Lawrence campus and the KU Medical Center campus in Kansas City, Kan.

The university does not block flight information on a King Air C-90B, of which the school is a part-owner. That plane, based in Kansas City, Mo., is used primarily for medical outreach reasons.

Kansas State uses its two planes for general business travel and developed the policy blocking the flight information since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

“Part of that response was to make sure that we do not make available where the aircraft is going,” said Dennis Kuhiman, dean of K-State’s College of Aviation.

That helps protect the university and the people who are on those planes.

The blocking policy doesn’t cover the university’s fleet of 40 aircraft used to teach piloting, maintenance and engineering, Kuhiman said.

The public can still find out where the planes went and when by filing a request under the Kansas Open Records Act, although the universities typically charge retrieval fees.

According to those records, Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway, Provost Richard Lariviére, Athletic Director Lew Perkins and men’s basketball Coach Bill Self are the university’s most frequent fliers.

The school said it spends almost $700,000 a year on its aircraft, including salary and benefits for three pilots and a scheduler, maintenance, training and insurance.
State needs more pharmacists

Potential students are there but KU lacks the ability to increase pharmacy grads

Much attention has been paid to the shortage of health professionals such as doctors and nurses, but there's another problem in the health profession that isn't as well publicized: the growing shortage of pharmacists in Kansas.

Seven Kansas counties have no pharmacies, meaning residents have to leave the county to get their prescriptions, not to mention other critical medical supplies and health information.

This is a problem for all Kansans living in those areas, but it places a major burden on residents with limited mobility, such as seniors and Kansans with disabilities. The situation isn't much better in the additional 30 counties that have just one pharmacy to serve the entire county.

An additional looming problem is the advancing age of Kansas pharmacists, with many of the pharmacists in those counties approaching retirement. In fact, one-third of pharmacists in Kansas are over the age of 50 and in some areas of the state that percentage is even higher. Also hard hit by a growing pharmacist shortage are our Kansas hospitals, where licensed pharmacists play key roles as members of the health care team.

Although the past few decades have seen remarkable discoveries in the field of medicine, allowing many illnesses to be treated by drugs rather than hospitalization, this has also increased pharmacists' role as a critical part of the health care system. Coupled with the increasing need for pharmacists as our population ages, this adds even more urgency to the situation.

Kansas is home to an outstanding pharmacy school at the University of Kansas,
and graduates are in great demand. Fortunately, the great majority of all KU pharmacy graduates stay and practice in Kansas.

The shortage of pharmacists and other health professionals is a national problem, but we can help solve that problem here in Kansas by supporting an expansion of the state’s capability to train new pharmacists. It takes a minimum of six years to complete a degree in pharmacy, so we need to begin that expansion now. There’s certainly no shortage of bright, talented students applying to pharmacy school. In fact, there are four qualified applicants for every position available.

We’ll be talking about this challenge as the legislative session approaches and hope we can find ways to preserve access to vital pharmacy services throughout Kansas.

Sigma Sigma Sigma took it all
with a first place performance during
last week’s Black Student Union Step
Show in Albert Taylor Hall.

The event was sponsored by the
Black Student Union and UAC.

“It felt amazing to win,” said
Kassie Piotrowski, freshman com-
munication major and participating
member in Sigma Sigma Sigma’s
performance. “My favorite part of our
performance was the third rule that
stated that if we didn’t have anything
nice to say then we shouldn’t say
anything at all, and then we lifted up
our shirts showing the letters on our
stomachs.”

This year’s Step Show provided
entertainment as well as support to a
charitable cause.

“Each competing group really
stepped up their game this year and a
proceed of the profits from the
event will go to the Susan G.
Komen breast cancer foundation,”
said Lorene Booth, junior business
administration major. “I feel bad for
those that didn’t come to the show
because it was off the hook.

The stage opened with a fog
machine and both emcees for the
show, Anthony Whetstone, graduate
student of history, and Ian Sadler,
sophomore political science major,
walked onto the stage. In the past,
fraternities haven’t participated in
Step Show but this time a last minute
performance began the show.

A member from each fraternity on
campus walked out on to the stage
and began their OWfl Step Show performance
complete with dance and
step.

All the sororities did a great job
last year, but this year I think there
is more hype,” said Cassie Ywike,
sophomore secondary education
major. “The fraternities’ performance
was very entertaining as well.”

The first competitive performance
of the evening was the Alpha Sigma
Alpha Sorority. The group took the
stage in matching hoodies and per-
formed a variety of different sections
of dance and step. The group used
drumsticks and chairs in their per-
formance and at one time made a
standing ASA with their bodies.

“I’m really proud of all the girls
in ASA that performed; they worked
really hard and did a great job along
with everyone else that performed
tonight,” said Lisa Stephenson,
senior biology and zoology major
and participating member in ASA’s
performance. “However, I personally
would have rather lost to a more
[Panhellic Association] positive’
group.”

Beta Lambda Alpha included a
performance that started with mem-
ers dressed like nuns; they then
switched into costumes that repre-
sented their sorority’s colors.

“I think as a whole we did a good
job considering how much practice
we put into our performance,” said
Carly Craig, senior English major
and participating member in the BLA
performance. “My favorite part was
where we were dressed like nuns. We
purposely tried to over emphasize
our actions in order to make it more
obvious to the crowd.”

Unity, a hip-hop dance team from
the University of Kansas, was the last
performer.

“The group was originally found-
ed in 1995 and they strive to achieve
the goals and dreams of their founder
Eve Bradley by maintaining live-
lihood and community service,
according to the Step Show program.

This was Unity’s third time to
perform at the ESU Step Show.

The Chi Omega sorority took
the stage to the song “Hard Knock
Life” by Jay-Z in “orphan Annie”
attire. Another group had a more
sophisticated style coming out to
“Glamorous” by Fergie in vests and
boots. The two contrasting groups
joined at the end of their perform-
ance for a mix of dance and step.

“Everyone really did a great job,
my favorite part of our performance
was definitely at the end when we all
came together,” said Jessica Bush,
sophomore health promotions major
and participating member in Chi
Omega’s performance.
E-Unit ran down the aisles and onto the stage after a movie that showed them running into Plumb Hall. The group used props and many costume changes during their performance. They had the longest performance of the night.

During the tallying of the judges votes, members of E-Unit gave a farewell to the founders of E-Unit who would be graduating and leaving the team at the end of this semester.

Sigma Sigma Sigma sorority was the last competing team for the evening and they sported a baseball style performance. The group went through a roll call of the members present with a step performance and then went through all of the rules that competing teams must follow during their performance.

Alpha Sigma Alpha placed second overall and Chi Omega came in third.

Other performers of the evening included J Tuck, a local rapper and disc jockey at Josie’s, the Stingers and BSO Steppers from Emporia State High School.
Campaign 101: Bring in the big guns?

The battle over the state’s 2nd District seat in Congress continues to draw heavy hitters to the Sunflower State.

The first woman to lead the U.S. House as a speaker, California Rep. Nancy Pelosi, will be in Kansas Friday to help raise campaign funds for Congresswoman Nancy Boyda.

However, bringing in prominent politicians didn’t seem to help former Rep. Jim Ryun keep his spot in Congress last year. Despite visits from Vice President Dick Cheney and President George W. Bush, Ryun still lost to Boyda in one of the nation’s biggest upsets.

Some observers have speculated those visits hurt Ryun by highlighting his ties to a White House that was falling out of the public’s favor. Could bringing in Pelosi, a stalwart liberal, similarly hurt Boyda in her GOP-leaning district?

Bob Beatty, an assistant professor of political science at Washburn University, said this week doesn’t think so. While the assistance to Ryun came in the heat of the campaign, Boyda’s visitor comes a year before the election, he said.

“It’s only the real political activists that are paying much attention right now.”

See how your government spends

The executive director of the Kansas Press Association will be among members of a board supervising development of a searchable Web site of state spending information.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius announced the appointment of Doug Anstaett, who has led the KPA since 2004, and three others to the board Friday, including state Secretary of Revenue Joan Wagnon.

Election’s just a year away

The Kansas Democratic Party still has launched no challenge to U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, R-Kansas.

But party communications director Jenny Davidson says Jim Slattery, a former Kansas congressman, continues to “seriously consider” the race.

“We’re talking to a number of Kansans who are disappointed with Pat Roberts and the way he’s protected our president and who are looking for new leadership in Washington,” Davidson said.

Roberts, whose staff characterizes such Demo comments as sour grapes, comes up for re-election next year.

He has a well-stocked campaign fund - some $2.72 million - just in case.

Gearing for the big race

Also gearing up to challenge the incumbent, Jim Ryun will welcome the public to his new campaign office Wednesday.

Ryun plans to officially open the office, in a downtown Topeka suite at 701 SW Jackson St., from noon to 2 p.m.

The candidate will address supporters at 12:30 p.m.

To pharm or not to pharm

The debate over pharmaceutical rice grown amid traditional food crops in Kansas is on tap this month at a conference at Washburn Law School.

“Pharmaceutical Crops in Kansas, A Larger Perspective,” is from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Nov. 14 at the law school’s Robinson Court Room, 1700 SW College Ave. in Topeka.

The forum is sponsored by the
Kansas Rural Center, the Center for Food Safety and the Farmer to Farmer Campaign on Genetic Engineering. The groups say pharmaceutical crops or “biofactories” should be of serious concern to food farmers.

The state’s Bioscience Authority, which is promoting new biological-based industries in Kansas, supports the new venture. Ventria Bioscience of California started this year to grow experimental pharmaceutical rice crops in central Kansas. They sought earlier to do so in California and Missouri but abandoned those plans amid pressure from the rice industry worried about cross-contamination.

The conference features a panel of scientists followed by a panel of farmers in the afternoon.
Dean’s Scholars to be recognized on Monday

LAWRENCE — Matthew Zachary Hudson, junior in psychology, Humboldt High School, is among 19 University of Kansas students in the Dean’s Scholars Program who will be honored by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the University Honors Program with a reception at 6 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5, at Nunemaker Center.

Joseph Steinmetz, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will welcome returning and newly selected Dean’s Scholars. Established in 1992, the program provides recipients with annual $1,000 scholarships and faculty mentors and is designed to diversify the talent pool available for liberal arts and sciences faculties.

The Dean’s Scholars Program is part of the University Honors Program and is geared for academically talented students in the liberal arts and sciences who are interested in pursuing graduate study and who represent groups traditionally underrepresented in graduate education.

Dean’s Scholars are matched with a distinguished KU faculty member and are required to complete special seminars designed to build skills and strategies necessary for graduate study and research. Students are selected as sophomores and juniors based on a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or higher.
LAWRENCE - When it comes to finding out where a business jet is headed, the University of Kansas and Kansas State University are more secretive than the governor's office.

Since January, the University of Kansas has participated in a service that shields real-time flight plan information from the public for trips taken by its Cessna Citation Bravo based at Lawrence Municipal Airport.

Kansas State has been blocking flight plan information for its two business jets through Internet tracking sites for six years.

"It is fairly common, for security, to not let the whole world know where your plane is going," said Todd Cohen, a spokesman for the University of Kansas.

But Gov. Kathleen Sebelius doesn't keep her flight plans secret.

"Our schedulers or security get on the flight tracking system and track the state plane regularly when needed," said Sebelius spokeswoman Nicole Corcoran.

Pilots regularly file flight plans with the Federal Aviation Administration prior to takeoff. Web sites then track the flights as they happen.

Federal law allows plane owners to request that information be blocked by the National Business Aviation Association.

"In the business community, some of the flights carry competitive and/or security concerns," said Dan Hubbard, a spokesman for the association. "There may be a reason why the party making the flight feels the flight should not be understood in real time."

The schools use their planes for a number of sensitive trips, including coaches recruiting players, performing government-funded research that officials would like to keep quiet or transporting controversial speakers to campus.

Kansas' Cessna seats about eight and is used by officials at both the Lawrence campus and the KU Medical Center campus in Kansas City, Kan.

The university does not block flight information on a King Air C-90B, of which the school is a part-owner. That plane, based in Kansas City, Mo., is used primarily for medical outreach reasons.

Kansas State uses its two planes for general business travel and developed the policy blocking the flight information since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"Part of that response was to make sure that we do not make available where the aircraft is going," said Dennis Kuhlman, dean of K-State-Salina. "That helps protect the university and the people who are on those planes."

The blocking policy doesn't cover the university's fleet of 40 aircraft used to teach piloting, maintenance and engineering, Kuhlman said.

The public can still find out where the planes went and when by filing a request under the Kansas Open Records Act, although the universities typically charge retrieval fees.

According to those records, Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway, Provost Richard Lariviere, Athletic Director Lew Perkins and men's basketball Coach Bill Self are the university's most frequent fliers.

The school said it spends almost $700,000 a year on its aircraft, including salary and benefits for three pilots and a scheduler, maintenance, training and insurance.