3 days of flying cost $1,800

By BERNARD SCHENSBERG

Trend budgets of the govern- ment office and the State Police were charged $1,800 for an eight-air- craft that shuttled Gov. Rod Blagojevich and security guards between Springfield and Chicago three times last week.

The costs are calculated on a per-leg, per-owner formula, depend- ing on the distance traveled, air service, and niceties the governor requested of the for- mer spokesman for the governor.

He said the Illinois Department of Transportation’s Division of Aeronautics had an agreement with the State Police, but it does not cover all costs, such as the full purchase price of the aircraft.

The actual cost for Blagojevich alone was $774, or just over $250 per flight. The fee is based on 30 miles per hour and $1,842.52, of which the police paid $1,800, with the costs split on each leg of the flight.

Last Tuesday through Thurs- day, the first three days of a planned six-day trip were sched- uled for the Blagojevich office, Springfield to Chicago, for a total of 46 days each day, and return to Chicago Plant in Chicago. The final three days, Nov. 26, were next week.

Blagojevich said last week that he had planned to return to Chicago Tuesday night for some events and to see his fam- ily, but he ended up staying in Springfield to spend “a few less hours” with the aid of his two daughters, who is a 3. He said he then decided to stay Chicago Wednesday night, and return to Springfield on Thursday.

If you’re asking me, I am a guilty of changing plans the last minute. ... rather than spend the night in that big, Je- rsey mansion, with all the ser- vants and the cooks and every- thing that goes along with it, I thought it would be better to work out something that I could get to a place and say any time that I could,” Blagojevich said in a statement. “I was sort of a that I just yelled, ‘God! You’re not even thinking about it, you’re thinking about the Cook County clerk’s job. You’re thinking about your law. You’re thinking about the admissions office.”

Frequent travelers were urged to get their real names when they arrived at a hospital instead of “doctor’s name” or “dentist’s name” or “Miss Smith” or “Miss Jones” to avoid being lied.

Bryan Essex, a spokesman for the Illinois Department of Transportation, said the department had no comment on the matter.

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"...you live like a king here"

Part 3

Working the early shift at Excel during the week and running his bar on weekends leaves Eddie Bernal tired. His sons, Jimmy, left, and Eddie, joke with him about making money to spend at the downtown carnivals.

Reflection of a changing America

Excel employees Eddie and Alicia Bernal have earned enough money to buy a house and are able to shop in Springfield for items such as computers and satellite dishes. The Bermas work different shifts so one parent will always be home with their two children, Eddie Jr., left, and Jimmy, center.

After a week of cutting off pig hooves at Excel, Alicia Bernal spends her weekend nights at the family’s bar, Salin Aulin. While Eddie DJs for the “grain ball” (pig dance) the night before Eastlake, Alicia does everything from tending bar to cleaning bathrooms.

Berkowitz had become a town hero partly on his own. There were few who felt that religious leaders had been forced to accept, fees that schools were forced to over- look, and that police officials chose to ignore.

For Hispanic workers and their families, the bar created personal conflicts.

"Impose an alien," he said, "on the board of directors, but he didn't want to be there. He was a kid. He was a kid, he was a kid."

Every day I'm here, here, here," she said, sneaking her son in the direction of the two-story house she and her husband bought. "We almost never do it. We do very well."

As she remembered her home in Mini-ta’s former beach resort, she sighed again. "At night, our mango tree would be full of fruit. It was the one, the breeze from the sea, she said. "I tell my husband, ‘Let’s do this, but he doesn’t want things like, my husband is happy here."

Many of the people at Excel works with taught papers, she said. "It’s so easy to see the kids and whether they want to go."

Time in this small, quiet town had brought prosperity to Beardslev’s immigrants. But their prosperity was built on too fast. Their spending could continue only if immi-

Parties are often a family affair for Beardslev’s Hispanic residents. Adults and children celebrate a First Communion at Salin Aulin until late at night.
"I have a lot of resentment."

But her husband ticked off a list of complaints.

The Hispanics didn't speak English. They celebrated their own Independence Day. And he believed they didn't pay their fair share of taxes.

"We're saying if you're going to be living in America, you're going to follow American laws. I'm talking about the Hispanics living here. Eugene Giron, who was a trim 7 and emulated with his American flag and the words, "These colors never run."

Giron also didn't like being called Angelo.

"We are Anglos," he said. "We are Americans."

Five Bearstown residents bothered nursery was at the heart of their feelings.

"I don't think there's any redeeming value here, I think it's a mess," a lot, Delbert Jordan, who lives near the nursery where the immigrants are protected by our own laws from moving to the other side, said. A 5-year-old Bearstown native who asked not to be named.

"My husband wants to move to Iraq. I pray that we're not going to have one. I want to go on my own."

"It's sad to see the schools paint them, Public has been taken in by Excel. But then a friend of mine told me, "I'm dealing with it, because it's wearing me. I don't see you're upset."

Excel has been silent about many of the issues surrounding the Bearstown operation. Repeat- ed requests made over a seven-month period for a face-to-face interview with company officials were ignored.

However, Excel said in a written response that "We make every effort to avoid employee employment eligibility while protecting against discrimination. Despite what some might speculate based on hearsay, we are very good at verifying employment eligibility." Excel agreed that Excel had gone together in recent years.

"For people without documents of employment, we have a process of verifying all kinds of documents, including the history of the job and many more."

Alberto Rosario, a 14-year-old daughter, Elizabeth Barcelo, was an interpreter in Excel's human resources department. It was her job to contact the Social Security Administration's Springfield office every week to check the numbers new employees had in the U.S.

"For less than a month," she said, and as least as many as 1,600.

"It can take weeks, if not months, for the Social Security number to match."

It isn't sold, the schools paint them.

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"We are Anglos," he said. "We are Americans."

The Hispanics who adopted most quality life in Bear- stown were people like Emilio Barcelo, who took all of every year, said Cynthia Giron, a mother and an Excel employee. Barcelo told him story about the next adventure.

He struck out for the border in 1997, and 10 times he was detained by immigration authorities. Adding the years up, said, nearly 1,200.

"He was not born in this country, he was born in Mexico, he was born in the United States."

When Barcelo got across the border, he rode the shuttle to downtown San Diego, caught a train to Chicago and slept in a park for two weeks. He pleaded guilty to immigration fraud, served five months in Chicago, then served five months in Mexico.

Then, he found himself in a Mexican mother and a Mexican father.

Barcelo's timing changed his life because he had a 1.2 million dollar insurance policy. As a Mexican, he was lucky enough to take advantage of the immigration program after he entered in 1988.

"A lot of people missed the opportunity. Now, they're lawyers," said the 35-year-old Barcelo. "It was a great opportunity, but I'm his wife, his family." He mentioned his wife, Adela, in their most recent interview and reached his brother at the border. No family mentioned.

Because he was documented, Adela also became eligible for legal work papers, which she received in 1999. Their two sons, Daniel and Emmanuel — the only children the family had known in the United States, are now American citizens.

In 1988, Barcelo also became a citizen and moved his family from Chicago to Bear- stown in search of affordable housing, a low crime rate and good wages.

Barcelo immediately went to work for Excel, where he was employed for a year, getting a job starting at $4.80 an hour.

They bought a 2-bedroom house and joined the family.

They refinanced and cut the money to come to a career called break off. They also bought a bunch of equipment that Barcelo rented and paid it under the name "J's Bar," a Spanish phrase meaning, "Yes, it can be done."