

UFOs Sighted in Central Marin

Citizens in Corte Madera and Kentfield See UFOs on Two Separate Nights

by Jane F. Rogan

WHETHER OR NOT you believe extraterrestrials piloted their crafts over Kentfield and Corte Madera during the week of September 14, you have got to be wondering what precisely *did* happen. The only certain thing is that two unidentified flying object (UFO) sightings were reported in the heart of Marin County. At midnight, Tuesday, September 15, Jerry and Lori Morgan of Corte Madera claim they saw an enormous craft hover over their house and move slowly toward San Francisco. At 9 p.m., Thursday, September 17, a Kentfield family claims they saw exactly the same thing. Nobody can say exactly what it was these people have reported seeing. But everybody is curious.

Lori and Jerry Morgan have now received national news coverage on their UFO story. On September 30, the couple told Channel 11 viewers all about their sighting. Before that they were interviewed by numerous reporters, including Francine Nemitz from the *Twin Cities Times* [see interview below].

When Morgan and his wife visited the *Times*' office, he told me the September 15 incident was "really kind of a religious experience," similar to others he had encountered. When I asked them for a more in-depth interview, one which would explore a correlation among their lifestyles, beliefs and the UFO sighting, they refused. Their ostensible reason for refusing to talk was based on their fear that people might start thinking they were just after publicity. Considering their track record on news releases, I couldn't help but question this fear as being quite a bit after the fact. I also began to feel that perhaps the Morgans had refused the in-depth interview for other, more personal reasons.

Perhaps the Morgans backed out for the same reasons the Kentfield family insisted that I not use their names in reporting their sighting on September 17. Most people are not willing to have their perceptions challenged or denied. They feel their experience is invalidated. They begin to mistrust their memories. They become defensive and scared. In short, they begin to worry that they are losing their minds. This, of course, is a legitimately frightening experience. But it is only an appropriate explanation for this aura of hush-hush if these people actually did see a UFO. The other explanation for all the mystery is that they are lying.

In an attempt to offer some speculation about these reports, I have been confronted with the uncomfortable dilemma of either disbelieving honest faces and earnest voices, or of believing stories which have no documentation except for some very flimsy hearsay.

After calling NASA, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Mill Valley Air Force Station on Mt. Tamalpais, Civil Defense, the FBI, and the CIA, I am convinced that there weren't any experimental aircraft out on either of these September evenings. I even called

the United States Geological Society to see if there were any reported earthquakes to account for the window-shaking noises the Kentfield family said they felt and heard. Furthermore, I phoned all of the Morgan's and Kentfield family's neighbors looking for confirming stories. Only the Morgan's immediate neighbors confirmed seeing anything unusual, and the young boy I spoke with said he would believe it if someone told him what he saw was just an airplane or a helicopter.

Finally, the question I have to ask is how did so many people in Corte Madera and Kentfield miss a craft described as being the size of "four intersections," "five 747s," and making the noise of an earthquake? But then, maybe people did see and hear a UFO, and they all fear everyone will think they are crazy.

I began to think seriously about how difficult a situation like this would be after I spoke with the mature-sounding, logical voice of the woman in Kentfield. "I know that I saw something very unusual," she told me. "After we watched this huge thing pass over the house, I went in to call up someone who could give me some information. I wanted to contact the Air Force and see if they were doing any experiments. But the information

operator's supervisor hung up on me! I don't like people thinking I'm crazy. I don't even believe in UFOs — at all. I saw this thing, and I have no idea what it was."

After this woman, her niece and nephew "saw this thing," and they futilely attempted to contact traditional sources, they looked up the *Independent Journal* story on the Morgans and gave them a call. The Morgans reassured them that they were not crazy, that "the thing" they described fit their own sighting perfectly, and that they could be certain — it was a UFO. To their own credit, the Kentfield family is still not so sure. They did not have an accompanying religious experience. They were scared to death.

If you have ever discussed the possibility of extraterrestrial UFOs penetrating our atmosphere, the question you will often hear is, do you *believe* in them? Those who are convinced that extraterrestrials have visited earth, discuss the subject with a sense of belief behind their words — faith, if you will. And ever since the UFO heydays of the 1950s, religious-oriented groups have been springing up all over the United States and Europe. A pervasive belief, which harkens back to the

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primitive, mythological worship of messianic sky Gods, permeates these groups.

In 1950, after supposedly being instructed by the extraterrestrial "A-Lan," Mr. Daniel Fry founded a group called Understanding, Incorporated. The group's ambitious aim is to "complete the problems of mankind." Ruth Norman, in 1954, founded Unarius, Science of Life, out of El Cajon, California. Then there is the group Aethirus, headquartered on Saturn, but financed from Los Angeles. Mr. George King has been running this organization since 1964. In some form or another, each of these organizations maintains the belief that extraterrestrials exist, that they have invaded our atmosphere in their flying saucers, and that they have done so to lead our country away from certain catastrophic doom.

The extraterrestrials' goals are always benevolent, enlightened, and far more advanced than our own limited earthling philosophies. The aliens are often perceived in an image not unlike the stereotypical Messiah. And when you are so bold as to question the existence of these great beings — who are perhaps our own moral and historical benefactors — you are accused of not being enlightened enough.

These are extreme cases. Jerry and Lori Morgan are the spiritual, "organic" types. So far, they do not come off as narrow-minded, although they may be heading for the "cultish" category. Jerry Morgan sells what are called "New Age Products." The products range from such items as a moisturizing lotion, which will send you on your way to "total success," to a "Formula 23" mineral drink which can "cure" arthritis. If, according to the Morgan's view, a person lives his or her life in harmony with the universe — and this includes using holistic products, and following holistic philosophies — this person will put off positive "vibrations." These vibrations attract certain events which benefit the person's life. They may also repel negative events.

The Morgans believe that their positive vibrations have put them in harmony with the universe and, therefore, in contact with benevolent extraterrestrials. Their explanation for why others cannot experience these sightings is that most people have not achieved this balance in their lives. Given this, I am left to wonder what

holistic attributes the doughnut-eating, cigarette-smoking, television-watching Kentfield family possesses.

Tallying up the results of my research, I am left with the following impressions: Jerry and Lori Morgan were looking for an extraterrestrial "religious experience," and they got it. The Kentfield family was sitting watching their television; they heard a loud rumble — like an earthquake — rushed outside, and saw an object in the air that they could not identify. What they got was an unusual and frightening experience. The Morgans are certain they saw a UFO. The Kentfield family is hoping they saw a secret Air Force experiment.

The interesting part about both reports is the different attitudes which lie behind the stories. Because of their uncertainty, their willingness to accept traditional explanations, and their complete desire for anonymity, the Kentfield family's story is more believable to me.