

'Big silver star' gives rise to UFO thoughts

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By DAVID WIDENER
Staff writer

The star-shaped, floating object moves swiftly and soundlessly through the air, giving off a periodic glow, following and troubling a group of Vidor residents and baffling weathermen, air traffic observers and police.

Delores Cherry, 52, of Vidor, who has seen and described in detail what she calls an unidentified flying object. Others reported having spotted the object in the past 10 days, but, so far, the reports have received no official confirmation.

"We've been kind of afraid since we've seen it so much," Cherry says. "It's kind of like it's following us."

Cherry, her nephew Byron Cole, her sisters

Joann McIntyre and Wilma Cole and Cole's two daughters say they have seen it hovering at midnight in the Sandra Lane area. Cherry and McIntyre say they first spotted it 10 days ago following them as they drove west on Interstate 10. Cherry says the object disappeared at Farm Road 105.

Witnesses said the object resembled a star and had three rounded protrusions similar to points on a star.

"At first I thought it was a great, big silver star," Cherry says. "It's not a weather balloon and it's certainly not a star."

Officials at Jefferson County Airport and the National Weather Service say no unusual sightings showed up on radar Sunday night, despite a report of an unidentified flying object in the Vidor area.

The object first was spotted on Sandra Lane, just off Farm Road 105 north of the Vidor city limit. Witnesses say the UFO stayed in the area two hours, from 9 to 11 p.m., leaving only when a helicopter or small plane arrived at the scene. None of the witnesses knew what kind of helicopter it was or who sent it.

David Watson, the patrolman from the Vidor Police Department who responded to the call, said he stayed at the scene 30 minutes.

"In my opinion, it was clouds passing in front of a real bright star," Watson said. "It would be real bright, then it seemed to disappear."

Watson said he neither saw nor heard any helicopter or other aircraft in the area where the UFO was reported.

The Texas Highway Patrol does have a helicopter it can dispatch from Houston, but a spokesman said one was not sent to the scene.

"Our log indicates nothing unusual showing up on radar at the time of the sighting," says Harold Edwards, air traffic control tower manager at the airport.

"Our radar will not show or pick up anything below 1,000-foot altitude,"

says Edwards, "so, it's still possible something may have been in that area. We only work helicopters that are landing or coming in to our airport."

Fred Wesley was on duty at the National Weather Service when the call of a UFO came in about 10:30 p.m.

"I checked the Lake Charles and Galveston radars, and there were no unusual sightings," he says. "The weather was mostly clear at that time with visibility for seven miles, so one of the airports would have had to pick up any aircraft in the area."

Wesley says no weather balloons were in the area Sunday night.

He reported scattered cloud covers at 1,000 feet and said the the sighting could have been a reflection on one of those clouds from a truck or big spotlight on the ground.

"But you can't really discount the report," says Wesley. "The people seemed reliable, and the weather conditions were favorable to see a great distance."

Some of those witnessing the sighting Sunday night say they have seen a strange object in the sky several times over the past 10 days.

"Nobody believes anything like this, and you get laughed at, so no one wanted to report it at first," says Cherry. "I've seen it four times, twice coming back at night from Orange. It's really weird. I'd just really like to know what it is."

"It puts off red and blue vapor and has a glow around it at times, but it makes no noise."

McIntyre, saw it for the first time Sunday night.

"It looked like a light and was moving fast, but you couldn't tell what shape it was," she says.

Another relative, Georgette Cole, finally reported the sighting.

"My husband went out to get some cigarettes from the car and spotted it," says Cole. "There were about 14 of us at my grandmother's house. No one wanted to report it because they knew they would get laughed at. I decided to do it so I called the Vidor police."

Cole says the object beamed brightly and had three points on it.

"It appeared to be round and sparkled all around," she says. "It moved

sideways and up and down and stayed in the area until the helicopter came. They both disappeared then."

McIntyre said she could only assume the craft that arrived in the area was a helicopter. "All I could see was the lights, but it looked and sounded like a helicopter. It was moving slow like one."

Vidor Police Chief Butch Reynolds said his department sent the officer to the scene after receiving a call about the sighting. He said the department had received no calls about UFOs before Sunday night.

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UFO spotted over Vidor

By SHONDA NOVAK
Staff writer

VIDOR — Never mind the laughs, Delores Cherry says the UFO she and her relatives have spotted over Vidor skies during the past 10 days has become disconcerting enough to start talking about.

National Weather Service specialist Fred Wesley issued a public information statement late Sunday about a possible UFO, which was sighted for the fifth time at Sandra Lane between Vidor and Beaumont between 10 p.m. and midnight. Weather specialist Danny Graves declined further comment on the sighting this morning except to say such matters are

beyond the scope of the weather service.

"There's a UFO research group in Boulder, Colo., I think, but we can't find the number and I don't know the name of the group," Graves said.

Vidor police also are mystified by the rotund, silver object Cherry and her sister, Joann McIntyre, 50, of Rose City, first spotted a week ago Thursday while driving home to Vidor from Orange along Interstate 10.

"At first I thought it was a great big silver star," said Cherry, 52, of 1495 N. Main in Vidor. "Then I said no, it can't be."

Cherry said the object is three or four

times as big as a star and has three rounded protrusions similar to the points on a star.

Every 10 minutes or so, the object emits a blue or red light, but otherwise does not blink and makes no sound, she said.

"It had been with us all the way home on the right side of the road. Then it disappeared by Roy's Grocery on Texas 105. It just took off real fast," Cherry said of the first time she saw the object.

Cherry said the object can "move slow or fast, up and down or back and forth, whichever way it decides."

She and her sister saw it the same place and time last Thursday while driving from

Orange to Vidor, but this time the object was above instead of to the side of the road.

"We knew it was something and we mentioned it to a few people, but they just laughed their heads off," Cherry said. "Everybody thinks you're crazy, especially if you're from Vidor."

"My nephew said he wished he had some of that stuff we'd been drinking or smoking, but then he saw it, too," Cherry said.

Cherry said her nephew, Byron Cole, 31, of Vidor, saw the UFO late Sunday over her mother's house on Sandra Lane around midnight. Cherry said she, McIntyre, her

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other sister, Wilma Cole, Cole's 12- and 19-year-old daughters and other relatives also were present.

Byron Cole's wife, Georgette, called the Vidor police, but Officer David Watson didn't quite know what to make of the incident.

"I think the poor man was so dumbfounded he didn't know what to say. He just stood there for an hour watching. He left and didn't tell us a thing. It was like he was in shock," Cherry said.

A Vidor police dispatcher said Watson was off duty and she could not reach him at home for comment. She said no other police personnel knew anything about the incident and the only staff officer on duty, Lt. Jerry Parker, was out of the office.

Cherry said Watson called the weather service after spotting the object Sunday

night and said, "It's not a weather balloon and it's certainly not a star.' Really, he couldn't tell us anything," Cherry said.

"We've been kind of afraid since we've seen it so much. It's like it's following us."

Cherry said the object has been sighted only late at night and she is puzzled why no one else has reported it.

She said she believes she'd be met with laughs and skeptical looks if she asked neighbors to come see it.

"There were all these people going on the highway in front of us when we first saw it," Cherry says. "Maybe they did, too, but they didn't say anything either. We're not crazy, we're really not."

An American force commanded by Andrew Jackson defeated a larger brigade of British soldiers Jan. 8, 1815, at the Battle of New Orleans. Peace had been declared two weeks before but word had not reached either force.

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