

# Bright lights in sky spark UFO reports

By Maxine L. Lynch

Hundreds of people, upset over seeing a strange stream of bright lights sailing across the sky just as the full moon rose Sunday night, besieged astronomers, police and the news media with phone calls yesterday.

"No one here saw it, but we have had a sufficient number of coherent callers to safely say something happened," said Peter Pesch, astronomy professor of the Warner & Swasey Observatory at Case Western Reserve University.

Hundreds of people in Ohio, central and eastern Kentucky and central Illinois who reportedly saw the "ball of fire" were convinced it was a U.F.O.

"It was glowing real bright. Like something I have never seen before," said an area farmer who reported he saw the lights about 10 p.m. as he walked to his barn.

Some people who reported the sighting to The Plain Dealer said they initially suspected a nuclear attack.

An Eastlake police dispatcher said one caller, an unidentified police chief, described the sighting as a meteor breaking up.

Pesch said the sighting might have been a boloid.

"It is the name we give to a meteor which is very bright and breaks up into fragments," he said. "We have no way of knowing. It could be some kind of spacecraft

material breaking up."

But you can't convince Fred Avalli or Nicholas P. Orlando that it was a boloid or a shooting star.

"We were driving down Country Lane Rd. (near Solon) and looking through the windshield when we saw these lights," Orlando said. "I stopped the car and I said, 'Freddie do you see that?'"

The two California men, here on a brief business trip, said the lights appeared about 3,000 to 4,000 feet above their car.

"It did not make a sound," Orlando said.

They said the lights flew in formation and some had streaks shooting from them like firecrackers.

"There were about 15 of them," Avelli said.

Pesch said he received calls from as far east as Ashtabula and as far west as Port Clinton.

Although many callers said a plane flew nearby, no pilots or passengers aboard local flights in the area reported anything unusual, a National Aviation Administration official in Cleveland said.

Earl J. Neff, director emeritus of the Cleveland Ufology Project, said Ohio is one of three states that has the most UFO sightings nationally. Neff said he is investigating the sighting.