

(Cir. D. 191,885)

Seattle, Wash.

JUN 24 1985

Post Intelligence

Allen's P. C. B. Est. 1888

# Gathering on 392 UFOs widens its horizons

By Don Tewkesbury  
P-I Reporter

A report of "nine shiny, pulsating objects flying over Mount Rainier" started it all 38 years ago.

Several dozen people gathered at a UFO convention here yesterday to mark the anniversary of Civil Air Patrol pilot Kenneth Arnold's June 24, 1947, report of the first unidentified flying objects.

The report from Arnold, who died during the past year in Meridian, Idaho, set off the first major wave of UFO sightings in the United States in 1947.

In the intervening 38 years, little has changed. The only difference is that today's witness is more likely to describe UFOs as Friabee-shaped.

Thousands of unidentified flying objects still are reported every year and the debate between believers and skeptics over "flying saucers" continues unabated.

## Unexplainable sightings

Skeptics ridicule flying saucers as "popular myth" and say there has not been a single piece of physical evidence presented in nearly 40 years.

Believers say that, although 90 percent of UFO reports are traced to explainable objects or events, there are many sightings that even dedicated skeptics and debunkers can't explain.

Among those who have been believers since 1947 is a former

Army major, Wayne Aho, whose New Age Foundation of Tacoma sponsored the 24th annual New Space Age Convention at a Seattle Center meeting room Saturday and yesterday.

Aho yesterday cited an Associated Press story from Moscow reporting the sighting of a UFO by pilots and passengers aboard a Soviet airliner last January. In the article, printed in the Post-Intelligencer, witnesses said the UFO shone a bright beam of light on the ground and then on the plane.

The UFO also flew beside the plane at 33,000 feet "like an honorary escort" until the plane reached its destination, according to one of the pilots.

## Cover-up charged

"In every instance, there is a denial story later," Aho said. "In this case, two days later, a denial story said they had just seen some space junk. Can you imagine space junk shining beams and following alongside a plane for 20 minutes. You have to be more gullible to believe the second story than you do to believe the original event occurred.

"That's why we charge there is Watergate-style cover-up concerning UFOs. The stories all are suppressed, and if you want to be immediately incarcerated in jail or a hospital by authorities, just say you've been taken aboard a UFO."

However, Aho's devotion to the pursuit of UFOs has been expanded over the years to include inner as well as outer space, prompting some UFO fans to complain about convention speakers yesterday whose topics were not directly related to UFOs.

New Age Foundation concerns have expanded to include nutrition, holistic health and spiritual transformation since Aho's marriage to his wife, Lee, who is involved in color awareness and therapy.

The latest convention was advertised as a gathering "where science and religion blend in a harmonic of truth."

Ecology, astrology, hypnotism, vegetarian diets and near-death experiences were among convention speakers' topics over the weekend.

A highlight of the Saturday afternoon session was the wedding of two of the convention's coordinators, Paul Koslowski and Maureen Connelly, both of Tacoma.

"Our motto is: 'Keep looking up and you too may see something,'" Aho said. "But we also say to watch out for open manholes don't keep looking up all the time."