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Hesperia couple reports early morning UFO show

By WILLIAM COUEY
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HESPERIA — Theeey're baaaaaack.

At least, they were last week, says a Hesperia man.

Mel Hardman and his wife, Fonda, say they watched for several minutes last Wednesday as an X-shaped UFO cavorted in the predawn sky over Hesperia. He called the *Daily Press*, he said, to see if anyone else reported it.

"It looked sort of like two frankfurters crossed to make an X, both of them inside an oval-shaped 'soft-light' lightbulb," the 60-year-old ex-Air Force man said.

"It wasn't an airplane and it wasn't a weather balloon. I don't know what it was, and I'd like to find out," said Hardman, who has em-

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physema and spends most of each night watching TV from a reclining chair in his living room.

Hardman, whose apartment is near Balsam and Sequoia roads, said he sleeps in fits and starts in front of the TV, which is next to a picture window facing east toward the sunrise.

Wednesday morning, Hardman awoke about 5 and glanced out the window. There, hanging above the crescent moon in the brightening sky, was the UFO.

"It had a grayish framework that was kind of thick — thick like frankfurters, rather than sticks. This framework was surrounded by an oval-shaped white glow that had a defined outline. It was like looking at a 'soft light' bulb.

"There was no glare, no sound, no smoke and no noise. The thing was right above the moon, but it was much smaller," he said.

The UFO hovered in one place

with a kind of wobbling or quivering motion, Hardman said. He watched it from 5:08 to 5:11 a.m., then yelled to his wife to wake up.

Fonda came in, and as the two watched, the UFO suddenly zoomed off to the south beyond the frame of the window and his line of sight. His wife picks up the narrative:

"It disappeared into some haze or clouds. Then it came back out, almost all the way back to the moon. Then it stopped, turned around, shot back into the clouds and disappeared," she said. They agreed it moved much faster than any jet they'd ever seen.

"You aren't going to make us look foolish, are you?" Fonda added anxiously. "We don't smoke or drink, and we're not kooks."

"I don't make these things up, believe me," Hardman said. "If I knew how, I'd write them down and make a lot of money." He added that he has good long-distance eyesight and only needs glasses to read.

Does he believe in UFOs? "I have no stand on them either way. I'm not politically bound on these things."

Hardman added he saw a recent report on television that UFOs had been spotted in Northern California, but he didn't pay much attention, he said.

Couldn't the object have been a weather balloon lit up by the predawn sun?

"I've seen weather balloons; it was definitely not a weather balloon. It was too quick and more abrupt. It seemed powered; its energy seemed to be coming from within rather than pushed by the wind," Hardman said.

Maj. Lloyd Patterson, a spokesman for nearby George Air Force Base, said his office had no recent reports of UFOs. Nor does a weather station there launch balloons anymore, he said.

The California Highway Patrol office in Victorville also had no reports of UFOs, but a spokesman noted the office doesn't take phone calls until 8 a.m.

Hardman's sighting was the second recently to involve an X-shaped UFO. On May 22, the Associated Press reported, a CHP officer and a radio station news

director were among more than a dozen people to report seeing a X-shaped UFO race across the sky near Petaluma north of San Francisco. It was variously reported as black or orange, with white lights and tiny green ones.

On May 29, multi-colored UFOs "the size of ping-pong balls" were seen in the skies over Sao Paulo, Brazil. They were recorded on radar and were unsuccessfully chased by Brazilian Air Force jet interceptors, the AP said.