

see the lights and a shape, about 200 or 300 feet in the air. It was just sitting there and hovering."

The UFO moved silently in a northerly direction, toward Lawton, Neumann said, adding that he called the Cass County Sheriff's Department to report the sighting, "but they thought I was a wacko."

"I thought it was a spaceship. I still think it was. I don't care what anybody says," Neumann said he knows the sighting was on Aug. 1 because he wrote down the date and a description of the craft right after he saw it.

When Long and Jandura sighted the craft over Banks Lake a short time later, they said they heard a young voice screaming from the shore, "What is it? What is it?" The voice apparently belonged to Chris Mricin, a Hackett Catholic Central High School student who lives on the west side of the lake.

After Long's story appeared last Tuesday, Mricin called the Gazette to say he had seen the UFO that night and yelled for his father and sister to come outside and see it.

"It was about 1,000 feet away, a slow-moving craft going over the lake," he said. "I thought maybe it was a helicopter, but there was no sound. I called my family out and we all saw it. We definitely saw something, just as he (Long) described it."

Around the same time, a woman who asked not to be identified said she was driving with her husband along Red Arrow Highway toward Mattawan when the couple "saw this terrific light streak. We did see this enormous thing in the sky. It was going up and then came down."

"Who knows what it was," she said. "My husband said it was a meteorite. I said nothing that big could fall and there be no report of damage. This left a yellow-green white light, a streak in the sky. It was close to the tops of the trees."

Next in the procession of UFO sightings came a report from three people who were driving on Baseline Road, the northern line of Van Buren County, between 10:30 and 11 p.m. on Aug. 1. A woman in the group, who also asked to not be identified, said she and her husband and a neighbor were returning to their homes on Baseline from a softball game in Kalamazoo that featured the nation's No. 1 team, Steele's Sports of Grafton, Ohio.

"We saw a very large object, with three red lights on the end," she said. "We thought it might be helicopters or planes flying in very tight formation, but it was moving very slowly so we followed it."

The trio followed the UFO along Baseline and then north on Doster Road, the eastern border of Allegan County, until it disappeared over a hill, she said.

"From what he (Long) described, it was same thing," she said. "It was huge. The sky was clear and you could see the lights. Between the lights there was a dark solid mass. It was very intense black surrounded by the night."

From there the craft apparently headed west toward Lake Michigan, where Phil Willson of Kalamazoo, standing on the porch of his lakeshore cottage near Glenn, saw a huge object with a bright light hovering over the lake around 11 p.m.

"My wife and I and our two children saw something that same evening," Willson said. "We walked out on the porch to look at the stars and saw something over the lake, about three or four miles out."

What caught our eye was the light effects. There was a tremendously large and extremely bright light at about 10 o'clock in the sky. It was extremely bright and got brighter and brighter, then it stayed at the same intensity, then it faded, then it would show up elsewhere.

"We saw it appear and reappear at bright intensity three or four times in the air and spring near elsewhere, then it would reappear. When I first saw it I thought it was a Coast Guard helicopter, but it was stationary with a spot light. But I know the distance-to-intensity ratio was way off. For a helicopter it was too bright, way too bright. And it wasn't moving."

Willson said he used a long-disk camera lens to look at the light and lighting system "the definition of a large craft." "I figured it was some- thing unusual," he said.

Several other people who read about Long's UFO experience last week also called the Gazette to report similar sightings, though not in the same type of UFO as Long's. In 1981, another woman said she saw a UFO over her trailer park in Kalamazoo last Wednesday and a man said he's seen the same UFO at a fishing pond in central Kalamazoo County.

All of the witnesses are being interviewed by Virginia Tully of the Mutual UFO Network, a world's largest UFO Network for UFO reports. Tully is describing the "major sightings" but she has declined to speculate about what the craft might be.

Missionville, Dennis Root, head of the control tower at Kalamazoo County Airport, said he has seen strange aircraft lower in the sky in the airport have been made weak, and nothing lower in recent showed up on radar.

"I know when this has happened before, when something comes out in the paper, we're going to get more calls," he said.

"I don't mean to downplay the person, but we do have a group of people in our society who want to be in the news. I would say that would be natural to call the airport and find out if there are aircraft flying over. We haven't gotten any thing like that."

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