

UFO still unexplained as investigator reaches the end of the trail of leads

By Art Drake

The UFO sighting that directed the state's attention to Waunakee for a day or two in July will remain unexplained unless new evidence crops up, according to UFO investigator Don Schmitt.

Schmitt said Sunday he has exhausted all his leads in the sighting and came up with no plausible explanation for the crescent-shaped lights that were spotted by a Waunakee couple and two Waunakee police officers in the early morning hours of July 14.

"We've eliminated the conventional," he said. "We've eliminated the astronomical, the natural. We have checked about air searches, anything that required medical air transport.

"There was nothing in the entire county that night," Schmitt said.

The Waunakee couple notified police at about 2 a.m. July 14 after catching sight of the lights which moved erratically in the sky east of Waunakee. The lights were in view for more than an hour before the police officers decided to go on with their regular routine.

Their report brought reporters from Madison and Milwaukee to Waunakee for the police officers' press conference later that day.

Schmitt, a Milwaukee resident, is co-director of the J. Allen Hynek Center

for UFO Studies in Chicago. He also investigated the series of UFO reports that came from the Belleville area earlier this year.

He said the fact that two civilians and two police officers saw the lights lends credibility to the Waunakee sighting.

The erratic motion of the lights rules out a star or planet as well as conventional air traffic, Schmitt said. It couldn't have been a weather balloon because they are not launched at night, and they don't carry lighting equipment anyway, he added.

And he said a hot air balloon is not possible because it's against the law for them to fly at night. A hot air balloon was in the Leeds and Morrisonville areas that morning, but it was launched after the Waunakee sighting, Schmitt said.

Schmitt emphasized that the fact that the Waunakee UFO is unexplained does not mean that it came from space carrying extraterrestrial creatures. The "U" in UFO stands for unidentified, he observed.

As UFO sightings go, the one in Waunakee was "nothing that spectacular," Schmitt said. "There were lights in the sky behaving unconventionally."

But one interesting thing about it is that other UFOs were spotted in the Madison area that same night, Schmitt said.

A woman who lives on Madison's west side reported seeing "what appeared to be an elongated object displaying a white light in the center with blue and green lights on the side," Schmitt said. That was seen at 3:50 a.m. in the sky west of Madison.

"The intensity of lights and size were greater than any star she had ever seen," Schmitt added.

Another sighting occurred near Stoughton from 1:15 to 1:30 a.m. While driving on County Hwy. E, the witness saw a slow moving object in the sky with a large white light in front and with red and blue flashing lights.

After completing the work involving the Waunakee sighting, Schmitt still has other UFO reports to turn to, including some "abduction cases."

There is a pattern of those reports, Schmitt said. Usually, the witness is driving and suddenly feels disoriented. Finding himself on an unfamiliar road, the driver can't account for several hours, Schmitt said.

Hypnosis draws additional information out of the witnesses, who often recall being contacted by short beings with large heads and small facial features.

Schmitt said he is working on six such cases in Wisconsin and that over 300 are now under investigation in the United States.