

Cases of alien kidnapping to highlight UFO conference

By Geoff Walden

Staff Writer

You are about to enter another dimension.

A place where human beings are kidnapped by little gray men with large heads and bug eyes who have journeyed to Earth through space.

Where the victims return to their homes suffering from symptoms ranging from vomiting to recurring dreams, and only gradually remember what happened to them, but then only part of it.

You are about to enter ... the UFO Conference, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday at Henry H. Wells Middle School on Route 312 in Brewster. And if the bug-eyed monsters themselves won't be there, people who purport to have met them will.

At least 12 unrelated earthlings in the Hudson Valley and Connecticut have reported being kidnapped by aliens, according to Peter Gersten of Peekskill, organizer of the conference. Some of the abducted dozen will be at the free event, he said.

The focus of the program — a follow-up to the 1984 conference on the boomerang-shaped object sighted in the nighttime sky in this area — is extra-terrestrial contact. Although the boomerang turned out to be light planes flown in formation by pranksters, Gersten contends some of the sightings are still unexplained.

Mark Plummer says, however, that most UFOs can be dismissed as natural phenomena. Plummer is executive director of the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, an international group based in Buffalo.

"We don't believe anyone's been kidnapped," Plummer said this week. He said no one claiming to have been a hostage has produced physical evidence of captors or their spacecraft.

Plummer said people who foster belief in kidnappings do it for one of two reasons. "You can write a book on UFO abductions and make hundreds of thousands of dollars," he said, "or you're deluded."

Gersten says 12 is too large a number for the hostage reports to have been coincidental fantasies. "I think the chances of that happening are astronomical," he said, "unless there's actually something there."

Gersten, a criminal lawyer in New York City, made the observation that if a dozen people said they were taken hostage by the same motorcycle gang their claim would generate a massive investigation.

"I've represented people for a lot less than abducting 12 people," he said.

Saturday's affair features an all-star lineup of authors who have written on close encounters of the third kind. The highlight promises to be an experiment in extra-terrestrial contact at 9 p.m.

Schedule of events for UFO conference

Peter Gersten of Peekskill, who represents Citizens Against UFO Secrecy, will open the UFO conference from 10 to 10:30 a.m.

Phil Imbrogno, who wrote "Night Seige," about Hudson Valley UFO sightings from 1983 to 1986, will speak until noon.

From noon to 1 p.m., the speaker will be Bud Hopkins, who wrote "Intruders" and has placed Hudson Valley "hostages" under hypnosis.

After lunch, John Keel, who wrote "The Mothman Prophecies" and has written about contact for 20 years, will speak from 2 to 2:30.

From 2:30 to 3 it's John Fuller, author of "The Interrupted Journey," speaking about the 1961 case of Betty and Barney Hill, the first publicly reported kidnapping.

Connecticut investigator Perry Collins will speak from 3 to 3:30, followed by Dean Fagerstrom until 4.

Ellen Crystal, author of "Invasion: They Come in Silence," about UFO sightings in Pine Bush, in Orange County, has the floor from 4:30 to 5:30.

The conference will be open to questions and unscheduled speakers until 6:30.

After dinner, Whitley Strieber, who wrote "Communion," about tri-state area cases, talks from 7:30 until the experiment for extra-terrestrial contact. Strieber, who says he conducts intergalactic communication regularly, will help foster the attempt to be reached by another world.

The experiment will involve group meditation, Gersten said, in an effort to get a message from outer space. The message could be channeled, whereby an individual's body is taken over by an outside intelligence speaking words from the cosmos. Or it could come through automatic writing, whereby the alien occupier controls the individual's hand to write or draw an interstellar telegram.

A man who reportedly experienced automatic writing, Dean Fagerstrom of Putnam Lake, will attend the conference and show the drawings he produced, thought to represent a craft from another galaxy.

Gersten said the goal of the event is to draw out unreported abduction cases and create interest in forming an organization — Contact — that would explore kidnappings from beyond.

"We want the people to come forward without fear of ridicule,"

he said. "We have to know what's going on. There is evidence that something's going on."

He said cases in this region conform to scenarios recounted around the country. People report being taken aboard a spacecraft, he said, and examined by BEMs (bug-eyed monsters). A discussion ensues, with the invaders saying they are interested in bettering Earth.

Gersten said the creatures are always described the same way: hairless, 5 feet tall and having large heads, wrap-around large eyes, a slit for a mouth, two holes for nostrils, and grayish white skin.

Those abducted later experience partial or total amnesia. Partial recall comes only after the passage of time, usually through hypnosis. The kidnapped suffer nausea, vomiting, red eyes, runny noses, nervousness, anxiety and recurring dreams. Leg scars have been reported.

Most victims are kidnapped again after a certain period of time. They're thought to be monitored, and there are reports of implants being inserted in some.

"The abductors are noted for disinformation and deception," Gersten said, explaining that the spacemen report various home planets. "No two have said they're from the same place."

Gersten is bankrolling the conference with \$3,500. He said sales of T-shirts and sweatshirts will recoup only some of the investment, adding, "It's worth it."

He said the 12 documented reports could be just the tip of a universe of close encounters. People who are abducted exhibit the same trauma as rape victims, he said, and are similarly unwilling to discuss their experiences. The higher their economic class, he added, the more likely they fear being humiliated for summoning up their time with the little gray men.

For information about the conference call the UFO hot line at 739-6830.