

WESTMORELAND/AREA

Late summer and autumn bring a spate of UFO reports

By Michael A. Fuoco
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

Stan Gordon has received hundreds of reports of unexplained phenomena since founding his scientific clearinghouse in 1981, but never have so many sightings been reported from such a wide area as in the past few months.

Gordon, director of the Greensburg-based Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, said he has no answers for the numerous reported sightings of unidentified flying objects in Western Pennsylvania — Clairton, the

Greensburg area, Warrendale — and in West Virginia and Virginia.

"There have been a lot of high-quality sightings that we cannot explain," Gordon said. "The pattern seems to have started in Pennsylvania and spread to West Virginia and Virginia."

"At this point, we are taking no stand on what the unexplained sightings represent. We only try to document the reports and get data to research people. We're trying to find out what is happening."

Gordon said the majority of reports usually can be explained as

misidentifications of natural or man-made objects.

As with other reports, the recent sightings are being investigated by his volunteer group of scientists, engineers, technicians and physicians. The association does not release the names of witnesses to protect their privacy.

The recent spate began Aug. 2 in Clairton, and the sightings have been

primarily concentrated in Western Pennsylvania, though reports have come from across the state, Gordon said.

One of the most unusual reports came from a 40-year-old woman and her mother who said that about 9:15 p.m. Sept. 15 in the Greensburg area, a low-flying circular object hovered about 50 feet above their heads, Gordon said. The craft enveloped the

two in bright light, tilted onto its edge and traveled east.

Since that occurrence, both women have suffered severe headaches, and the daughter is suffering from health problems seemingly associated with the effects of microwaves, Gordon said.

In another report, four men — identified only as three local police officers and a businessman — said

they saw a large, oblong object hovering 150 to 250 feet above the ground Sept. 3 near Greengate Mall in Hempfield. The object, which had strobe-like white lights around it, moved slowly away and then turned to a vertical position, Gordon said.

Sightings can be reported to the association's 24-hour hot line at 838-7768 or by writing to 6 Oakhill Drive, Greensburg 15601.

Venus, Jupiter light up heavens

By The Tribune-Review

Not as exciting as a meteor shower but better than Halley's Comet.

That's how one local resident rated the conjunction of Venus and Jupiter.

The planets, visible as bright lights to the west in the evening sky, appear to be close together, so close, in fact, that one can cover the distance between them with a thumb held at arm's length.

The Carnegie's Buhl Science Center in Pittsburgh reports receiving a lot of calls in recent days from people convinced the bright lights are UFOs. An assistant floor operations manager said the heavenly orbs are visible through the telescope until 10:30 p.m. Venus is the brighter of the two silver-bluish lights.

Atmospheric conditions can make the planets appear to brighten and dim, to appear and disappear and to move around and change colors, says Stan

Gordon, director of the Greensburg-based Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained, which investigates reports of UFO sightings.

The distance between the planets will grow as they move in opposite directions and they will eventually be in different parts of the sky.

In late September, Mars, the red planet, will make the closest approach to earth since the early 1970s.

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