

# Reported Explosion, Area UFO Sightings Under Investigation

By Marian Fahr  
Staff Writer

The large explosion widely reported across Clearfield County early Saturday morning remains a mystery and, along with recent unidentified flying object reports, is being investigated by the Pennsylvania Association for the Unexplained.

While the reports of an explosion at about 1:50 a.m. Saturday were at first written off as resulting from an earthquake in Quebec about 6 p.m. Friday, Charles Langston, Penn State professor of geophysics, said university monitoring equipment did not register any earthquake activity or aftershocks at that time. He said he doubted the explosion sound reported was connected to earthquake aftershock and said it was more likely an explosion.

Brian Witherow, Clearfield County Emergency Management director, said despite searches by fire companies and some area police and a check with the Federal Aviation Administration, there were no explosions to be

found or missing airplanes that might have crashed.

Coincidentally, Elk County communications reported an outhouse exploded and burned down at a camp in Lake City at 1:50 a.m. Saturday.

In Clearfield County, two police officers, one from Clearfield Borough and another from Lawrence Township, saw a tremendously bright object streaking through the sky over Hyde just after the reports of an explosion began pouring into Clearfield County Control. The officers reported the object kept traveling across the sky for a long distance and even after it went behind the clouds the bright light could be discerned.

Stan Gordon of the PASU said the association, which investigates UFO sightings, can't make a definitive opinion on the strange activities in the skies over Clearfield County but will continue to investigate to try to find an explanation.

"We didn't get any other reports on aftershocks in this area. Of course, we're not an agency that would receive that," he said.

He doubted it was space junk, as one police officer suggested, adding if so there would have been lots of reports from a large area, normally several hundred miles wide.

He said an extraordinarily bright fireball called a bolide, a large meteor usually seen over a widespread area, can produce a sonic boom. The question is why it was only reported locally in this county, he said.

Mr. Gordon also said five persons reported seeing a large spherical, extremely bright object over Goshen at about 6 p.m. Friday. The PASU has been receiving reports of strange lights in the sky since a Lanse resident a week earlier reported a UFO along Interstate 80 in Graham Township.

Mr. Gordon said it takes time to try to differentiate between what's natural and what's not. He said the association, made up of volunteer professionals, will follow up and try to make some sense of what area residents have been seeing and hearing.

But, over the years he said when there have been localized UFO flaps, for several weeks there are reports of large objects hovering and also reports of mysterious explosions.

"I can't say for sure what's happening here, but it sounds very familiar," he said.

All of last weekend "was crazy with reports from other areas of the state," he said. At 2 a.m. Sunday in the Harrisburg area 30 to 40 lights were reportedly zigzagging across the sky.

Mainly bright lights are being reported in the sky, he said, but there were several cases in the past week of three or four daylight sightings of large, long flat objects. In the past year and one-half there have been many UFO reports across the state, including several objects of the same description as reported here over I-80, he said.

The October issue of Carrier Lines, a Pennsylvania Electric Co. publication, noted a wave of UFO reports during the past year in the Johnstown area and most recently at Homer City, where Penelec has a generating station. It reports residents saw "slow dropping fireballs" and large dome shaped objects resembling a helmet with legs and lights on the bottom.

"As far as we know if anyone is up there watching, we're too busy to see them," Ron Lantzy, station director, was quoted as saying.

In connection with the Clearfield County UFO reports, Mr. Gordon also said historically there have been reports before earthquakes of luminous spheres in the sky, such as the one described in Goshen. There are a lot of theories on it, including that it results from gases due to pressures within the earth.

He said a lot of what is being reported here is similar to reports of cases that PASU has not been able to explain.

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**STAN GORDON via COUD—I  
PASU**