

# The Latrobe Bulletin

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## Does Public Really Believe UFOs Exist?

By KIM OPATKA  
Bulletin Staff Writer

Do most members of the general public believe in unidentified flying objects?

Do they care?

What would they do if they saw one?

Those were some of the questions asked in an informal survey taken during the past few days to determine the opinions of people on the subject for Part Three of a series of articles dealing with UFOs. In addition, some UFO hotspots will be listed.

### Part Three

Many persons were unsure and would not venture an opinion, while some had very definite responses.

"Hell no," said Bob Heintzelman, assistant fire chief of Latrobe Co. 6. "I don't think they exist."

"E.T. went home," his cohort Scott Mueseler joked. "I've never seen one so I really don't know."

"I think it's a big hoax," added fireman Tom Kuncher.

"I've never seen one but I wouldn't doubt they exist," commented Brian Martin of Latrobe. "I think it is interesting and I would like to see one. As for Bigfoot, that doesn't scare me. I'd give anything to see it."

Jack DePree of Latrobe said he felt it was more likely Bigfoot existed than an unidentified flying object.

"I don't know if I believe in UFOs but it's something to think about," he said. "When it comes down to Bigfoot I'd definitely like to see it, but I don't think I'd tell anybody because people exploit it and stuff."

"I think it is kind of arrogant for us to think we're the only creatures in the universe," noted Greg Hutchinson of Latrobe. "I don't think any of them have got Elvis' head or the stuff you read in the tabloids, but I think there is the possibility that they do exist. I'd like to believe they do."

"Sometimes you wonder," Latrobe resident Rita Smercani said. "I don't really know."

"I'm not quite sure I do," said a Mrs. Arbore of Latrobe. "UFOs are so controversial. I want to believe in it but something tells me not to make it final that I really believe."

"No," said Geano Agostino. "I'm old-fashioned. If I can't see it I don't believe it."

Allen Haase of Blairsville was unsure, as were a number of others who didn't venture an opinion.

Scoutmaster David Busija of Troop 302, Lloydsville, said he believed they exist.

"I think you've got to believe there is a higher life form. There are too many things happening, too many sightings. It has to be true and I think one of these days we're going to make contact."

Some of his troops weren't quite  
(See DOES, Page 3)

### The Weather

Fair tonight. Low in upper 30s. Partly sunny and milder Thursday. High in the mid 60s.



Kevin Sullenberger

Kristy Busija

Michael Currykosky

Scott Busija

# Does Public Believe?

(Continued From Page 1)

as sure though: "I've never seen one so I don't think so," said Erik Podlesnik.

"I think someone's doing it just to get the publicity," added Michael Currykosky.

"It's probably just frisbees," said Kevin Sullenberger, noting he probably wouldn't believe in them "even if I saw one."

Kristy Busija said she didn't think there could be life forms on other planets, with Scott Busija stating he thought it was all a big hoax.

What would he do if he saw one? "I'd shoot it," Scout Jeff Kitsko stated emphatically. "I don't think they exist, but if they really do I'd like to see a little green martian come up and say hi to me."

"I don't think about it. I don't think about nothing," said his friend, Bobby Evancho. "I might think about it if one of them came to my door."

Despite most of the skeptics, Pennsylvania led the nation in UFO sightings for the last six months of 1988, according to Paul Ferrughelli, New Jersey state section director for Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) the world's largest UFO membership organization.

The peak months, he noted, were August and November, with all sightings occurring between 7 p.m. and 11:15 p.m. He bases his statistics on a sighting summary from UFO Filter Center in Indiana.

Ferrughelli has also obtained

computer data for the past two and a half years, and plans a study of some of the sightings. In addition to Pennsylvania, he notes other states with high sightings reports include Wisconsin, Michigan and Florida, with some in New York and New Jersey.

Other areas of activity include Chestnut Ridge, Lake Erie area, Hudson Valley in New York and Gulf Breeze, Florida, according to documents provided by Latrobe UFO computer researcher Gary Metzler.

In addition to the large number of sightings in the ridge area, which have extended from Indiana to Fayette counties, the Gulf Breeze sightings were reported widely by the media, and were included in the 'UFO Coverup—Live' show broadcast last fall.

Many Gulf Breeze residents allegedly reported some type of strange lights, and investigators from around the world have shown an interest in what is occurring. Some photographs taken have been labeled a hoax or trick lighting, but no consensus has been established by investigators.

The Hudson Valley sightings were recorded by Phil Imbrogno, author of 'Night Siege' and continued from 1983 to 1986, witnessed by thousands, including law enforcement officials.

Lake Erie was the sight of some strange reports, with a sighting on March 4, 1988 causing quite a stir. A large object, described as blimp-



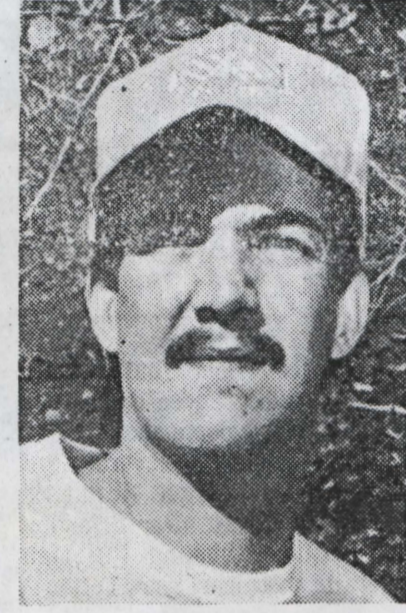
Bobby Evancho

like, allegedly hovered over the Lake and was seen by many witnesses, including those on a Coast Guard cutter called to the scene, documents state. Bright triangular lights, yellow, hovered intermittently around the object and darted into the sky at great speeds.

Some reports tied the incident to the Jupiter-Venus alignment, and spontaneous gas emissions from both planets, but that claim has been disputed by ufologists.

Other hot spots, as listed by New Jersey researcher/photographer Ellen Crystall in her newsletter, Contacted, include Pine Bush, New York; south central and southern Indiana; Missouri; New Jersey; and New Mexico.

More information on hot spots



Jack DePree

and UFOs can be obtained from Crystall's newsletter, P.O. Box 12, New Milford, N.J. 07646.

MUFON is an international scientific organization seriously interested in studying and researching the phenomenon. The group has a board of consultants of professionals representing 45 areas of science, medicine and technology who apply their expertise to UFO study. The group is headquartered at 103 Oldtowne Rd., Seguin, Texas, 78155-4099, phone 512-379-9216.

Part Four of the six-part series will look at how incidents are investigated, as The Bulletin went on a recent investigation with Latrobe resident John Micklow of Pennsylvania Association for the study of the Unexplained, a Greensburg-based group.



Jeff Kitsko

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