

city volunteers. All of the children received plastic fire helmets to help them become more aware of fire safety. An editorial appears on page 2.

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RICHARD HEIDEN via COUD—I

UFO pays a visit

Continued from front page

"We're just country people," Betty said. "Born and raised in the country. But you gotta tell what you saw if they ask you."

Harley stood on the back porch and retold the story about what he saw that Thursday night in August. Betty stayed inside behind the screen door.

Harley said he isn't too sure of the date, but it was about 10:30 p.m. He was coming home from working as a volunteer for the Knights of Columbus at the bingo game held in the Firemen's Community Center.

He'd parked the car at the side of the house and was walking up the back porch steps when he glanced into the sky. And there it was!

"It was big," he said. "It was a huge object like a big round disc. All you could see on it was all the lights. They were all around the bottom, blinking off and on. Over and over. Colored lights. Red and blue.

"It wasn't an airplane. It was a lot bigger than an airplane. I've seen airplanes go over every night."

He said he called to Betty, who was inside the house watching television.

"The way he hollered I thought he was having a heart attack," recalls Betty, who said she ran to the back door.

She, too, watched the object in the sky.

"It didn't make a sound. Not a sound. Besides that, it was just sitting in the sky," she added.

They watched the silent object with the flashing lights for about five minutes. When it began moving slowly eastward, Harley said he ran a block down to the corner, hoping to get a glimpse of it.

"It was a goin' that way," he pointed. But it had vanished.

"The first thing I thought about was jumpin' in my car and fol-

lowin' it around but it disappeared too fast."

"It coulda zapped me in my living room," Betty said, "and I wouldn't have known the difference."

Did she ever see anything like it before?

"Heaven's no. It was just one great big ball of flashing lights," she said. "I wished I'd had a camera. But when something like that happens, who thinks about a camera?"

Harley said: "I'd like to see it again."

The Pliners have watched for it every night since then, but with no luck.

"The politicians know what's goin' on," said Betty. "Maybe some government car will pull up in front of the house someday. Because there's somethin' mysterious about it."

Close encounter of the Hillsboro kind

By Steven J. Stanek

A strange visitor recently appeared in the skies over Hillsboro. One warm night in the latter part of August, Betty and Harley Pliner watched an unidentified flying object for over five minutes as it hung motionless in the night air above the city.

"I worked for the Knights of Columbus that night, helping out with the bingo at the Community Center," recalls Harley. "I drove home about 10:30. I put the car in the garage, and walked up the sidewalk toward the house, when I saw this big thing in the sky."

Harley was startled to

observe a large lighted object hovering above some trees across the street from his house on Mill Street.

"It was on the other side of Albrecht's house," he continued. "It was stationary, and it wasn't making a sound. It was round and covered with red and blue lights. "I ran in the house and yelled at my wife, and she came out and looked at it"

Betty Pliner described the object as having, "...a million lights all around it, and they were all blinking. I thought it was beautiful. They never quit flashing...they just kept flashing."

"I know it was no plane. They can't hang in the air like that. A helicopter would make noise, but this didn't!"

The couple estimate they watched the strange lighted object for nearly five minutes before it slowly moved away.

"I was going to jump in my car," reveals Harley, "but it moved out of sight. I was going to chase it!"

"When it disappeared over the tree," says Betty, "he thought he saw another light."

So he went clear across the road looking for it. I would have been afraid, but I guess when you see a spectacle like that you're too astonished to be afraid.

Though, Harley continued to look, the UFO had apparently vanished, returning to whence it had come. Later, he wondered why he and his wife alone were privy to the unusual phenomenon.

"I'm surprised that nobody else ever saw it," he commented.

Betty won't speculate on whether or not the object she observed originated in outer space.

"I don't think it was from around here, though," she remarked. "It was weird. It was nothing we had ever seen."

The couple's brief glimpse of the unknown proved tantalizing, and they hope that maybe someday they'll get a second chance to view an unidentified flying object.

"We've looked every night," reports Betty, "but haven't seen it since."

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CLOSE ENCOUNTER

UFO sighting hot news

By PAT MOORE
Of the Tribune staff

HILLSBORO, Wis. — Harley Pliner stood on the back porch of his Hillsboro house Friday noon and pointed to a spot in the sky a half-block away.

That was where about two months ago he saw a huge disc with flashing blue and red lights hovering silently above the trees.

He had never seen anything like it before. He hasn't since, either.

The disc didn't touch down. No three-eyed aliens strolled through the Hillsboro city park or zapped anyone, as Tass, the Soviet news agency, reported they did in the Russian city of Voronezh. Tass didn't send any senior reporters to talk with Harley and his wife, Betty.

"I told three people about it," Harley said. "I never told nobody else. But somebody reported it to the newspaper office."

On Thursday the

story of the Pliners' sighting was on the front page of the weekly Hillsboro Sentry-Enterprise. The headline read: "Close encounter of the Hillsboro kind."

Now, Harley, 62, says people are calling him a celebrity and asking: "Have you seen any more UFO's lately?"

Harley, who delivers oil for Madden Petro Inc. of nearby Elroy, took time during his lunch hour

Friday in his two-story gray house on Mills Street to talk about the encounter.

Betty Pliner, 67, who has been married to Harley for 25 years, said they hesitated to say anything about it "because people will think you're nuts."

"We're not senile yet," she joked. "But there's more going on around here than we know."

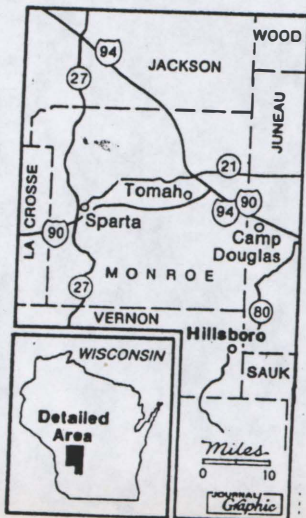
Harley agreed. "We never intended to have any publicity," he said. "That's why we didn't say much at the time. I think different people seen something that night but didn't say anything about it."

See UFO, A-9



Dick Rinker of the Tribune staff

HARLEY PLINER sits on the back porch of his Hillsboro home last week.



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