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Eitzen family reports close encounter with UFO

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Of the Tribune staff

EITZEN, Minn. — Wayne Skarbozewski said he's always had an interest in the stars, but no astronomy book he's read prepared him for what he says he saw Sunday night.

At about 11:20 p.m., as Skarbozewski waited on the steps for his dogs to finish their nightly walk, he looked up to watch a plane flying across the sky when he noticed a bright

object off to his right. As he looked east, he gawked at what appeared to be a bell-shaped object with flashing blue, green and red lights hovering in the clear night.

Skarbozewski said the object looked as if it was miles away, although he couldn't be sure because he couldn't judge the size of the unidentified flying object.

The 63-year-old retired truck driver quickly ran into the house to fetch his field glasses. He then told his wife and daughter to

come outside so they could verify that his recent cataract surgery hadn't blurred his vision or his mind.

"The first thing I thought was 'What the hell is it?'" Skarbozewski said.

The three stood outside and watched the unidentified object continue to hover above the horizon. Skarbozewski said the object then swelled to about 10 times its original size.

As the evening progressed, Skarbozewski said, the object

began to slowly move south. He said the object was still visible when he went to bed at 1 a.m.

Skarbozewski did not call the county sheriff and he said he was reluctant to talk to the media or to tell anyone about his family's close encounter.

"I wasn't drinking," he said. "I didn't want to be one of those nuts that calls just to see their name in the paper."

Skarbozewski's wife, Joan, 65, said she was a bit skeptical when her husband came into the

house and told her about his mysterious sighting. But she said she decided to humor him and agreed to take a look.

Daughter Lisa, 18, said the lights on the object looked like they were revolving around the object rather than flashing. But she said she's convinced it wasn't a satellite.

The Houston County Sheriff's Department said they've received no recent calls about UFO sightings and added that no patrolling deputies reported see-

ing any strange flashing objects in the sky Sunday night. The sheriff's departments in nearby Crawford County in Wisconsin and Allamakee County in Iowa also had no such reports.

But the UFO stopover in Eitzen may not have been the object's first visit to the Midwest. In August, a rural Hillsboro couple reported they spotted a large round object with red and blue lights hovering in the sky. They watched for five minutes before it slowly moved east.