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Editor: Kent Harker

CSICOP PRESS RELEASE: JAL UFO INCIDENT

[The recent furor over the well-publicized UFO encounter of a JAL flight reached its zenith on the NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw. The story featured a "dramatization" of the incident with a cockpit-view of the alleged UFO. It looked like banks of stadium lights on either side of the front windows about 50 feet away! This from the pilot's description of two small UFO's and a larger one. I asked our own UFO expert and Chair of BAS, Robert Sheaffer, to check the celestial arrangement in the area of the occurrence at the time and date indicated by the pilot. The first paragraph is Robert's comment. -- Ed.]

November 16, 1986, 4:48 P.M., 35,000 feet above Ft. Yukon, Alaska. The sun has sank to 13 1/2 degrees below the horizon, meaning that while many stars have become visible, the sky is not yet fully dark. Jupiter is an extremely brilliant object shining at magnitude -2.6 in the southeastern sky, and it is only about twelve degrees above the horizon. Mars is also visible about 20 degrees west of Jupiter, but it is much fainter, at magnitude - 0.1, and it is only seven degrees above the horizon.

A brilliant planet such as Venus or Jupiter is by far most likely to be perceived as a "UFO" when it is within about 20 degrees of the horizon. Bright planets high in the sky are more readily overlooked by casual observers, and even if spotted appear to be "up high" where they belong. But when they are at lower angular elevations, people imagine them to be close to the ground, and scintillation effects due to the long light path through the atmosphere make them appear to flash and change colors. The Jimmy Carter UFO, the Incident at Exeter, and the Betty and Barney Hill UFO are but a few well-known examples of brilliant planets low in the sky being taken for a "UFO".

Buffalo NY -- An investigation of the incident in which a UFO reportedly paced a Japan Airlines 747 en route to Anchorage, Alaska, for nearly forty minutes on November 18, 1986, reveals that at least one extraterrestrial object was involved: the planet Jupiter, and possibly another, Mars.

The investigation was conducted by Philip J. Klass, an internationally recognized skeptical UFOlogist and chairman of CSICOP's UFO Subcommittee. His investigations have yielded prosaic explanations for many famous UFO cases during the past twenty

years.

At the time the UFO incident began near Ft. Yukon, the JAL airliner was flying south in twilight conditions so that an extremely bright Jupiter (-2.6 magnitude) would have been visible on the plane's left-hand side, where he first reported seeing the UFO, according to Klass. Jupiter was only ten degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be at roughly his own 35,000 ft. altitude. Mars, slightly lower on the horizon, was about twenty degrees to the right of Jupiter but not as bright.

Although the very bright Jupiter and less bright Mars had to be visible to JAL Captain Kenjyu Terauchi, the pilot never once reported seeing either -- only a UFO that he described in his initial radio report to FAA controllers at Anchorage as being a "white and yellow" light.

Many of the colorful details of the incident carried by the news media, largely based on the six-week-old recollections of the pilot, are contradicted by a transcript of radio messages from the pilot to the FAA controllers while the incident was in progress.

For example, media accounts quoting the 747 pilot said that when he executed a 360 degree turn, the UFO had followed him around during the turn. But this claim is contrary to what the pilot told the controllers at the time. During the pilot's interviews, he "remembered" some details that did not actually occur, judging from his earlier reports, and he forgot several important events that would challenge his claim of being paced by an unknown craft.

Another airliner, United Airlines Flight 69, heading north from Anchorage to Fairbanks, had agreed to deviate slightly from its course to allow FAA radar controllers to vector it to the vicinity of the JAL 747 to see if the United crew could spot the UFO. At approximately 4:48 pm. Terauchi reported that the UFO was about ten miles distant and to his far left -- in the direction of Jupiter. At roughly 4:50 pm, the United pilot reported he could now see JAL but a short time later said: "I don't see anybody around him." Shortly afterward, the JAL pilot reported that the UFO was "just ahead of United" which is where Jupiter would appear to be from Terauchi's location. The United pilot would not notice Jupiter because it was to his right, while his attention was focussed on JAL which was to his far left.

At about this time, the pilot of a USAF C-130 transport in the area volunteered to be sent to the vicinity of the JAL airliner to see if he could see any object nearby. The C-130 crew readily spotted the JAL 747, but they too could see nothing in its vicinity.

"This is not the first time that an experienced pilot has mistaken a bright celestial body for a UFO, nor will it be the last," Klass said. In one case in the early 1950s, investigated by the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek, a military pilot chased a UFO for more than thirty minutes and the UFO turned out to be the bright star Capella. In

this case, as with the recent Alaska incident, a radar operator reported briefly seeing an unknown blip on his radar screen.

During World War II, B-29s on night bombing raids from the Mariana Islands to Japan reported being paced by a mysterious "ball of fire." Attempts to shoot down the object were unsuccessful. After much speculation as to what kind of secret Japanese weapon might be at work, the mysterious glowing object was identified as the planet Venus, which was particularly bright at the time.

More than 25 percent of all UFOs reported to the Center for UFO Studies (created by Dr. Hynek in 1973) during a fifteen month period turned out upon investigation to be a star or bright planet. Some eyewitnesses in these cases reported that the celestial UFO "darted up and down," or "wiggled from side-to-side," and a variety of shapes were described.

In Captain Terauchi's account to the media some six weeks after the incident, he described seeing two small UFOs in addition to a large one. But the transcript reveals that the pilot only briefly reported seeing TWO lights and thereafter referred to only one light in his communications with FAA controllers.

News accounts of the incident stressed that USAF radar had detected an unidentified object in the vicinity of the JAL 747's "blip" -- which seemed to confirm the pilot's sighting. However, radar operating in mountainous areas, such as that where the UFO incident occurred, can receive false echoes when radar bouncing off an aircraft is reflected a second time off mountains and snow-covered terrain.

When the pilot first reported the UFO, FAA controllers -- ever-concerned over the possibility of mid-air collision -- asked controllers in an Air Force Regional Operations Command Center to examine their displays for an unknown intruder. A radar operator spotted something, but was unsure whether it might be a spurious echo. However, the echo appeared only briefly and was BEHIND the 747, whereas the pilot had reported that the UFO was in front or to the left of the aircraft. Later, as the JAL 747 approached Fairbanks International Airport -- even though the pilot was still reporting a UFO -- the radar controller at the airport found no unknown blips in the vicinity.

On January 11, 1987, Captain Terauchi reported seeing another UFO while flying in approximately the same area of Alaska, but after an FAA spokesperson in Anchorage suggested that this UFO might be the lights from a distant village bouncing off clouds, the pilot acknowledged that this might be the case.

"My suspicions that this UFO might be a bright celestial body were prompted by the fact that the pilot reported seeing the object for more than thirty minutes," Klass said. "Experience has shown that when a UFO remains visible for many minutes, it almost always proves to be a celestial object." Another clue, he said, was the

fact that when the plane descended 4000 feet, the UFO appeared to stay at the plane's altitude. At Jupiter's great distance, an airplane's altitude change would produce no change in the planet's apparent altitude.

Klass, who was a senior editor with "Aviation Week and Space Technology" for nearly 35 years, has been investigating famous UFO cases as a hobby for more than twenty years. His most recent book on the subject is "UFOs: The Public Deceived", (Prometheus Books, Buffalo N.Y.).

EDITOR'S CORNER

It has several names and many manifestations. Deja vu, synchronicity are a couple. The occurrence of some synchronous event can produce an eerie feeling as we try to sort out what has happened and find some causal connection.

It is not an old wives' tale that old wives' tales die a hard death. (I suppose the term is a sexist explanation for notions that have been passed around for years until they acquire the enduring trait.) One such false notion is that we only use 10% of our brains when in fact more than 10% of our brain is functioning even when sleeping. It is perhaps a poor choice of terms to call the subconscious unconscious, for it is probably one area of the brain that is "conscious" (functioning) all the time.

In any event, if we were fully aware of all the information being processed at a given time we would be unable to function, so complex is the maze of material going through our biocomputer. So the brain hardware and software is selective for what is displayed on our consciousness. Perhaps 10% of the information is even an overestimate.

With this in mind (tune up your consciousness) let's look at coincidence. We learn a spelling error we have made for our whole lives and wonder why we haven't seen it all these years when it literally jumps out of the page at us now that we are aware of it. We have been thinking about a high school friend and at the same time he/she phones. The list is long -- life is full of these occurrences. What, if anything, do they mean? Is there any control over them?

Psychologist Carl Jung coined the term "synchronicity" so intrigued was he with coincidental phenomena. His writing indicates that he felt there must be some causal mechanism; this began with an experience which turned him on his head: "A certain M. Deschamps, when a boy in Orlean, was once given a piece of plum pudding in a Paris restaurant and asked if he could have a piece. It turned out, however, that the plum pudding was already ordered by M. de Fortgibu.

Many years afterwards, M. Deschamps was invited to partake of a plum pudding as a special rarity. While he was eating it he remarked that the only thing lacking was M. de Fortgibu. At that moment the door opened and an old, old man in the last stages of disintegration walked in: M. de Fortgibu, who had got hold of the wrong address and burst in on the party by mistake."

Assuming the story is true (tales of coincidence are often heavily embellished by design or by unconscious desire to make the mundane a little more remarkable), the first question usually asked is, "How can this be explained?" Some parapsychologists have postulated a "hidden force" that links otherwise unlikely events.

Given the enormous number of things that happen in the course of our daily lives a certain amount of coincidence is to be expected just by the Laws of Averages: play roulette long enough and you are certain to have a run in which you do nothing but win on every bet. Still, the really bizarre events plague us.

Jung worked closely with physicist Wolfgang Pauli (discoverer of the "exclusion principle" of quantum mechanics) when he (Jung) wrote, "It is only the ingrained belief in the sovereign power of causality that creates intellectual difficulties and makes it appear unthinkable that causeless events exist or could ever occur." QM was the basis for this thinking -- a type of "quantum weirdness" -- In which causeless and unpredictable transitions of matter from one quantum state to another were postulated.

Einstein proposed the thought experiment known today as the EPR Paradox to try to show that QM theory was incomplete at least or totally wrong at most; thus began the search for "hidden variables" to explain some of the quantum strangeness. Alas, some parapsychologists and laypersons have taken Bell's inequality, the EPR Paradox and come up with a "theory" of synchronicity.

But this is only our psychological excuse for insisting that unusual events cannot occur but by some design. If we had recall like a tape recorder the vast majority of déjà vu would be exactly that: already seen, and we would remember where and when. For the "residual effect," those small number of cases which are truly anomalous, it is perfectly sane to ascribe them to nothing more than anomalous cases.

RAMPARTS

[Ramparts is a regular feature of BASIS, and your participation is urged. Clip, snip and tear bits of irrationality from your local scene and send them to the EDITOR. If you want to make some comment with the submission, please do so.]

Well here we are at the end of March and there is not much from O. Roberts' camp. Since he didn't make a personal call to headquarters, may we safely assume his coffers were in receipt of

the requisite funds? Heaven only knows. From the Associated Press a reporter from the Dallas Morning News announced that he had a tape in which Roberts was under orders to collect \$8 mil by DECEMBER 31, 1986 or be looking at eternity.

Some quotes from Roberts' voice on the tape: "Oral Roberts' life is on the line. God has spoken to me twice, Jan. 26 and May 6. He told me...I'm going to be gone before this year is out.... I know it as much as I'm standing here."

Why he mentioned May in the past tense when he was speaking in March isn't clear, but it must not matter much. His spokeswoman, Jan Dargatz gave some "explanation" why Roberts is still among us and why his announcements don't make much sense, but her explaining is more confusing than Roberts' rambling.

DIANE MOSER (BASIS former co-editor) sends along the San Mateo County Office of Education's announcement of their spring class offerings. Irrationality is alive and well in S. M. Among classes on math, landslides, writing, music, and technology is one called "Healing Is An Inner Process."

As BASIS goes to press, regrettably you will have missed the opportunity to "...discover how to sense and manipulate ENERGY FIELDS, and share the experience of healing touch." (emphasis added) because the last session of the course ended on March 25. But you can call the Community Education Office at (415) 574-6563 and ask if anyone knows what an "energy field" is. The class was held at the Nueva Learning Center in Hillsborough by one Terry Attwood, CHT. For that matter, ask what a CHT is while you're at it.

The two following items are not really "paranormal," but they are beyond the pale. The AP wire service picked up the story from the awards ceremony of the Committee on Doublespeak, a precocious offspring of the National Council of Teachers of English. The distinguished third place was awarded to the Department of Defense for calling temporary coffins "aluminum transfer cases," a hammer a "manually powered fastener-driving impact device" and a steel nut a "hexiform rotatable surface compression unit." It's hard to imagine anything beat that for first and second place.

Second bit was from a TV news broadcast in which the reporter, absolutely straight-faced, announced that, "The medical community is concerned that the occurrence of ovarian cancer was abnormally higher than in women who had had their ovaries removed." Headaches, I would wager, are more frequent in those who have not been decapitated, too. Is the country in trouble?

WILLY WERBY of San Francisco sends us a picture of "psychic" healer Elissa Heyman. This lady has perhaps learned something from the psychic map dowzers: do your stuff in the comfort of home. Evidently Ms. Heyman conducts much of her healing over the phone. She places a bowl of fresh water near the phone "to collect the

energy transmitted from clients." Then again, maybe the fresh water collects the diseases from her clients, in which case it should be disposed of in safe toxic chemical containers.

CRYSTAL POWER

by Lawrence E. Jerome

[I asked Lawrence to research and write an article about "crystal power" after receiving no less than five news articles about the subject from BASIS readers. Lawrence is a BAS board member and advisor to CSICOP; a materials engineer and science writer, he is eminently qualified. Thank you, Larry. -- Ed.]

Would you like to increase your psychic abilities, improve your powers of astral projection, be able to heal what ails you or your loved ones? Or are you interested in making your astrological talismans more powerful and effective, or perhaps just extending the range of your prayers and good thoughts? All this is possible, and more -- much more -- if we are to believe the proponents of "crystal power," or crystal "work" as it's known to aficionados.

Crystals have long been associated with the psychic arts -- it's a rare Psychic Fair that doesn't include a booth or two selling expensive crystals and crystal jewelry -- but recently, crystals and "crystal power" have been getting more press. In the last few years, prices for quartz crystals have quadrupled, yet the demand has remained so high that suppliers are hard pressed to keep up. Why? What is it about crystals -- particularly quartz, the most common mineral on earth -- that make them so valuable to mystics, astrologers and psychic healers?

When I agreed to tackle this article, I thought my two degrees in Materials Science, which included a fair amount of study about crystals and crystallography, would be sufficient to understand what all this "crystal power" fuss was about. Little did I know that the subject would require all my years' accumulation of knowledge concerning ancient magic, shamanism, Yoga, astrology, psychic healing and the paranormal!

The key to understanding "crystal power" lies not in understanding the physical or electrical properties of the crystals themselves, but rather in understanding the terminology and thought processes of those who promote the arcane practice of "working" with crystals. The energies and "power" they claim to use and capture in crystals have nothing to do with the everyday electromagnetic, chemical or other energies we ordinary humans are familiar with. The energies associated with "crystal power" lie on a higher astral plane, and only those "in tune" with the astral plane can use and feel the "energies of crystal power."

In short, we who would like to get hold of something solid, something demonstrable we can test and use, are sadly at sea when

it comes to "crystal power." Proponents' claims are so far-reaching, so broad in scope, and so interconnected with all the other mystic arts, that it's hard to find a single claim that a good honest skeptic would consider testable.

For instance, consider the claim that an object placed beneath a "properly charged" crystal will itself become charged with "energy." What kind of "energy"? Can we measure it? Can we see some observable change in the object, or can we test to see if the object has now become more useful? If this sounds a lot like "pyramid power," you're right. Remember the claims that placing a razor blade beneath a pyramid would keep it sharper? Yet, all objective tests found no difference between ordinary blades and "pyramid blades." A truly sharp and long-lasting blade was wrought by metallurgical science with the introduction of the stainless steel blade, not by "pyramid power"!

Today, "pyramid power" is out of fashion, and "crystal power" is in, yet, both have a very long history. In a surprisingly clear and objective article, "Fate" magazine recently ran a piece by Ron Bodoh, "Quartz: Gem of Legend" (May, 1986, pp. 78-81), which outlines the long and colorful history of quartz crystals. Not surprisingly, crystals "were prized by the ancients as powerful gems endowed with unique healing and visionary properties." The ancients considered quartz to be a form of ice, congealed to super hardness by intense cold. The Greeks used the word, ice, to refer to quartz, and the word crystal comes from the Greek term, "crystallos", for clear ice.

The Greeks utilized the physical property of quartz to refract light as a magnifying lens to focus sunlight to start ritual fires and, according to Pliny, to cauterize wounds. The "Fate" article suggests the Egyptian pyramids were once capped by quartz, and notes that many ancient civilizations mined and used quartz for both artistic and utilitarian purposes. American Indians seemed to have come closest to modern "crystal power," placing quartz crystals on their eyelids to enhance the clarity of dreams and visions. Of course, the familiar crystal ball appeared early on the world scene, found in cultures ranging from Aztecs to Babylonians to Persian and Chinese.

"Crystal power," in fact, IS closely allied to crystal gazing, crying. Crystal gazers claim to actually see visions and pictures within crystal and even glass balls. First, they "see" a clouding within the ball, then an image will appear or change. Of course, staring fixedly at a single point will usually produce some sort of visual pattern; add desire, autosuggestion and/or unconscious projection, and it's not hard to understand how crystal gazers can soon "see" an image of some sort, just as automatic writers soon learn to produce legible, readable script.

Real quartz crystal balls, which may range in size from 2-1/2 inches to the world's largest at 12-3/4 inches, are prized by crystal gazers for their blue or purplish color, and especially

for milky or cloudy inclusions (which are easier to focus on).

Like crystal gazing, "crystal power" involves focusing on crystals but, instead of focusing visual images, the crystal "worker" focuses "energies": thoughts, prayers, magical symbolism, healing "powers," Yoga practices, astrological talismans -- or any other mystic art or arcane practice that appeals to the crystal "worker."

Uma Silbey's nicely written and illustrated book, "The Complete Crystal Guidebook" (U-Read Publications, San Francisco, 1986. p.1), sets forth these basic tenets of "crystal power": "Do you want to do healings? Do you want to empower your meditations, your affirmations, and/or your thoughts? You can energize the body and balance its energies. You can develop many psychic abilities, including clairvoyance, clairaudience and traveling on astral and mental planes. You can use the crystals to change many unwanted circumstances in your life and create new ones... You can meet guides and beings from different dimensions and uncover ESP abilities."

Such modest claims. Why not add creating world peace, eliminating poverty and hunger, and just for kicks, cleaning up the environment? In fact, one crystal advocate was quoted by the "New York Times", "New York would be a more peaceful place if everyone wore a clear quartz crystal over the solar plexus." No doubt New York WOULD be a more peaceful place if everyone walked around wearing a crystal and thinking "peace." Tell that to a mugger.

Serious "crystal work" involves much more than just staring at a lump of clear rock or sleeping with pillows filled with magic stones. First, you must learn how to "center" yourself, a Yoga-like exercise described by Uma as "that state of being in which you are just yourself. Rather than judging yourself to be this or that, what or who, there is just a feeling of being here now.... When you are centered, it is a feeling of being collected into your center rather than being scattered." (ibid., p.14)

Next, you must "ground" yourself, permitting "the flow of energy from the earth to move through the soles of your feet and up through your body. This can then be joined with energy flowing from the sky, through the top of your head and down through your body. The coupling of energy from the 'heavens' and the 'earth' creates the proper balance to do crystal work." (ibid., p.15)

Once you are "centered" and "grounded," the crystal must be "cleared" by burying it in the earth (don't let the dog out!), submerging it in salt or spring water, or simply by "thinking" it clear. How do you know if a crystal is "clear"? Simple: it just looks clearer to you!

Finally, you are ready to "program" your crystal, "locking in" your intentions (prayers, thoughts, or magical "energies.") After centering yourself while holding the crystal, "inhale and forcefully exhale through your mouth... as if you are blowing your

intention into the crystal. Continue this process until you feel satisfied that you have completely filled the crystal with your intention." (ibid., p.20)

Wouldn't it be nice if programming a computer were that easy --just "blowing" a program into the computer! Unfortunately, at least to hard boiled skeptics, the real world is not that simple. Hard work and adherence to the physical "rules" of the universe are still required to program a computer -- or to accomplish any other projects, from cleaning the house to passing a bill through Congress. "Crystal power" appears to be just so much wishful thinking. While some of the associated Yoga exercises might well help one become more relaxed, I'm afraid any further crystal "work" leads the practitioner into self delusion and alienation from the real world.

For the most part, "crystal power" is probably harmless enough -- after all, one knows the crystal workers cannot actually DO anything in the real world (except sell crystal jewelry for outrageous prices) -- but I do question the psychological effects such self delusion can have on mental states and stability, especially for those already a bit unbalanced and grasping at magical straws in order to have some impact on this complex world of ours.

Walt Disney's recent Sunday night movie, "The Young Houdini," is a case in point: teenage Houdini teleports himself out of a falling box with the help of "crystal power" provided by the mysterious mute Indian, Gray Wolf, and even the adult Houdini is portrayed as using the magic crystal to escape from his famous Chinese Water Torture Chamber. This portrayal does the real Houdini a great disservice; Houdini studied hard, worked hard, and practiced hard to physically master his many feats of daring escape. No magic, no mysticism, and certainly no "crystal power" was involved.

FROM THE CHAIR
by Robert Sheaffer

Congratulations once again to our dauntless editor Kent, who weathered yet another crisis so smoothly that most of you probably didn't even notice! Our volunteer effort was breaking down under the laborious, old-fashioned process of coding, typesetting, and paste-up for this newsletter. Kent fearlessly set out on the seldom-trod path of IBM PC-based desktop publishing, evaluated the available packages, picked out the best one, arranged to get it delivered to us, got his system configured for it, FIGURED OUT HOW TO USE THE DARN THING (no small task!!), found a shop that could do the laser printing, turned out an excellent-looking March issue, all this without skipping a beat. Way to go, Kent!

From here on, BASIS will be "desktop published," clearly the wave of the future for small organizations such as BAS. The software

package was expensive, but we'll soon make back the cost in what we had been spending on typesetting. Most importantly, the number of hours spent in production will go down dramatically, AND we can still deliver a quality, professional-appearing newsletter to you.

Bay Area Skeptics in the news: We really don't toot our own horn loudly enough. Some of you may not realize the impact that this small group is having. Last month we gave you some of the "psychic predictions" from our year-end press release, reviewing the dismally bad predictions made twelve months earlier. We gave a number of press interviews about that.

I was on Channel 5's 6:00 news on New Year's Eve, reviewing some of the predictions. They chose to concentrate on Barbara Mousalam's predictions, and even went to her house to interview her. They read back to her some of her predictions for the year just past, asking her why she did so poorly! Later that evening, I was interviewed by Lee Rogers on KGO Radio, who always enjoys a good laugh. Yves Barbero appeared on Channel 7 news New Years' Day, and made some very good points. Bob Steiner and Larry Loebig also did a number of radio interviews.

Another symptom of our morbidly excessive modesty: more than a year has gone by, and I still don't think that we've told you about the long (and funny) article on the Bay Area Skeptics in the "Berkeley Monthly" of February, 1986, by B. Alvarez. "You're at a cocktail party. Everyone's talking about computer auras, spiritual weight-loss and custody settlement through witchcraft. You begin to sense that right here, right now, you're present at the decline of Western Civilization. Who You Gonna Call? FAITHBUSTERS!" The first page has a drawing of Bob Steiner holding a fly swatter, trying to swat astrological symbols as they fly by.

Other echoes of BAS activities: The February issue of "Popular Communications" magazine, read by shortwave radio, ham radio, and scanner radio enthusiasts, reprinted portions of Mr. Amazing Randi's article about Peter Popoff from "Free Inquiry" magazine, titled "Heavenly Contacts on 39.17 MHz?" The readers of that magazine were no doubt most interested to learn about the creative uses which Popoff found for his miniature scanner! Mention was made of the Bay Area Skeptics, as well as of the contributions of Don Henvick, Bob Steiner, and Alex Jason.

Reverend Michelina Russo is an aging Spiritualist who has succeeded in convincing many people, including "Examiner" columnist Bill Mandel, that she gets help from the Beyond when she reads messages that have been sealed up in envelopes. When I observed her act in 1982, she was deftly opening one edge of the envelope, and stealing a peek at the paper inside. (See "Best of BASIS," 1982-83, page 19-21). I even have some of the sliced-up envelopes to prove it.

She moved from Santa Clara to Santa Rosa, then somewhere after that, and we lost track of her for a while. Well, she's back in the South Bay. The "Cosmic Church of Life & Spiritual Science," a

"Christian Spiritualist Church," has been set up at 1035 Emory St., San Jose, in the Oddfellows Temple. She's advertising in the Los Gatos paper; perhaps she figures that a community of the well-heeled must contain many prepared to part with hefty sums for Spiritual Enlightenment. Save your money, folks -- anyone with a letter opener can do that trick.

Speaking of noted ecclesiastics, Channel 5's favorite "psychic," Sylvia Brown, whose 1986 "predictions" included "Dynasty" being cancelled and the Pope getting pneumonia, has apparently left Nirvanah (the Foundation, that is) in Saratoga. Now she has the "Church of Novus Spiritus," a "Scottish Rite Temple," at 2455 Masonic Drive, San Jose. She has advertised in the Los Gatos paper, too! Hmmmmmm.

Opinions expressed in "BASIS" are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of BAS, its board or its advisors.

The above are selected articles from the April, 1987 issue of "BASIS", the monthly publication of Bay Area Skeptics. You can obtain a free sample copy by sending your name and address to BAY AREA SKEPTICS, 4030 Moraga, San Francisco, CA 94122-3928 or by leaving a message on "The Skeptic's Board" BBS (415-648-8944) or on the 415-LA-TRUTH (voice) hotline.

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