



ORBITER

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The New England Aerial Phenomena Report

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CORAL LORENZEN (THE FIRST LADY OF UFOLOGY) (1925-1988)



Coral Lorenzen.

Coral Lorenzen died April 12, 1988 of natural causes. Her interest in the UFO phenomena began in 1934 at the age of 9 when her and two playmates saw a hemispheric object cross the western sky from west to north. This sparked her interest. Her second sighting came in June, 1947 when she observed a tiny round object leave the ground and quickly moved straight up into the sky and quickly disappeared.

During the next five years she made many contacts with people interested in the subject of UFOs. In January, 1952 she began contacting them to form APRO. The main thrust of her idea was to preserve information which otherwise would have been lost to history.

Through the years Mrs. Lorenzen has held additional positions as a correspondent and feature writer for various newspapers and was employed by the United States Air Force at Holloman Air Force Base where she became familiar with Air Force procedures and missile testing.

She is the author (or co-author with her husband Jim) of seven books: *Flying Saucers-The Startling Evidence of the Invasion from Outer Space* (originally entitled *The Great Flying Saucer Hoax 1962-1966*); *The Shadow of the Unknown* (1970); *Flying Saucer Occupants* (1967); *UFOs Over the Americas* (1968); *UFOs-The Whole Story* (1969); *Encounters with UFO Occupants* (1976); and *Abducted* (1977).

Mrs. Lorenzen felt strongly that UFO researchers should concentrate on improving the quality of investigations and therefore reports and attempts to see that the results are made available to the scientific community. She felt that the thousands of reports of UFOs in the sky, on the ground, and accompanied by humanoid occupants indicate that a careful, methodical and in-depth study of earth and its inhabitants is under way.

NEW_COLUMN_-_ARTICLE_LOG

I am implementing a new column on UFO related articles in the hopes of keeping a record of them. Most of these articles are very difficult to locate. Some are found in the local libraries (if you know where to look), others can be found in local or regional magazines, second-hand bookshops, etc. The Chevy article listed below was found in a used-magazine rack in a small out of the way shop. Let us know if you come across any UFO-related articles so we may register them and keep this column updated. Here is a list of articles recently discovered:

- 1) Chevy Outdoors spring issue 1987, (page 82).
- 2) New Hampshire Profile - April, 1988 issue.
- 3) Utne Reader Jan/Feb. 1988 (page 33).

FILM_FAX

Film Fax is a video guide that deals with unusual motion picture films, T.V. and odd videos. In issue #8 of the guide, Film Fax carried several flying saucer movies (class B-type. One of these listed is the documentary "UFO". It also carries a listing of saucer models. You can receive this guide by writing to: Film Fax, Box 1900, Evanston, Illinois 60204. Send \$5.00 plus \$1.50 postage.

NEW_MAGAZINE

The first nationally distributed UFO magazine in 8 years goes on sale June 4th at newstands across the U.S. and Canada. The name of the magazine is UFO Universe. Publisher Al Weiss, Editor Tim Bechley. The first issue contains the following articles: "The Hidden History of the UFO Mystery" by John Keel; "Mutiliations, Crashed Saucers and Aliens in Captivity" by Linda Howe; "Alien Abductions - Will you be next?" by Brad Steiger; "UFOs 40 miles from New York City" by Phil Imbrogno. The first issue is 72 pages, 8 pages of color pictures. For premiere issue send \$2.50 plus \$2.00 postage and handling to: Condor Books, 351 W. 54th Street, New York, NY 10019.

CUFOS_SPECIAL_REPORT

The Center for UFO Studies has issued its first bulletin in nearly 7 years. This special report is both a statement of their position on the Gulf Breeze events and a caution against excess enthusiasm of the ongoing case. This bulletin is reprinted in this issue of Orbiter with the permission of George Eberhart (Editor, CUFOS Bulletin, April 1988).

CUFOS Scientific Director Mark Rodeghier makes a good point in that those familiar with the history of ufology should have seen the warning signs. He details strong similarities between the Gulf Breeze case and such personalities and events as associated with the Billy Meirs and Adamskis.

These warning signs were in evidence since the case received its first publicity. The Miami Herald article clearly detailed problems of Mr. Ed's taped polaroid camera, Mr. Ed's videotape, his reluctance to answer questions related to his camera. Mr. Ed's wife was reluctant to get involved. (Why?) The Jet propulsion laboratory was reluctant to analyze the photos due to a suspected hoax and much more..

MUFON investigators jumped the gun on this one. In their excitement to get the story into the limelight they overlooked their priorities. They bruised the credibility of their fellow colleagues and damaged their own prestige. This should be a lesson. We are investigators and researchers. We gather evidence, data, and analyze it before calling a press conference.

Late note: Mr. Ed boasted to a few neighbors and acquaintances that he is going to pull off the greatest hoax ever. There will be more on this in the May issue of Orbiter.

CUFOS investigator Robert Boyd should be commended on his critical stance of this very bizarre case.

Gulf Breeze, Florida: The Other Side of the Coin

by
Mark Rodeghier
and
Robert D. Boyd

Background. On November 16, 1987, a businessman, later nicknamed by UFO investigators and the press as "Mr. X" or "Ed," delivered five Polaroid UFO photos and a "To whom it may concern" letter to the editor of the *Gulf Breeze, Florida, Sentinel*. The letter and three photos were printed in the November 19 edition of this weekly newspaper.

The letter, from the anonymous photographer who was later revealed to have been "Mr. X" himself, explained that the pictures were taken about 5:00 p.m. on November 11. The camera was a Polaroid Model 108 with a fixed distance setting. The object appeared to have been the size of a house. Other anonymous witnesses claimed to have observed the same or similar objects, and their comments appeared in subsequent issues of the paper.

Mutual UFO Network investigator Donald M. Ware went to the site of the alleged encounter, the home of the witness, who said the object changed direction, cast light, hovered, descended, ascended, wobbled slightly, and glowed. After taking the fifth photo, Mr. X was paralyzed in a "blue beam" coming from the UFO. He felt he was being levitated and told telepathically to be calm. Then he got the impression that someone was "flipping through a book showing him pages of dog pictures." He tried to scream but couldn't, then fell to the ground, whereupon the object and the beam disappeared.

On later occasions Mr. X claimed to hear a humming sound in his head, which indicated to him that the UFO had returned. He would then go outside, hear more voices and see more pictures in his head, and see the UFO. Several times he was able to obtain more photos.

The case is much more complex than can be related here, with Mr. X producing a videotape of the UFO, aliens with shields and a glowing rod who beamed down from the object, a strange black dog that followed the witness, a baldheaded human who appeared in his bedroom, and two civilians with pistols who attempted to take the photos and claimed to have a "material seizure warrant."

The incidents and photos have been reported by

WEAK-TV in nearby Pensacola, WKRG-TV in Mobile, Alabama, the Pensacola News Journal, the wire services, the Miami Herald, and current issues of the MUFON UFO Journal.

Robert D. Boyd, CUFOS' investigator coordinator and MUFON state section director for Alabama, has provided us with the results of his investigation, published here for the first time.—GME.

Photographic Analysis

The bare details of the Gulf Breeze sightings as described above cannot do justice to the convoluted nature of this case. CUFOS has been asked several times by ufologists and the press to comment on Gulf Breeze. Given the complexity of the case and the fact that only Robert Boyd of CUFOS has talked to the primary witness, we have previously declined to state our position. We do so now because we are quite concerned about

"The Gulf Breeze photographs taken by Mr. X are most probably a hoax."

the possible ramifications for ufology if Gulf Breeze is eventually discovered to be a hoax.

The CUFOS position can be stated simply: the photographs taken at Gulf Breeze by Mr. X are most probably a hoax. Moreover, the investigation of the case has been less than competent, a circumstance contributing to continuing interest in the photos.

Let's begin with the photographs themselves. Almost every experienced ufologist, upon first viewing the color images, has said something like, "These photos are too hokey to be real." This includes not only both authors and other staff at CUFOS, but also Willy Smith of the UNICAT project and Robert Nathan of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California. Nathan's opinion can be summarized by this quote: "I have the feeling that somebody is perpetrating a hoax."

Of course, "real" photos of UFOs might just look hokey, but there are more problems. It is curious that several investigators have remarked, upon viewing the prints, that there is a waviness in the images that makes them appear to be taken near water or in water. Yet the pictures are said to have been taken near Mr. X's home, not on the Gulf of Mexico. Another interesting feature is the obvious non-symmetrical shape of the UFO and the flaw in its bottom rim (evident only on good quality prints, not in newspaper reproductions).

If the photographs are a hoax, we can suggest at least two possible methods.

One is to take the prints as reflections in water. This method has the advantage of requiring the photographer to work at a body of water, away from his home, so that his neighbors would be unable to view his creative efforts. Another classic technique of trick photography is to take the photos as a reflection off a pane of glass. Either of these methods would

require the use of a model or common household object, explaining the flaws in the objects's appearance.

And it is still possible that, despite the use of a Polaroid camera, the witness has developed an ingenious means of creating double exposures.

Never underestimate the cleverness of the motivated common man.

Here is another problem with the photographs, in a lesson taken from UFO history. How many photos of UFOs has Mr. X taken? Dozens. How many reliable photos of UFOs exist with the exception of Gulf Breeze? Probably around 2 dozen, give or take a few. Does that make Mr. X's photos appear less plausible? Absolutely.

Yet another odd fact. Dave Barry, reporting for the *Miami Herald*, visited Mr. X a few months ago in the company of a photographer from the newspaper. The photographer was quick to point out that some of the film used by Mr. X has an ASA rating of 80, which means it is relatively slow to react to light. Why is this a problem? Because Mr. X claims that the UFO moves almost continually, and a moving object would appear blurred with this film unless the shutter was left open for some time. But Mr. X's images of the UFO are relatively sharp, and he has not opened his camera shutter for excessive amounts of time. As the *Herald* photographer stated, "It just doesn't look right."

If the photographs are such poor evidence, why the continued interest in this case? Putting aside the actions of the local newspaper, the *Gulf Breeze Sentinel*, and its editor, who has covered the story extensively, one contributing factor has been the willingness of the local MUFON investigators to endorse the authenticity of the photos before detailed analysis. In the December 10 issue of the *Sentinel*, Charles Flannigan and Donald Ware are quoted as follows:

"Preliminary evaluation, prior to the completion of the photogrammetric analysis, is an unknown of great significance because of the quality of the five photographs..." How, we ask, can it be determined that one has "quality" photographs prior to the analysis? The answer is simple. You cannot, if you are conducting a serious, unbiased investigation.

The Witness

There are other indications that the quality of the investigative work has fallen short. One of us (Boyd) was astonished to learn, in late March, that the MUFON team had not yet canvassed Mr. X's neighborhood for potential witnesses, even though the original sightings had been publicized as early as November 19.

Talking to as many neighbors as possible is crucial in this case because Mr. X claims that a large UFO has often been hovering low over his neighborhood. If true, we would expect several sightings from his immediate neighbors. If there are few such sightings (and so far, that is true), one is led to wonder about the veracity of Mr. X's testimony.

After some prodding, Mr. X took a lie detector test, which he passed, on February 18 and 23 of this year. The investigators have pointed to this test as evidence for Mr. X's sincerity. However, it is well known that sociopathic personalities can pass lie detector tests even when telling falsehoods. CUFOS

does not put much stock in the results of any lie detector, whether pro or con (since nervous, truthful people can also fail a test).

The investigators also seem to have overlooked several curious parallels between incidents described by Mr. X and the events described in Whitley Strieber's book, *Communion*. The most striking is Mr. X's mention of the smell of cinnamon during one close encounter. Strieber also mentioned that distinctive smell in his book (page 19). This coincidence is intriguing because nowhere else in the UFO literature can we find a mention of cinnamon, except for Mr. X's account and a book published a few months before his own experiences. Does this prove the case is a hoax? Of course not. But should we be looking for such parallels in Mr. X's testimony? Absolutely, and the fact that the MUFON team has not is discouraging.

We believe the points raised above are sufficient in themselves to cast doubt on the validity of the Gulf Breeze events. There is more, though, and it concerns the personality and actions of Mr. X himself. One of us (Boyd) has verified by interview that Mr. X, a prominent businessman in the community, is known as a practical joker and prankster. In fact, we have been told that Mr. X told a number of his young friends (he does many things for children and teenagers) that he was going to pull off "the Ultimate Prank." This statement was allegedly made in the summer of 1987. Given the sensational nature of the Gulf Breeze events, these revelations are hardly of the type to increase our confidence in the case.

Mr. X has also made the rather unbelievable claim that on January 13 of this year, two men with large pistols came to his home and said they had a "material seizure warrant" and demanded his photographs. Shades of the men-in-black stories of the fifties and sixties. First, there is no such thing as a "material seizure warrant." And second, the government does not come around seizing photographs that have already been published in a newspaper (you see, the old MIB stories concerned an attempt by the dark forces to suppress evidence not yet made public, not gather evidence already released). Thus we don't believe Mr. X's story about the two men, and once again, more doubt is cast on the rest of his story.

Mr. X is clearly articulate and bright. But those who have visited with him at length have come away somewhat disturbed by his personality. Rather than use our own observations, we quote Dave Barry, the reporter, again. He concluded after his talk with Mr. X that, "He acts agitated, manic. Not to put too fine a point on it, he acts a little crazy." Has this bothered the investigators on the scene? Not too much. But it certainly bothers and concerns us.

The "Investigation"

Let's step back for a moment and take stock of what we have learned. A fellow in Florida has taken dozens of pictures of UFOs that hover over his community, even his own home. This is an unprecedented situation in the annals of ufology.

Recall the boomerang sightings in the New York city area. Thousands of people saw the huge boomerang-shaped UFO over a period of several years, and many photos were taken of the object (see the November/December 1987 *IUR* for a review of the book *Niche Signs* about the sightings). That is

precisely the point. This UFO came back many times, and many people saw it each time. But in Gulf Breeze, although the UFO has returned many times, almost no one except Mr. X has seen it around his home.

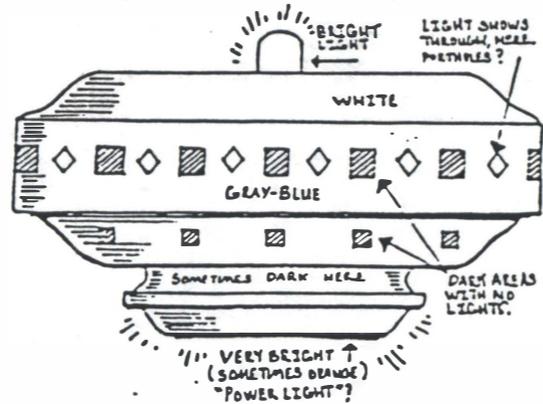
Some more points. Most competent investigators who examine the photographs believe they look fake, even if the exact mechanism cannot be specified.

Mr. X is alleged to have been planning to pull off the "Ultimate Prank" since last summer. And Mr. X is known as a practical joker.

Given all this (and there is other information that is not yet ready for publication), we would expect any investigators to treat the case with caution and take great care to have the photos analyzed as soon as possible. We have seen that the investigators have acted instead with what some might term reckless abandon.

As for the photo analysis, nothing conclusive has yet been done after all this time. And consider this amazing fact: the *National Enquirer* declined to publish the photographs in their publication! This action from a journal that has told us how to detect if our co-workers are star people. On this one, we're with the *Enquirer*.

It has not taken any penetrating powers of analysis or relentless onsite investigation to gather the evidence or reach the conclusions presented above (although Boyd has made about



Top: The Gulf Breeze object, adapted from Mr. X's drawing. Bottom: An artist's rendering of one of the Polaroid photos, showing the object hovering over a road. Artwork courtesy of Susan Smith.

half a dozen trips to the Gulf Breeze area). The evidence has been there for the taking. We believe that certain leads were furnished to Boyd by concerned citizens primarily because he had expressed an open-minded, unbiased approach to the investigation and wanted only the truth about what was taking place. It is the responsibility of an investigator to follow any serious lead, pro or con, on any case.

One more issue should be mentioned. Some investigators have expressed the opinion that Mr. X should be considered innocent until proven guilty, as if we were dealing with a court of law. But the methodology of science is not to be confused with that of our legal system. The witness is an integral part of any UFO report, i.e., the witness is one of the measuring instruments, just as he or she often is in any of the social sciences. This means that witness reliability and validity must be ascertained if one is to have confidence in the data being analyzed. Any facts which weaken our confidence in the believability of witness testimony are thus crucial to an examination of any UFO report, or, in this case, photographs.

Unlike many UFO reports which rely only on witness testimony, the Gulf Breeze reports will stand or fall on the authenticity of the photographs. We welcome and support detailed studies of the photographs. Either the photos will be found to be authentic or they won't. That is a reassuring point in this otherwise perplexing case.

The UFO community cannot conduct itself as does the debunking movement, with its tacit agreement never to criticize one's colleagues or allies. That is why we have written this article, however painful it may have been to say some of these things in public. Science advances by healthy criticism of each other's work, not by silent acceptance of potential errors and flaws. In the long run, we are all the better for weathering the rough and tumble of public debate.

CUFOS expects this statement to be both the first and last one we make on Gulf Breeze. Ufologists have better things to do with their valuable time and resources than spend endless hours listening to tales of UFO visitations from Mr. X. Hoaxes

do not occur often, despite what skeptics may claim, but when they do, it is important that ufology quickly expose them for what they are. The UFO community did this with the Billy Meier case in Switzerland, as well as several others.

We hope this statement from CUFOS contributes to a rational discussion of the Gulf Breeze events and a full expose of the facts and circumstances surrounding the reported sightings.

HOW & WHY

Q. When will Voyager II come back? If it won't, what will happen to it? 4th grade of Doyon School, Ipswich.

A. Voyager II is still hurtling out through the solar system after flying past Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus and sending back spectacular pictures of those planets.

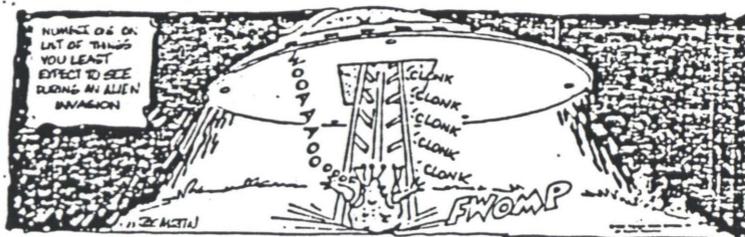
Voyager's next - and final - flyby will happen on Aug. 25, 1989, when it will send back pictures of the mysterious planet Neptune and its huge moon Triton. After that, it will keep on going, never to return.

Its instruments will remain switched on for several years, as astronomers use the space probe to try to find the heliopause - the edge of the region where the sun's energy influences the interstellar environment. The probe's battery power is expected to run out in about 2013, cutting it off from further communication.

But in the vacuum of space, the spacecraft itself will not rust or corrode, and should remain in pristine condition, perhaps even until its next near-approach to a heavenly body - the star Sirius - in about 358,000 years. Just in case, NASA attached a "calling card" to the spacecraft so that if it is ever found by alien beings, they should be able to figure out where it came from and who built it.

Sci-Tech invites readers to send science questions to How and Why. Call 929-2050 or write: How and Why, Sci-Tech, The Boston Globe, Boston, MA 02107. Selected questions of general interest will be answered each week. The column cannot address requests for medical advice, and unpublished questions cannot be answered individually.

MISTER BOFFO by Joe Martin



Unusual Weather:

Ball Lightning in a February Thunderstorm Down East in Maine

The following three excerpts from the *Ellsworth Herald*, published at Ellsworth, Hancock County, Maine, describe the antics of a freak winter thunderstorm occurring during a snowstorm in February 1853. These were located through the courtesy of Herbert T. Silsby II of the Maine Historical Society.

A most welcome old fashioned north-east snow storm visited this locality on Sunday noon and continued until about three o'clock on Monday morning, giving us about seven inches of snow. During the raging of the storm at the fiercest on Sunday evening, loud claps of thunder followed by exceedingly vivid lightning were noticed as very singular phenomena. Even the "oldest inhabitant" does not remember the like during a snow storm in Maine.

Ellsworth Herald, Friday, February 18, 1853, page 2, col. 7.

The Storm at Mount Desert

In our last, we noticed the fact of thunder and lightning during a severe snow storm on the evening of Sunday, 15th inst. We have since learned that the storm was most violent in Mount Desert. At Bass harbor, the lightning struck four people and shivered into a thousand splinters a large spruce tree. Two vessels at N.E. Harbor and one at S.W. Harbor were also lightning-struck and thereby considerably damaged.

Ellsworth Herald, Friday, February 25, 1853, page 3, col. 5.

A Thunder and Lightning Story

The following statement, dated Bass Harbor, Mt. Desert, Feb. 16, is made to the Fountain, in the authority of Mr. John S. Dodge:

A thunder-cloud passed over this village on Sunday evening last, which, for terrific appearance surpassed anything ever before known here.

The wind during the day had been from the N.E., accompanied with snow, with a temperature of from 15 to 20 deg. above 0—at 6 P.M. had increased to a heavy gale, and at

7 P.M. ceased to blow, and flashes of vivid lightning commenced.—In a few minutes more, thunder was heard in the N.W., and at 8½ P.M. the scene was grand and awful beyond description. The lightning was of a purple color, and sometimes appeared like balls of fire, coming through windows and doors and down the chimneys, while the houses trembled and shook to their very foundations.

Mrs. E. Holden was near a window, winding up a clock: a ball of fire came in through the window and struck her hand, which benumbed her hand and arm. She then, with all in the house, retreated into the entry. Another flash succeeded, and, in the room from which they had retired, resembled a volume of fire, whirling around and producing a cracking noise.—A similar appearance of fire was seen, and cracking noises were heard in a large number of houses. Some who heard the noise, say it sounded like breaking glass.

Capt. Maurice Rich had his light extinguished, and his wife was injured. He got his wife onto a bed and found a match: at that instant another flash came and ignited the match and threw him several feet backwards. John L. Martin received such a shock that he could not speak for a long time.

A great many persons were slightly injured. Some were struck in the feet, some in the eye: while others were electrized, some powerfully and some slightly. But what was very singular, not a person was killed or seriously injured, nor a building damaged: but a cluster of trees within a few rods of two dwelling houses, was not thus fortunate. The electric fluid came down among them, taking them out by the roots, with stones and earth, and throwing all in every direction. Some were left hanging by their roots from the tops of the adjacent standing trees—roots up, tops down.

The lightning, after entering the earth to a depth of several feet and for a space some 5 to 10 feet in diameter, diverged into four different directions. One course which it took led thro' the open land, making a chasm to the depth of several feet, and continued its march unobstructed by the solid frozen

ground or any other substance, to the distance of 370 feet; lifting, overturning and throwing out junks of frozen earth, some of which were 10 or 11 feet long by 4 feet wide; and hurling at a distance, rocks, stones and roots.—The power here displayed was truly awful, and had it fallen on a building, it would have thrown it with its inmates into ten thousand fragments. It really seemed that God's mercy is manifested in sparing our lives amidst such danger and destruction. And while we thus enjoy his merities [mercies?], O! that we might be duly affected with gratitude of heart.

I understand that in South-West Harbor, and North-East Harbor, (in this island) several vessels had their masts rent in pieces; one had some planks torn from her, and one man was knocked down, but not killed.

Ellsworth Herald, Friday, March 4, 1853, page 3, column 1.

A reminiscence of the event by one who was in the Holden house at the time of the freak storm appeared 31 years later in *The New York Times* where your editor noticed it. The major part of the letter follows:

* * * * *

I don't believe there ever was a worse frightened lot of people in the world than the inhabitants of Bar Harbor were that night. That purple ball lightning flashed about and obtruded itself everywhere. There was scarcely a house that was not visited by it. At one house it entered it passed through one window and across the room and out at another window, setting fire to a box of matches that lay on a table in the middle of the room. At another house a woman was rendered unconscious by a shock, which extinguished all the lights in the house at the same time. The woman's husband was trying to find a match to strike another light when he was prostrated by another shock. These two recovered, but the man was speechless for a long time afterward. Scores of people were paralyzed by visitation of the lightning, but no one in Bar Harbor was fatally injured. The storm was not confined to Bar Harbor, but prevailed all over Mt. Desert Island. At Southwest Harbor and Northeast Harbor vessels were dismantled [dismasted?] by the lightning, and one sailor killed. There was scarcely a craft of any kind in the harbor but at least had one shattered mast.

The freaks of this strange electric visitor outside the buildings were most extraordinary. At one place one of the fiery balls struck the top of a flagpole. The pole was torn into a hundred pieces, and the lightning plunged into the earth. Usually that would have ended the career of the ordinary electric current. This ball, however, was not subdued yet, and after plowing its way to the bottom of the pole beneath the ground, between four and five feet, it started horizontally in an easterly direction. Although the ground was frozen as hard as a rock, this thunderbolt plowed a trench through for a distance of nearly 500 feet. The debris from this trench, consisting of great masses of frozen ground and stones weighing in some instances hundreds of pounds, were thrown in both directions, and some of them high in the air for long distances around. One mass of frozen earth as large as a fishing smack was hurled more than 75 feet away. Fortunately for property owners and their lives the course taken by this erratic ball of fire was through an open piece of land with no buildings near it. If it had chosen a western course it would have ploughed in under several residences, and in the inevitable wreck that must have followed scores of lives would undoubtedly have been lost.

A grove of trees that stood in those days between the residences, I think, of a family named Carter and one named Lodge, seemed to be an especially favorite spot for the lightning to play about. While the purple bolts shot in among the trees no less than six times, neither of the adjacent houses was touched. On the second visit of the lightning to the grove the tension on the nerves of the inmates became too great for them to bear, and they sought other quarters without delay. The grove was a sight to see next morning. Only a few trees were left standing. Great stones had been torn from beneath the surface and lay scattered about in the snow, which had been swept entirely away in some spots as though there had never been a flake there. Several trees had been torn up by the roots. One of these was carried 25 feet into the yard of one of the houses. Another tree, a small spruce, hung by its roots in the upper branches of a larger tree a long distance from where the smaller one had been torn up.

* * * * *

The New York Times, September 23, 1884, page 4, col. 6.

On April 4, Uranus is stationary, beginning its retrograde motion.

Boston Globe 4/18/88

STAR WATCH/ALAN M. MacROBERT

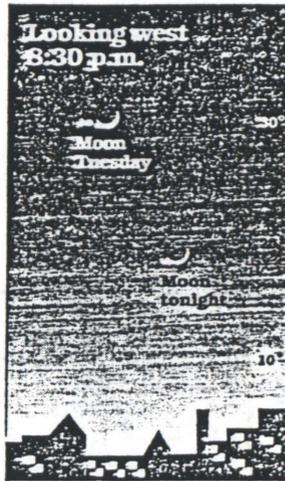
It's not a UFO; it's Venus

One evening out of each month all winter and spring, the crescent moon has shone near Venus, the bright "evening star" in the western sky after dusk. Sometimes, when the two have been especially close, they've attracted a great deal of attention.

Tomorrow Venus and the crescent moon will be the closest together they've appeared all year. If the weather is clear, be sure not to miss the unusual show. Venus is responsible for more "UFO" sightings than any other celestial body, especially when it's as bright as it is this spring.

Venus will be just to the left of the moon's upturned horns, as shown in the diagram. You'll probably first notice the two objects during early twilight, around 8 p.m. The scene may be prettiest in late twilight, around 8:30. They set around 10:30.

You can actually see Venus in broad daylight if you look at exactly the right spot in a blue sky. You may search for many minutes without seeing it, then suddenly Venus pops into plain view when your eye happens to land right on it. Tomorrow afternoon the crescent moon will help guide you to the right point. Just find the moon in daylight and examine the sky a little to its left. Venus' placement with respect to the moon depends on the time of day. Binoculars may help.



Source: Alan MacRobert
Globe staff diagram

After dusk tomorrow, when the two objects dominate the western sky, you can see the moon moving along its orbit. In early twilight the moon will be next to Venus or just a little below. But soon the moon climbs above it. The change should be obvious in less than a half hour, perhaps even 10 minutes if you watch closely.

Every hour, the moon moves a distance equal to its own diameter. Usually there are no bright background objects next to it for comparison, but tomorrow Venus provides a more-or-less fixed reference point to make the moon's motion plain.

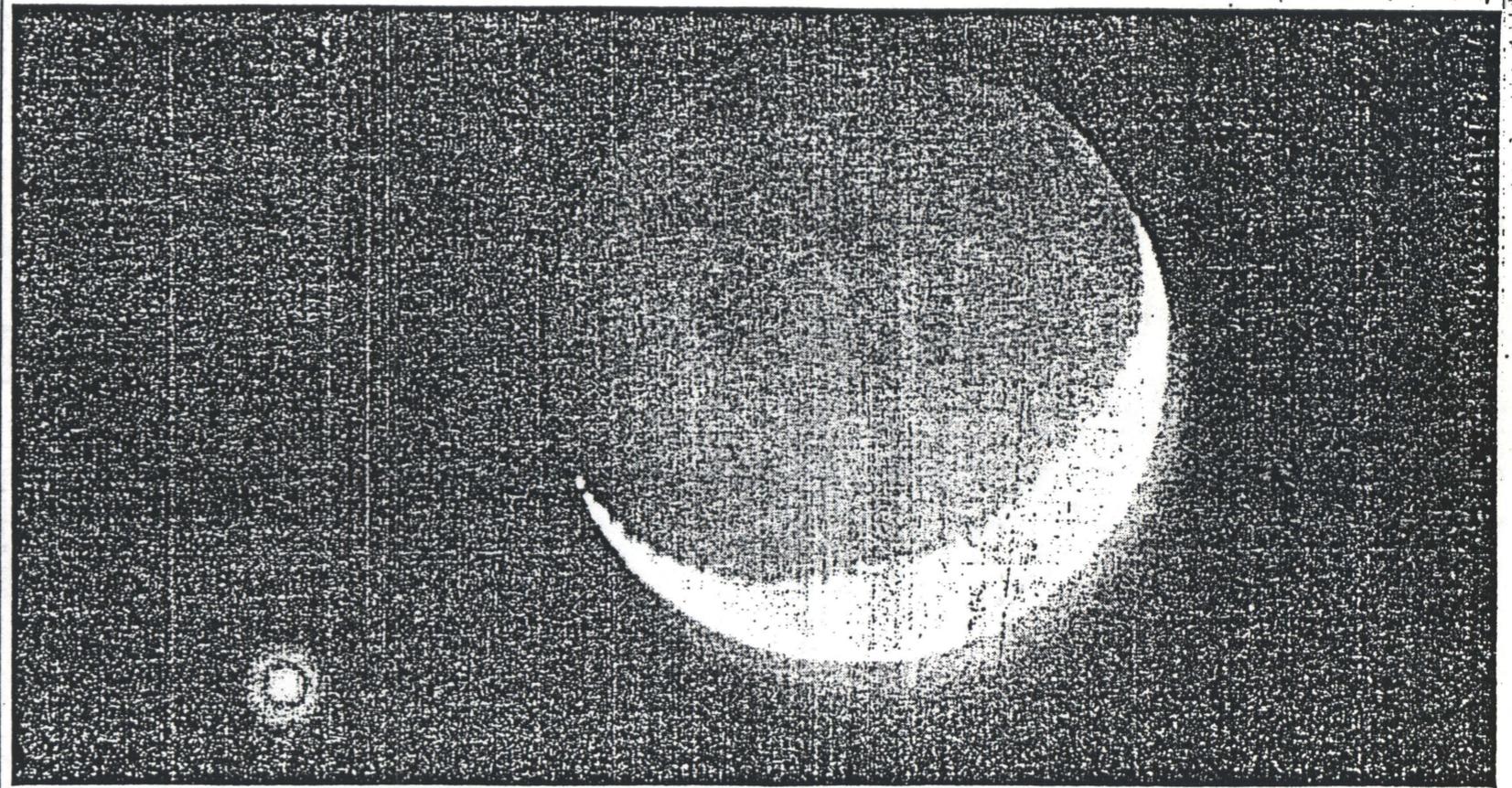
Incidentally, in April the evening crescent moon tilts its horns as nearly upward as possible. If the crescent were a cup, it would hold the most water this month.

To be sure, the crescent's horns always point upward to some degree whenever the sun is below the horizon. The reason is that the crescent's round side always faces directly at the sun, and so the horns point away from it. Their tilt varies throughout the year: the October evening crescent is like a cup that's been knocked almost on its side.

But never can the moon have downward-pointing horns at night. Artists who portray it this way (and they often do) reveal that they don't pay attention to the sky.

Alan M. MacRobert is an editor at Sky & Telescope magazine. His Star Watch column appears each month in Sci-Tech.

BRIGHT ASIDE



Venus appears near the crescent moon in the western sky once a month all winter and spring. At about 8:30 last night, the "evening star" was as close to the moon as it has been all year. The photo was taken at a 15th of a second with a 600mm lens at F8. Globe photo/John Mottern

Now You Know

By United Press International

Mercury is one of the hottest and coldest planets with extreme temperatures ranging from 300 degrees below zero to 800 degrees above zero.

Jupiter, in conjunction with the sun on May 2, becomes an object located in the morning sky, but it is completely lost to normal sight in the sun's glare.

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The Public Interest Is The First Concern Of This Newspaper

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Weather: Tonight: Mostly clear and extremely cold. Low around 10. Saturday: mostly sunny and very cold. High in the mid 20s. Weather map is on page 2A.

Ed classes react

Postponed Adult Education classes that could not meet Feb. 2 will meet for orientation at the Ramay Junior High School cafeteria auditorium on Feb. 9 at 7 p.m. For more information or to register for classes, call 442-7353 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m., or stop by the Adult Education office, 2350 Old Farmington Road in Fayetteville.

Flu hits schools

EL DORADO, Ark. (AP) — Absenteeism has declined since a peak Monday, indicating that an outbreak of influenza or a flu-like illness is subsiding in the city's schools, Associate Superintendent Harold Smith said. Smith said Wednesday that schools have averaged between 12 percent and 15 percent absenteeism, with higher numbers at some schools. However, he said declines were noted Tuesday and Wednesday in students and faculty missing class.

Emergency room doctors have examined 120 such cases at Warner Brown Hospital and 33 at Union Medical Center during the last two weeks, including 32 in the past three days. However, most cases are handled by private physicians.

Flu symptoms vary among individuals, but often include fever, muscle aches and cough.

Extortionist exiled

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal judge spared a reputed mob associate a jail sentence to save his life, but ordered him out of the New York City area for his role in a labor extortion scheme at Kennedy Airport. U.S. District Judge Jack B. Weinstein said Salvatore Reale "just knows so much to live" and sentenced him Thursday to five years probation and a \$10,000 fine while suspending a 15-year jail sentence.

Among the conditions of probation, Reale, 45, cannot live in New York City or eight outlying counties, must continue counseling and is forbidden to associate with any reputed or named crime figures, the judge said.

Last April, Reale pleaded guilty to conspiring to extort \$30,000 from a principal of a Chicago trucking company in order to maintain labor peace at Kennedy Airport. Law enforcement sources say Reale presented reputed Gambino family boss John Gotti in airport rackets.

Teen sentenced

NEW YORK (AP) — A white teenager convicted of chasing a black man to his death on a highway in the Howard Beach section of the city and battering a second black was sentenced today to six to 18 years in prison.

3 women: 'We were chased by UFO Jan. 19'

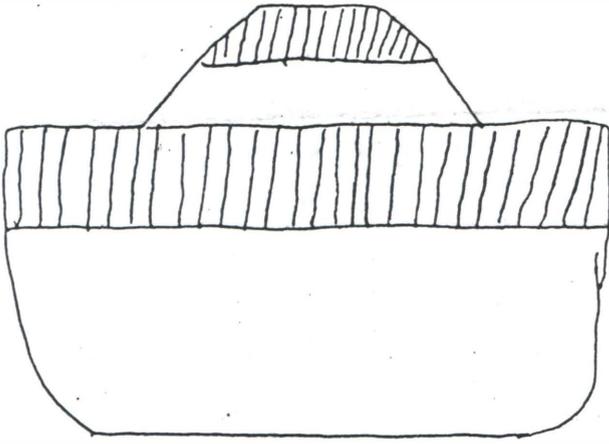
EDITOR'S NOTE — Residents of the small southwest Arkansas town of Foreman began spotting unexplained lights in the night sky late last December. Since that time, the local sheriff's department has received more than 200 reports of unidentified objects flying over the Foreman/Ashdown area just north

of Texarkana. Rarely do such episodes continue as long as this one or involve as many people. Unless otherwise noted, all episodes re-

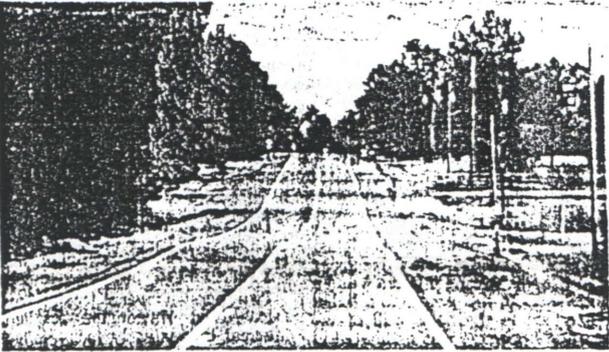
1988, a completely unexplained, brightly-lit object chased them as they drove home from a basketball game. Foreman is home to approximately 1,300 people. The town is located just east of the Oklahoma state line on Ark. Hwy. 41. Texarkana sits to the south. To the east is Ashdown, Arkansas, a community dominated by the Nekoosa Paper Mill. The huge pine trees that feed the mill grow almost everywhere that hasn't been cleared for housing or agriculture. Hwy. 41 runs north and south through Foreman. Hwy. 32 runs into town from the east. The incident began at 10:15 p.m. Terri Jeanes, 30, was driving her

Part 2 of 5-part series. See related story page 7A.

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Deanna Irvan's drawing (above) depicts object she saw in the sky. The women said the brightly lit object chased them along Hwy. 32 (below) towards Ashdown.



counted in this five-part series on the Foreman sightings were told firsthand to Times reporter Bill Macomber on location there. At press time the sightings continue, and efforts to find military or commercial air explanations have yielded no answers. Part I in yesterday's Times outlined the background of the sightings. Today's Part II installment in this five-part series details the episode that brought the sightings to more widespread public attention.

By BILL MACOMBER
Times Staff Writer

Three Foreman women have reported that on Tuesday, Jan. 19,

white, 1988, Nissan Maxima home from a basketball game with two friends. Margaret Sharp, 23, was in the passenger seat of the car. Deanna Irvan, 33, was in the back seat. The women had not been drinking at the game that night, they said. "We wish we had been. We needed one after all that," Jeanes said later. Close friends and relatives affirm the women do not take drugs or drink heavily.

See orange light
As they drove south on Hwy. 41, Sharp told Jeanes to stop the car. She had spotted what she described as an orange light to the east less than a quarter of a mile away. From their position, the light would have been over what is known locally as



Deanna Irvan runs a hairdresser shop on Ashdown mainstreet.

the Red River bottoms. Jeanes pulled the car onto the shoulder. The three women watched as the orange light "lunged" three times at treetop level toward the north and then disappeared. Sharp described the vanishing light in the same words as almost everyone who has seen it: "It was like turning out a light."

The women pulled back onto Hwy. 41 and continued driving south to the Hwy. 32 turnoff. They then drove east towards Ashdown, eventually turning off on the Anderson lateral road, where Sharp and her husband live. The Anderson lateral is a ruer-straight road running south from Hwy 32.

As Jeanes' car topped a small rise on the Anderson lateral, all three women saw the light again in the distance to the south. It appeared to hover over the "bottoms," they said. At first Jeanes thought the light might be Air Life, a medical helicopter operating out of Texarkana. What they were seeing contained four distinct lights; red, blue, green and amber. Standard light configurations on jets or airplanes include a green light on the right wing, a red light on the left wing, with various white lights. No aircraft operating in the United States flies with blue lights.

Light approaches them
Jeanes parked the car in a driveway so they could observe the light. They watched it hover for three to five minutes, during which time they became convinced that what they were looking at was not Air Life. Margaret Sharp's husband was at work that night, and Margaret now decided she didn't want to come home to an empty house. Jeanes backed the car out of the driveway to return to Foreman. It was then a "huge white light," according to Deanna Irvan, came on among the other lights. The object's light then turned bright red, she said, and began to approach them.

"We just nailed it," said Sharp. Sharp's uncle, Bob Taaffe, lived some two miles away on Hwy. 32.

Jeanes headed back up the Anderson lateral road toward his house. The light followed their car to treetop level, running slightly to the right of the road and parallel with the car. Before arriving at Taaffe's house, the object passed over the to-



Margaret Sharp (left) and Terri Jeanes pose in video store where Sharp works.

of the car, according to Irvan, throwing a shadowy "red cast" of light inside the car as it disappeared.

Terrifying chase
Sharp was frightened enough by what she had seen to crouch on the passenger-side floorboard of Jeanes' car. At Taaffe's house the women ran inside and told Sharp's uncle what they had seen. In a later interview, Taaffe said the moment he opened the door to his niece and her friends on the night of Jan. 19, he knew something was wrong. At first he thought they might have had an accident of some sort. Sharp decided she would wait at Taaffe's house for someone to come and take her home.

At approximately 11 p.m., Jeanes and Irvan left Sharp at Bob Taaffe's

• (See UFO page 7A)

UFO

(Continued from page 1A)

house and got back in the Maxima. As they began rolling east on Hwy. 32 towards the Hwy. 41 junction and home, the object appeared again out of the south. To Irvan, who was now seated on the passenger side in front, the light resembled a large ball of fire.

The light behaved as it had earlier, running almost parallel with the car, except this time it glided to the left of the automobile. "It seems to adjust itself to the terrain, up and down," Irvan said. "Where there are no trees it will get lower very quickly. Very quickly."

Jeanes floored her Maxima. When they got to Hwy. 41 they turned right, or north, toward Foreman. The light also turned north. Irvan said the turn made by the object did not describe the typical arc of a car merging with a perpendicular highway. Instead, the light made a sudden, 90 degree turn.

Large metallic machine
Completely terrified now, the women sped toward Foreman at speeds that reached 120 miles per hour. As they approached town they could see the lights of the local Chevrolet dealership ahead on the left. Jeanes remembered thinking at this time that the light must have come closer to the car or changed somehow because Deanna Irvan suddenly became even more terrified than before.

Irvan's terror increased because she was getting her first clear look at the object behind the bright light. In front of the Chevrolet dealership in Foreman stands a brilliantly-lit advertising sign. "It went right in front of their sign," said Irvan. "That's where I could really see it. It was a large metallic machine. The lights seemed to be in the center of the object. It threw a glow out to where I couldn't see the top as well as I could see the bottom. To me it was shaped like a tank. It was flat on the bottom. It had a dull finish. Dark." Irvan estimated its width at two pickup trucks side by side, and its length at three pickups end to end.

In a drawing Irvan made the next morning, the "tank's" turret is evident above the main body. Two bands of light circle the object, one high and one low.

Irvan watched the object all the way into Foreman. She said the light came to a halt over the rodeo arena next to the highway. It hovered a moment and streaked into the night sky. The light appeared to become a distant star "in half a second," according to Irvan. At no time during the incident did anyone bear sound coming from the object.

The women turned into a convenience store where they saw a police car parked. By the time Irvan and Jeanes convinced those inside to step out and look, the light was gone. The police officer made fun of their sighting. Since their sighting all the women have become acquainted with ridicule.

They have remained adamant that

the light they saw was not the Air Life medical helicopter. Even if the lights were the same, they said, no helicopter makes the kind of high-speed 90 degree turn this object made over the intersection of Highways 32 and 41.

None among the three women has claimed the object was a flying saucer. They simply said the object was something very strange that they had never seen before that night.

Women ridiculed

"I don't know why people think we would make something like that up," Deanna Irvan said. Irvan, who is married with children, runs a hair-dressing business in Ashdown. The women received obscene phone calls shortly after reporting their unexplained sighting. Friends and neighbors ridiculed them. The ridicule has died down, however, as more and more UFO reports flooded the local newspaper and sheriff's office.

As in most UFO sightings, the women have no absolute proof of what happened to them. The only potential physical evidence can be explained. Across the trunk of Jeanes' white Nissan Maxima were odd markings. Each group of markings has four lines side by side. The lines are approximately three inches long and are dotted. The black marks appear to the naked eye to be rubber marks, though Jeanes has been unable to wash them from her new car. Jeanes said the markings were not visible on her trunk the day before the "chase." She first noticed them the next day. The marks could be explained as the residue left by a threadbare car wash roller, for instance.

Man sees light also

Though it was impossible to verify, the object seen by those in the car may have been the same one spotted by Jerry Grant, 29, who was coming home from work at 10:15 p.m. that night. Grant was returning to Foreman on Hwy. 32 from the Nekoosa Paper plant. To the east he saw a very bright light. He observed the light as it remained stationary for 10 to 15 minutes. The light, he

said, appeared to turn red and move off quickly. "I didn't say much. I didn't want to end up in the funny farm, because I don't know what it was," Grant said.

In another nearby sighting (one of the most dramatic in terms of short distance from the object) Eula French, 19, who lives with her family on the Anderson lateral road in "the bottoms," saw a large greenish light extremely near her home at 11 p.m. on this same night. Her story, and the frequent sightings over the bottoms, will appear later in this series. French is quite sure what she was was not Air Life or any other sort of craft she has ever seen. It, too, made no sound, though her dogs were barking furiously, she said.

Margaret Sharp, also married and the youngest of the three women, described how the incident in the car continued to affect her nine days later. "I'm just drained. I know what I have seen. I just wish it would go away. It terrifies me. It followed — or chased — us, however you want to word it. I even unlocked the door in case I needed to jump out of the car. It's the closest I've ever felt to death. I can't sleep. I've only stayed in the house one night in the last five," she said.

As for possible planetary misperceptions, Sharp said, "I've seen Venus. Venus is in the west, and this was in the southeast. I've seen a lot of stars, but I've never seen a star chase after a white Maxima."

Frightening memories

Deanna Irvan has had much the same emotional reaction as Sharp. "I felt threatened by it. We were crying and yelling. It's like an invasion of privacy, like a rape victim, like I'm always looking over my shoulder now. I feel calmer at home.

At work I get a shaky feeling, like I'm hypersensitive."

Though they are relieved other Little River County residents have seen something unidentified, the women remained baffled as to what the object might have been. They simply did not know. Barksdale Air Force Base in Shreveport, La., said there has been no unusual Air Force activity around Foreman.

"I hope it is a government thing because I can't think, I'm terrified all the time," Margaret Sharp said.

All three women agree that if they were chased again they would tell no one.

"We're tired of all the ridicule and the stupid explanations like the moon shining off snowgeese. I saw something, and it isn't any of those things," Deanna Irvan said.

Irvan saw UFO last summer also

By BILL MACOMBER
Times Staff Writer

Deanna Irvan remembered seeing strange objects over Foreman on two occasions last year. Until her high-speed chase by an unidentified light in January, however, Irvan didn't tell anyone about what she saw. (See related story page 1A.)

One incident occurred in November. The other was last summer. Both times Irvan was at the Foreman High School track exercising with at least one other person. Irvan works during the day as a hairdresser in nearby Ashdown. She exercises at night.

At approximately 10 p.m. on the nights in question, Irvan and her companions saw something unusual pass over the track as they sat on the bleachers cooling off. This object, she said, was "much huger" than the one she would see in January. She estimated it was at least the size of a football field. She heard no roaring sound accompanying the object's flight.

As it passed over, she and the people with her could clearly make out details of the underside of the object. She said its underbelly appeared to be covered with "crossed pipes." Irvan was somehow reminded of an erector set.

The craft looked highly unusual to Irvan. There had been no UFO sightings in Foreman at the time, however, so she made no connection. She told herself the strange craft was perhaps an extraordinary experiment by Barksdale Air Force Base near Shreveport, La. She dismissed these early sightings entirely until the more intense sighting activity began in late December. So far the Air Force has denied responsibility for unusual air maneuvers over the Foreman area. Regular Air Force refueling operations normally occur at altitudes above 20,000 feet. Irvan said she could not have mistaken this object for a refueling flight, which she has seen before.

More recently, other Little River County residents have reported seeing unidentified flying objects similar to what Irvan remembered. One man described a low-flying object that passed over his house as resembling an electric substation. The substation he mentioned is made of a series of crossed metal pieces. He, too, noted the resemblance to an erector set.

lot of people did," Hlonsberger said.

If KDKA Radio said the sky was falling, Pittsburghers would probably take cover — even on April Fool's Day. Morning disc jockey John Cigna implied yesterday that a flying saucer had landed in North Park. Many callers claimed to have witnessed the event, which was a figment of Cigna's imagination. "People are seeing it. But it ain't there," news director Fred Hlonsberger said.

Cigna told listeners, "The place is cordoned off. You can't get into the park." He introduced a man on the telephone as Col. Charles Bradshaw. "Is that a UFO? Is that a saucer that's down?" Cigna asked. "I can't divulge any information," the man replied. Nervous listeners lit up switchboards at the radio station, KDKA-TV and the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained in Greensburg. Allegheny County police officers stationed at the park also spent the morning responding to queries, mostly from reporters.

Last year on April Fool's Day, Cigna said on the air that an alligator was lurking in Pittsburgh's sewer system. To solve the problem, he asked listeners to flush their toilets at the same time. "A

AIRWAVES/APRIL-FOOLISH PRANK