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1381
UFO watcher seeks closer encounters of the 'weird' kind

By John Helton
 News Journal

FORT WALTON BEACH — Donald Ware admits people might find him a little weird.

But those are normally closed-minded people who haven't given much thought to the possibility of life beyond our solar system, he said. Ware, 50, has been giving the subject a lot of thought since 1952; the more research he does, the more evidence he finds somebody is watching us, he said.

"I believe our planet is being watched right now and has been for thousands of years," he said.

Since retiring from the Air Force in 1983 at the rank of lieutenant colonel, Ware has devoted most of his time to the Mutual Unidentified Flying Object Network (MUFON), a 17-year-old organization that researches UFO sightings and encounters. He serves as the network's Florida state and section (the four westernmost counties) president and as a field investigator.

A native of Richmond, Va., Ware said hadn't given the subject much thought until he saw a UFO over Washington, D.C., when he was 17. Since then, Ware has earned a master's degree in nuclear engineering, has flown 100 combat missions over North Vietnam and has put thousands of hours into learning everything he could about extraterrestrial visitors.

Not to be confused with Donald E. Ware, an Okaloosa County Commission candidate, Donald M. Ware can rattle off case after case of sightings, abductions and visits, the product of those hours of research. And he has a compulsion to be precise, halting in the middle of a sentence to search a reference to make sure he's absolutely correct.

After ending a 26-year Air Force career, Ware said he wanted to spend his retirement doing what he wanted to do. Splitting time between six volunteer organizations doesn't leave time for much else.

He gives lectures, 14 last year, about UFOs to civic and community organizations, lectures he calls a broad view of the UFO phenomenon.

"Some of these things are absolutely weird, there's no explanation," he said, "and you can't hit somebody with too many thoughts. It involves too many thoughts that aren't generally accepted."

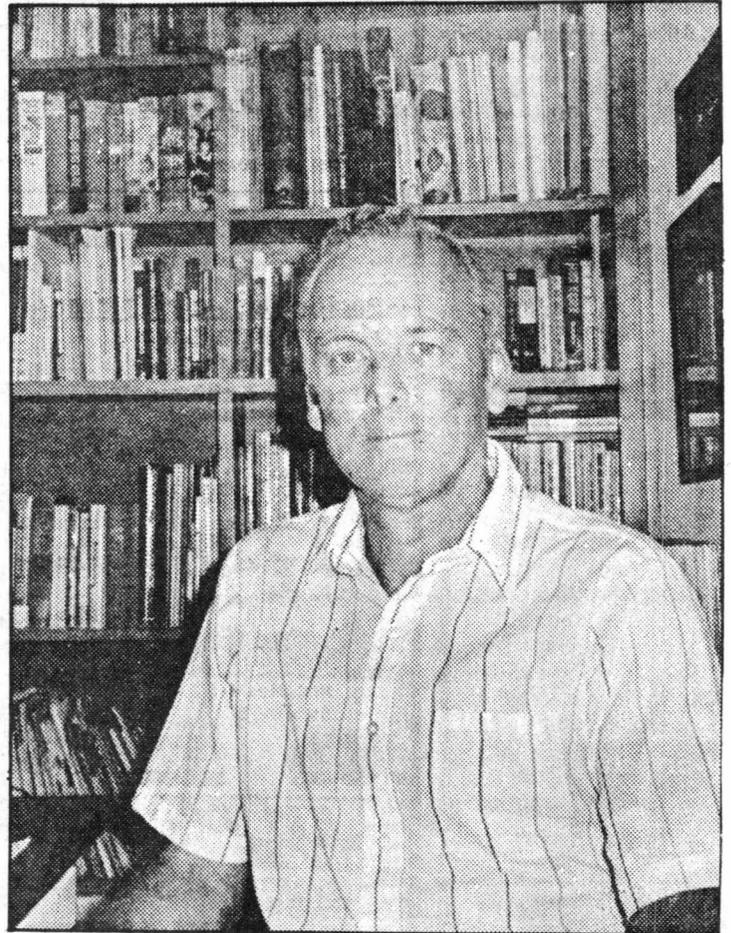
One of those talks and an article last year about his work brought forward people who had sighted UFOs but didn't know how to go about reporting them.

One was from a teacher, now in her 30s, who said she saw an egg-shaped craft in Fort Walton Beach. Another came from a retired Navy man who said he watched a round object pass overhead as he mowed

his lawn. Both sightings were documented on some of the 11 forms MUFON investigators fill out, recording everything from the weather to animal reactions to the witnesses' medical condition.

"MUFON looks at the phenomenon as a study of advanced science," Ware said, pointing out the organization's consultants, who have doctorates in 40 different fields.

Everyone has their own specialties, he added. Ware's is in the strange writings associated with



John Helton/News Journal

Ware studies 'absolutely weird' UFO sightings.

UFOs. He is currently gathering as many samples as he can for analysis, which he said will be a 10-year project.

With only 54 MUFON members in Florida, many sightings go uninvestigated, Ware said. Part of his job as president is to recruit investigators and train them. For the \$25 yearly membership dues, anyone can join the organization to be trained as an investigator in Fort Walton Beach or just to help out where they can. Ware can be contacted at 862-6582.

1351 Sky sights: State UFO group to take part in national information week

By Michael A. Fuoco
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

The bright objects that appear nightly in the eastern, western and southern skies aren't unidentified flying objects, even though under certain atmospheric conditions they may appear to bob and move. Actually, they're the planets Jupiter, Venus and Mars, respectively.

That was easy to explain. But what was the silver, disc-shaped object seen by two people flying over the Birmingham Bridge Jan. 7?

And just what was that oval-shaped object that appeared in New Castle Feb. 28?

And how about the object, described by two witnesses as a "metallic hot dog," that hovered near Greensburg June 21?

Those are just three of the open cases being studied by the Pennsylvania Association for the Study of the Unexplained. The association is a

Greensburg-based statewide clearinghouse for UFO sightings and other phenomena.

To bring the serious study of UFOs to the attention of the general public, the association will take part this week in the second annual National UFO Information Week sponsored by the Mutual UFO Network of Seguin, Texas, the world's largest UFO research organization.

For its part in the week, the Greensburg-based group will present an exhibit Saturday at Westmoreland Mall, Greensburg. Included will be UFO detection equipment, slides, government documents and plaster casts of Big Foot and other strange creatures.

Electronics technician Stan Gordon of Greensburg, who founded the non-profit group in 1981, said it is possible the Pittsburgh, New Castle and Greensburg sightings this year are explainable, as are 90 percent of the 300 calls his 75-member group

receives each year. Most sightings involve natural objects — planets, stars, satellites, weather balloons, aircraft lights — that are misidentified, he said.

But, he adds, the remaining 10 percent of the sightings are not so easy to explain away.

"I've never seen one myself but after interviewing thousands of people I'm convinced there are credible people seeing things that at this point have no scientific explanation," Gordon said.

He said it is hoped that by showing the professionalism of private UFO research, the public will become aware it has a place to report sightings without fear of ridicule. PASU promises confidentiality to callers, he stressed.

PASU's 24-hour UFO hotline number is 838-7768. Correspondence may be sent to 6 Oakhill Ave., Greensburg 15601.

Light in sky baffles stargazers

Free Press Staff and AP

Michigan sky-watchers out for a meteor shower Tuesday night were among people in the eastern United States who reported seeing a mysterious light that one local observer said "corkscrewed" toward the ground, leaving a vapor trail.

A University of Michigan astronomer who did not see the light said it may have been part of the annual Perseid meteor shower.

But Alan Svalya, 34, of Warren, an amateur stargazer and 11-year U.S. Air Force veteran who saw the light while watching the meteors with his wife and a friend, said: "It didn't look like anything we'd ever seen before."

"Anybody who saw it would have recognized it as something that didn't belong there. It was in another part of the sky. It started out as a point of light and then corkscrewed toward the earth with a vapor trail, then it got dimmer and sort of turned into a cloud close to earth."

Douglas Richstone, chairman of the U-M astronomy department, said: "My experience is these things always turn out to be an airplane or a natural phenomenon."

Residents of Clark County, in eastern Kentucky, said the light was accompanied by a boom that shook their houses around 10 p.m.

Robert Gribble, a spokesman for the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, said he received more than 100 calls from a region bounded by Michigan, Maine, South Carolina and Louisiana.

UFO seekers seek others

WHILE we have slept soundly in our beds, members of Exeter UFO Group have been on Dartmoor searching the sky for unidentified flying objects.

Now they are appealing for more people to come forward to join them in their search which they carry out twice a month, weather permitting.

Their leader, Mr Jeffrey James (37), who is writing a book on UFO sightings in the West Country, has records of nearly 400 unexplained objects seen since 1967 by his group.

He explained that watchers soon get to know what is natural and what is not. He said: "The predominate colour of anything extra-terrestrial is always orange, not not pulsating."

"We get quiet experienced at knowing what is a balloon or a satellite, which are always white or blue."

"But it is really odd we have seen nothing of interest this year other than orangery lights over Haytor, which are not flares."

"Ninety-seven-eight was the biggest year for sightings in Devon. It was a strange co-incidence that we saw an object over Exeter on the very day that Genette Tate disappeared. I've never forgotten that."

Mr James is inviting anyone who is interested to contact him at 31 Walpole Street, Exeter, or to telephone him on Exeter 59993.

Unexplained light awes area residents, scientists

By Jim Babcock
STAFF WRITER

Some Miami Valley night sky watchers were among residents of several eastern states who were awed Tuesday night by a still-unexplained small point of light with a misty cloud around it.

Art Goss, curator of astronomy at the Dayton Museum of Natural History, said Wednesday afternoon he remained as mystified by the sighting as most of the rest of the scientific world claims to be. But he is convinced that something out of the ordinary was out there because he had been receiving calls all day from people who saw it.

"It has been described by the people who called as a little point of light that moved slowly from the southeast to the northeast over a period of 10 to 15 minutes. And they said it had like a misty cloud around it," he said. "They all saw it sometime between 10 and 10:30 (p.m.)."

Goss said the phenomenon described by the callers sounded to him like the light show that occurs during a "barium release experiment" from an orbit-

ing manmade satellite. But when he checked with the Smithsonian Scientific Events Alert Network, it had no knowledge of NASA conducting such an experiment Tuesday night.

Later, a spokeswoman for the network, which also received calls about the sighting, told Goss that a follow-up check with NASA's Wallops Island, Va., test range, which normally conducts the barium release experiments, confirmed it had done no experiment.

"Of course, the Smithsonian spokeswoman said that doesn't mean there couldn't have been an experiment released from another sight. But it is awfully puzzling," Goss said.

The fireball effects created by a satellite re-entering the atmosphere could be another explanation for what was seen, Goss said. "But it certainly sounded most like a barium release experiment," he said.

Among the Miami Valley sighters of Tuesday night's unexplained spectacle were Judith Webb of 9064 Normandy Lane, Centerville, and her daughter Toni Dane of 9213 Stephanie St., Centerville.

"My husband saw it first," said Mrs. Dane. "He had been out . . . looking for the (Persied) meteor showers and he said it started out as a bright ball of light — orangish-yellow — that had a halo effect around it.

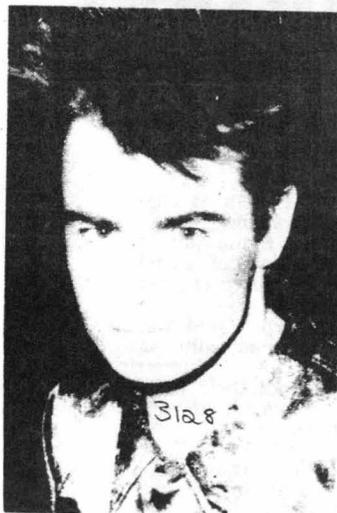
"He came in screaming, 'Come out! Come out!' And by the time I came out it was moving up and leaving a vapor-like tail behind it. Then as it climbed higher and higher, the light got smaller and the cloud got bigger. Then my husband saw a light like a small star that moved along in front of it. Then the whole thing just dissipated.

Mrs. Webb, who was alerted to the sighting by her daughter, said it was 10 p.m. when she and her husband ran out onto their patio to look at the object.

"It was in the eastern sky," she said. "The light was very bright, and the cloud around it was very white. I'd say it lasted about five minutes or a little longer.

"I've seen many, many meteorites, but they were nothing like this. I don't believe in flying saucers. But that sure as heck was something."

JACKIE, LONDON AUG 16 1986



WAY OUT MAN!

NIK KERSHAW will tell you he's not the sort of person who imagines things, but he's CONVINCED that he's seen a U.F.O.

"It was a while back," Nik told us. "I was driving past an old quarry one night with a few friends when we suddenly saw a light in the sky. It began to do those incredible manoeuvres which would have been impossible for any normal aircraft to have made!

"We were just stunned and stared at it for ages before it shot off at a remarkable speed. I'm sure whatever it was didn't come from this planet . . ."

Maybe you had just a little too many fizzy pops, Nikky!

AUG 16 1986

Space engineer thinks fireball was linked to Japanese rocket

By GIDEON GIL
Staff Writer

The mysterious glowing cloud that hundreds of people saw over the eastern United States on Tuesday night was caused by a Japanese rocket booster that released excess fuel almost 1,000 miles above Earth, James Oberg, a space-shuttle engineer in Texas, believes.

Sunlight reflected off the vapor cloud that formed after the station-wagon-sized booster dumped cold liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen fuel into space — much like the sun reflects off jet exhaust vapors — Oberg said yesterday in a telephone interview.

But no sooner than the Texan had aired his theory, skeptics were trying to ground it.

"I don't buy it at all," said Robert Gribble, a staff member of the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle. He said people who saw the object reported that it was climbing vertically at high speed. A rocket booster, he said, would have been moving across the sky. Gribble also doubted that an object 1,000 miles high could be seen from the ground.

Gribble said Tuesday's event probably will become one of the 10 percent of UFO sightings re-

ceived by the center that are never solved.

Morton C. Herald, a Clark County sheriff's deputy, had a different problem with Oberg's hypothesis. It doesn't explain the ground-shaking boom that residents in Central Kentucky heard when they saw the illuminated cloud.

An anonymous caller reported to the sheriff's office Wednesday that he had exploded some mortar-type fireworks, like those set off during Fourth of July shows, Tuesday night. But Herald said he doubted that the fireworks would have been strong enough to shake houses a mile apart, as residents reported.

Oberg, 41, is not one to back off in the face of criticism, however. He said he was hoping his idea would not get by without somebody "picking a fight" with him.

"Mr. Gribble is certainly welcome to enjoy his own fantasy world, but popular estimates of motion high in the sky are notoriously inaccurate," he said.

He said similar vapor clouds from rocket boosters have been seen for decades over Australia, where American spacecraft have unloaded fuel, and South America, where Russian boosters have released their gas. But Americans

have not seen the phenomenon because, until now, the United States had not been downrange from a country launching rockets powered by liquid fuel, he said.

The Japanese only recently switched from solid-fuel rockets to the liquid variety, which must release excess fuel when the gas begins to heat up to prevent an explosion.

Oberg, who works for a National Aeronautics and Space Administration contractor, said the Japanese satellite would have been flying northeast over Cuba, Bermuda and just off the East Coast of the United States shortly after 10 p.m., the time when people reported seeing the object.

He said he calculated the orbit from the time of the satellite's launch, 4:45 p.m. EDT Tuesday, and tracking data obtained from the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado Springs.

As for the boom heard in Clark County, Oberg said it was probably caused by something unrelated to the glowing object, because the sound was not reported elsewhere.

While still unconvinced, sheriff's deputy Herald said, "I guess that guy's theory is just about as good as any other."

BRADFORD TELEGRAPH & ARGUS WEST YORKSHIRE AUG-20 1986

Afternoon cuppa disturbed by a UFO

CONVERSATION over a cuppa was interrupted for two Keighley pensioners by what they believe was a UFO.

Mrs. Margaret Snowden, 60, of Delph House, Parkwood Rise, was

having a get-together with her neighbour, Mrs. Edith Spencer, 90, when a strange sight cut into their chat.

Their attention had been drawn to the window of Mrs. Snowden's ninth floor flat by a buzzing noise outside.

To their amazement, they saw an oval-shaped object flying towards the tower block from the direction of the Haworth/Oakworth moors.

It was black on top with a silver rim round its centre, and disappeared towards Keighley town centre as quickly as it came.

"I could see it as plain as anything," said Mrs. Snowden.

"I didn't believe in flying saucers but I do now," Keighley police said they had received no reports of other sightings in the town.

Leeds Bradford Airport said they had observed no abnormality or

extra aircraft, though their radar was such it did not cover anything at a very high altitude.

The Aeronautical Information Service at RAF West Drayton said there had been no reports of aerial phenomena from West Yorkshire.

UFOs exist, speaker claims

UFOs are for real, and it is time the government stopped keeping its information about them secret, members of the International Flying Farmers were told Wednesday.

Unidentified Flying Objects are from elsewhere in this universe, have a power system far advanced of anything known on Earth and probably don't mean any harm, claimed Richard Sigismund, a social psychologist from Boulder and the owner of a soon-to-open gold mine in New Mexico.

But UFOs could create culture shock and panic, and for that reason the national government keeps a tight lid on the information it has collected and releases only that which it must under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, the farmers were told.

About 800 people are at the Clarion Hotel attending the Flying Farmers annual convention, which opened Sunday and will wind up with a flyaway breakfast at the Colorado Springs Municipal Airport Friday morning. About 150 planes owned by the farmers are parked now at the airfield.

Although many people scoff at UFO stories, there is too much evidence to dismiss the reports as fiction, Sigismund argued.

The UFOs visiting this planet have a power source based on electromagnetic energy that negates gravity, a system far beyond the comprehension of earthlings, he claimed.

Wherever reports have been made about UFOs, a common report is when the craft sets down on the Earth's surface, all nearby gasoline engines fired by an electrical spark sputter and die, Sigismund said.

UFOs began arriving in the Earth's atmosphere in 1945, and the first act by the government was to impose a veil of silence about them because the military forces needed time to investigate the invasion of the nation's air space, he claimed.

AUG 14 1986

And UFOs ought to be a matter of serious concern for the military. "If not, we had better revamp our military forces," he declared.

However, a "coverup" is no longer in the best interest of the country, he asserted.

The information now held secret should be released, because continuing government silence will "erode confidence in government" now that people know UFOs exist, he said.

However, he claimed UFOs will spark culture shock when contact is made between representatives of that far-advanced society and the people of Earth.

And because the least advanced culture is always more impacted by contact, he claimed, a visit by UFOs could prompt young people to look upon their society as second class and might decide it is not worth efforts to continue it, Sigismund claimed.

Reliable reports of UFOs have come from all parts of the globe, he said, citing Iran, Kuwait, the Soviet Union, Cuba and, most recently, Brazil.

The Brazilian incident occurred earlier this year when a number of UFOs were sighted over Brasilia, but air defense planes were not swift enough to catch up with them, he claimed.

Sigismund said an early sighting of a UFO occurred on the Front Range, when a Longmont couple claimed in 1968 they saw a UFO craft and went aboard it at the invitation of the space travelers.

The couple told him they communicated with the beings by extra-sensory perception, Sigismund said.

Under the effects of hypnosis, he claimed, the two both drew similar pictures of the craft, which looked like many illustrated spaceship concepts, and the husband sketched figures of crew members.

Among the features of the beings were bald heads with no eyebrows, no observable ears, and hands as long or longer than those on a chimpanzee or orangutan.

SEP 10 1986

'Media is under mystery influence'

REVELATIONS that mysterious influences caused the press to ignore a startling theory about aliens on Earth are soon to be made by Rickmansworth's UFO expert, Gordon Creighton.

Mr Creighton, a retired diplomat, will publish the revelations and repeat the theory in the magazine *Flying Saucer Review*, which he edits from his home in Cedars Avenue.

In June there had been wide media interest in which the French astronomer and physicist, Dr Jaques Vallée, expounded his belief that visiting aliens do not come from outer space but break through into our world from another dimension.

Dr Vallée, who was Steven Spielberg's adviser for *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and was the model for the French scientist Lacombe in the film, said many aliens were already here, unrecognised and observing the human race.

He added, however: "When we do see them arrive or depart, it's listed as a UFO sighting."

Mr Creighton is now sure that the aliens used a form of telepathy to deter the media from publishing Dr Vallée's theory, as only one newspaper reported the lecture.

He says: "This is alien control, and the aliens are not necessarily benevolent. I think this control is responsible for the mess the world is in."

"I also think the aliens are most anxious that they shouldn't be rumbled. For that reason they spread the theory that aliens were extra-terrestrial, rather than from another dimension."

Mr Creighton, who has previously told of spacecraft being found crashed with dead aliens inside, intends putting forward the multi-dimensional theory and discussing the press blackout in *Flying Saucer Review*, probably in the same issue as he explained the recent circular depressions in cornfields in Hampshire and Wiltshire.

OH-DG3 NEW PHILADELPHIA TIMES
REPORTER AUG 13 1986

Lights seen in night sky

T-R Special Report

Authorities say mysterious lights reportedly seen in the night sky by residents of the Tuscarawas Valley and elsewhere in the eastern half of the nation could be aircraft, rockets, meteor showers or something else.

Melvin Hyler, who lives on Dover Township Rd. 329, reported that he and four other persons witnessed a spiraling, pointed UFO drift off eastward from New Philadelphia late Tuesday night.

More than 100 other calls were referred to the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle from a region bounded by Michigan, Maine, South Carolina and Louisiana.

"I glanced up into the sky at about 10:15 p.m., and I saw this white object spiraling," said Edward J. Uiszkowski of Vestal, N.Y. "It looked like a bunch of fireworks followed by a white cloud."

Robert Gribble, a spokesman for the UFO center, said the light must have been at least 100 miles high to be seen over so large an area.

"It was like three lights at once — red, green, and white. It was flashing on and off," said Tim Jones, an air traffic controller at Syracuse airport who said he watched the lights for about 45 minutes early today. He said they periodically hovered and veered randomly.

Workers at Cape Kennedy, Fla., the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado Springs, Colo., and the NASA facility at Wallups Island, Va., all confirmed there were no launches Tuesday.

An astronomer said the sightings as described could not have been related to the Perseid meteor shower, an annual event at this time of year that makes shooting stars visible with greater frequency in the night sky.

The lights, which were also seen by a commercial pilot, registered on the Syracuse airport's primary radar, which is designed to ignore stationary objects.

Most UFO sightings are finally explained by either a weather or astronomical phenomenon, Gribble said.

KEIGHLEY NEWS, YORK.

AUG. 29 1986

ENG

Who saw a UFO?

A Keighley ³¹¹²UFO investigator has appealed for people who saw a mysterious object flying over the town to come forward.

David Atkins, local representative of the Yorkshire UFO Society, says it was seen by two Delph House pensioners.

It came from the direction of Long Lee and disappeared over Black Hill at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, August 19, the flight path taking it over Parkwood, Fell Lane and Braithwaite.

Mr. Atkins says the pensioners claim the buzzing object did not look like a normal helicopter or plane. Witnesses should phone Mr. Atkins on Keighley 680104.

EAST ANGLIAN TIMES,

IPSWICH

SEP 11 1986

Tel Aviv UFOs ^{3/28}

Two brightly lit unidentified flying objects have been spotted over Tel Aviv, alarming residents who called police and the weather service according to the Israeli daily newspaper Hadashot.

THE TORONTO STAR
AUG 14 1986

Hundreds see mysterious light in sky

By Craig Benjamin Toronto Star

Space experts still can't explain a mysterious light — seen by hundreds of people in southern Canada and the eastern United States — that crossed the sky about 10 p.m. Tuesday.

"I've never seen anything like it," said author and astronomer Terry Dickinson, who reported seeing "a small, bright, spiral-shaped cloud the size of the moon" while driving near his home in Yarker, Ont., northwest of Kingston.

Dickinson, who writes the Sky at Night column for The Saturday Star, said he "pulled over and watched as the cloud slowly expanded and it moved west to east, the way a stationary Earth satellite does.

"It was very surprising."

Dickinson contacted NASA headquarters in Washington, D.C., the Goddard Space Flight Centre in Maryland, NORAD headquarters in Colorado and the National Research Council in Ottawa, but couldn't get an explanation.

He speculated that the object might have been a military satellite, possibly Soviet, either crashing, manoeuvring in the upper atmosphere, or releasing gases.

Robert Gribble, a spokesman for the U.S. National Reporting Centre in Seattle, Wash., said the centre received more than a hundred calls before staff stopped counting around midnight Tuesday.

The calls came from an area bounded by Michigan, Maine, South Carolina and Louisiana.

Gribble said the centre hasn't received so many reports in such a short time or over such a large area in at least three years. Many calls were received three years ago when a satellite burned up as it entered the atmosphere.

Ah, those aliens in the attic

Conventional analyses having failed to explain why Ronald Reagan no longer wants to fight Soviet Communists but instead wants to feed them — with, of all things, taxpayer-subsidized grain! — I eagerly plumbed the depths of Ruth Montgomery's *Aliens Among Us* (Fawcett, 1985) in search of answers. Because, well, let's face it. We may not like it. And it is a little scary. But if Mr. Reagan is a so-called Walk-In, a person whose body has been occupied by a spiritual being from outer space, this could explain a lot.

However, I must be brutally frank. There just ain't a whole lot of stuff in this book which is very enlightening, at least not in the sense I hoped for.

For those unfamiliar with Ruth Montgomery, a blurb in her book says that she is one of our country's "most beloved writers," who used to write a syndicated column on politics and world affairs but has now turned her attention to "spiritual and psychic matters." And, we are told, Ruth Montgomery is a woman way ahead of her time, having revealed many spiritual wonders, including the existence of Walk-Ins, "long before Shirley MacLaine wrote about out-of-body experiences."

More specifically, we learn from this book that: "Though many space beings, who are only souls like us that inhabit thought-worlds, actually incarnate here in the normal fashion, some walk into full-grown bodies, others are beamed down from spaceships, which are only thoughtships that materialize as they enter into this dimension, and still others come here by mental projection. The highest are the ascended Masters, who are free from all limitation and can be anywhere they like in an instant. These Great Ones merge into omnipresence and emerge wherever they like through the simplest technique of identification."

Oh, yes, and then there are "my Guides," of whom Ruth Montgomery has asked questions for 25 years — the "souls like ourselves who have had many previous lifetimes but are currently in the spirit plane, as we will be when we pass through the mysterious door called death."

There, now. Got it? OK.

Early on, Ms. Montgomery makes a plea for "open-mindedness" regarding the existence of extraterrestrials. But I gotta admit what's true: I'm having a real problem believing some of this stuff.

No, it's not the part where the Guides tell Ms. Montgomery that she used to live in Atlantis, in another galaxy, in the Orion constellation, and on the star Sirius. I mean very few people live all their lives in one place, right? People do move, right? And while the Guides are obviously saying that this lady lived in these places during *more* than one lifetime, this is, nonetheless, clearly something about which reasonable people can and indeed should disagree.

And I do not find all that far-out Ms. Montgomery's story about the Colorado woman who is known to her wide following simply as "Tuella," the "space name" we are told that was "assigned to her by the Ashtar Command, an intergalactic fleet" that has allegedly been circling us in outer space for millennia — a fleet the Guides say will evacuate "certain earthlings whose superior development will be required when the New Age is scheduled to occur."

Fine. No problem. I mean weird things have happened on the ground in Colorado, right? — things like the election of Gary Hart to the Senate. So, why not an intergalactic fleet in the air over Colorado? Nothing inconsistent here. In fact, this story may be the best explanation of why Mr. Hart was elected in the first place.

John Lofton is a staff columnist for The Washington Times.

And I find nothing exceptionally off-putting about the story of the truckdriver named Hal who, according to the Guides, had this happen to him: "It was a physical experience, and the spacecraft existed in the third dimension, having been recreated in earth's atmosphere after leaving the mothership aloft. He was taken from his bed in the truck sleeper in a dissolved state that you earthlings do not understand, but put aloft in the pilot's seat where he did indeed guide the ship and experience what he truthfully recalls. He was in physical form while in the ship and again when he awakened,

and throughout, except for brief periods of removal from and return to the sleeper. It is a matter of altered state that spacelings thoroughly understand, for since all is energy they know how to alter the vibrational patterns and manipulate the atoms."

Hey, 10-four, good buddy! Truck drivers are the salt of the earthlings. And if Hal says this happened, far be it from me to question him. Again, no problem.

And I certainly do *not* find far-fetched the story about how President Eisenhower supposedly had an encounter with a small fleet of UFOs and their alien occupants at Edwards Air Force Base in 1954. And that there, as he watched, "the humanoids disembarked from their craft, talked to Ike in English, and displayed their spacecraft technology for him." But everyone present was sworn to secrecy because the president felt the world was not ready to know of such things, because to reveal this would cause a "panic."

As Ms. Montgomery tells it, her Guides say the president should have told about this encounter publicly before he died. But the Guides' criticism of Ike is unfair. He *couldn't* have told anybody about this, because the humanoids spoke to him in a language in which he was never fluent — English!

No, I can't be "open-minded" about this extraterrestrial thing because of scars and cows. That's right, scars and cows. At one point, Ms. Montgomery tells about a "Diane" who had "a clean surgical scar between her nose and lip," a scar she believed was caused by surgery performed on a star ship by laser needles used to implant a replica of a soul from someone named "Tibus." The Guides say this happened when "Diane" was 3.

But sorry, I ain't buying this. I ain't buying the idea that space aliens can fly zillions of miles and make themselves invisible, but can't perform surgery without leaving a scar. No way, Jose! This is too much to believe!

And last and certainly least, there is the cow bit. Ms. Montgomery tells us about a Wyoming rancher, supposedly abducted at least twice by UFOs, who thinks aliens mutilated two of his cattle — a vile act he originally thought had been performed by "some sex cults from the university."

But again, and I intend no disrespect, I must say, in the immortal words of Sam Goldwyn: on this one include me out! I haven't the foggiest notion why aliens would travel zillions of light years to come here, but I am absolutely positive that it is *not* to mutilate cows! Perhaps they come here to *milk* cows, but not to mutilate them. Call me a bigot. Call me narrow-minded. I don't care. But aliens are *not* cattle mutilators! And please, don't write, my mind is made up on this one.

And finally, although Ms. Montgomery will probably view this as heresy, her beloved Guides aren't all that smart, either. She says that in October of 1984 they told her that the federal deficit will continue to increase, but then "taxes will be raised, and with the economy soaring, the deficit will be whittled down rapidly."

But taxes don't cause an economy to soar! Increased taxes cause an economy to stagnate and the deficit to soar! And anybody who disagrees is stupid enough to think that you also fight Communists by feeding them — which, come to think of it, may mean that Ronald Reagan, who also gave us the largest tax increase in history in 1982, is a Walk-In after all.

And remember: you read it here first.

by Sue Riley

A UFO enthusiast has come up with a theory for the silver UFO seen by two Keighley pensioners.

Mrs. Margaret Snowdon,

'Oval flying saucer' shocks

Margaret

Rain theory over that silver UFO

60, of Delph House, Parkwood Rise, was having a cuppa and a chat with neighbour Mrs. Edith Spencer, 90, when their conversation was interrupted by a strange buzzing.

Looking out the window they saw a weird, oval-shaped object flying towards Keighley from the direction of the Haworth/Oakworth moors.

It was black on top with a silver rim around its centre and disappeared towards Keighley town centre as quickly as it came.

David Barclay, of Shipley, who writes about UFO's, said as the sighting occurred just before a downpour, it could be linked to the theory of barometric pressure.

It is thought that pressure in rocks produces electricity, which in turn produces a glowing aeroform.

Mr. Barclay, is currently forming a group in the Aire Valley to study all aspects of the paranormal.

Believe

Mrs. Snowdon said she saw the UFO "as plain as anything"

"I didn't believe in flying saucers but I do now," she said.

Keighley police said they had received no reports of any other sightings in the town.

The Aeronautical Information Service at RAF West Drayton said there had been no reports of phenomena in West Yorkshire.

BOURNEMOUTH EVENING ECHO

DORSET

AUG 16 1986

Sky lights

3128

SIR — I wonder if any of your readers can help me? During June and July several people reported sightings of unusual lights in the sky to the "Echo," including Mr. Peter Charman of West Howe.

The British UFO Research Association is dedicated to unbiased, scientific investigation of unidentified flying objects and usually we manage to find an ordinary explanation for sightings of such phenomena.

Consequently, could any readers who observed unusual lights during this time please write to me at the address below giving a full and precise account as possible. — PAUL FULLER, 83 Alresford Road, Winchester.

What was that?

Stargazers get an extra treat

By Dan Hughes
News-Sun Staff Writer

SOUTH CHARLESTON — There were as many explanations as scientists Wednesday, but none seemed to fit the spectacular white orb which fell through the stratosphere Tuesday night and glowed in the southeast sky for at least five minutes.

Miami View Elementary School science teacher Jim Soermer, 10 students, their parents and a lucky visitor from the *News-Sun* ogled almost unbelievably as a very un-cometlike orb with a wide white tail fell slowly about 10:30 p.m. Tuesday, did a couple of spirals and hung as if in suspended animation.

The brightest component of the unknown phenomenon died out, but a large white cloud drifted to the northeast, bright and clear to the naked eye.

It took Soermer, on loan to Clark Technical College for a week-

long "Become a Stargazer" program, a few moments to remember a 13-inch reflecting telescope which stood only a few feet away from the amazed spectators. Almost in unison, his younger charges and their parents ran to the telescope, grabbed powerful binoculars and jockeyed for a better view.

"Until I hear a better explanation from the government, I'm calling it a UFO," Soermer said Wednesday afternoon. Some scientists suspected the phenomenon was an especially active Persied meteor shower, but Soermer said it was in the wrong part of the sky, and its behavior was nothing like a meteor.

"I've never seen a meteor spiral like that did, and remain lighted for so long in the sky," he said. "I can't figure out what energy could have caused that."

He speculated like others that it might have been a release of barium into the atmosphere to test satellite tracking, but NASA officials at the Lewis Research Center in Cleveland claimed no knowledge of a rocket launch necessary for the release.

"Something's going on that they're not telling us about," he said.

Aerospace specialists told *The Boston Globe* Wednesday that the most likely explanation for the sightings was a rocket launched late Tuesday by the National Space Development Agency of Japan. James Oberg, an aerospace engineer and author in Dickinson, Texas, said the Japanese rocket was the "overwhelmingly likely" explanation for the sightings.

Oberg said a doughnut-shaped cloud is typical of sightings that involve sudden release of rocket fuel.

There was plenty going on during a crystal-clear night on a dark Xenia-London Rd. without the mysterious cloud. Soermer and some pretty sharp pre-teens watched nat-

ural wonders like Venus, the Moon, Saturn, Mars and Jupiter stretched across the southern sky like a celestial necklace.

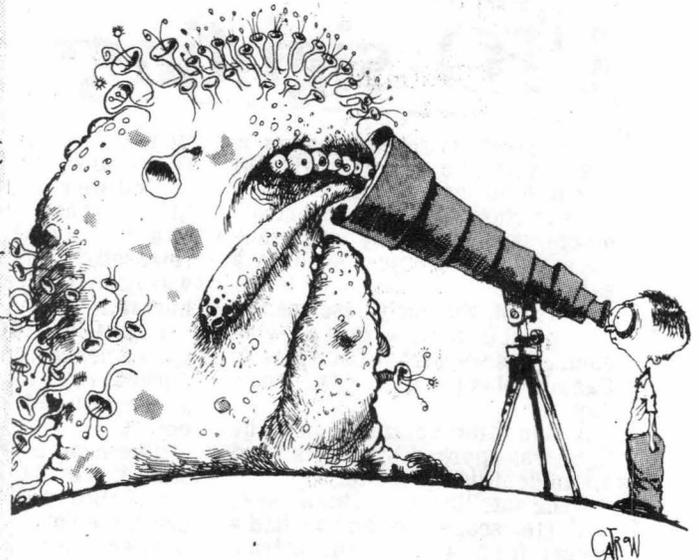
They observed the break in the rings of Saturn, twin stars, constellations, the stellar bounty of the Milky Way, nebula of a distant galaxy, meteors, and man-made satellites speeding around the earth's orbit with their solar panels reflecting the sunlight.

Mindy Holtz, 11, visiting from Fort Wayne, Ind., and her friend Suzanne Saksa, 11, drew their versions of the moon's surface between giggles under a flashlight while Soermer oohed and aahed at the sky like any other kid.

"I really am just an overgrown 11-year-old, but I'm able to buy more toys than they can," he said. "I'll tell you what, though, some of these guys are a step and a half ahead of me."

"I've always liked looking up in the sky," said Ben Babian, 11, a sixth-grader at Roosevelt Middle School. "It just goes on forever."

Babian talked about things like any other 11-year-old, like building a modern pony express — space stations spaced 267,000 miles apart from here to Mars, with fresh space shuttles and crews stationed on each of them to make the journey to the red planet easier.



He also announced plans to develop a telescope for NASA with the capability of seeing through 15 billion light years. Why? "Because that was supposed to be when the universe started, and I would be able to see the dawn of time."

Babian's friend, Scott Plankey, 10, from Rolling Hills Elementary School, posed an interesting addendum to the theory.

He said he questioned the wisdom of the super-scope because, "I heard that if you push it all the way you'll see God looking back at you — telling you you've gone too far."

¹³⁸¹UFO sightings still a mystery

The mysterious light that was seen in the sky in the eastern third of North America coincided with a meteor shower but some astronomers say it probably was made by a manmade object such as a satellite.

The light, variously described as a pinpoint or a spiral or a glowing cloud, was seen from Louisiana to Canada about 9 p.m. CDT Tuesday.

A Canadian scientist said the light was sparked by debris from an unidentified satellite.

"The satellite was actually seen in the telescope here and we had a report from an amateur astronomer (who) saw it and saw the release of material from it," said

Tom Bolton of the David Dunlap Observatory north of Toronto.

"But we're not sure which satellite it was and we're not sure what the material was that was released," he said. He added there was no indication the material was harmful.

Paul Oles, the director of the Buhl Science Center in Pittsburgh, agreed that the lights probably were caused by a manmade object.

"We have a pretty good idea of what it was not, more than what it was," Oles said. "It was not a Perseids meteor associated with the shower that was going on."

He speculated the lights came from a release of gas from one of

the thousands of satellites orbiting the planet.

But Ronald Stoner, physics and astronomy professor at Ohio's Bowling Green State University, said he suspected the display was caused by the meteor shower. The annual shower, produced by the remnants of a comet, lasts several days.

"It is caused by little bits and pieces of dust from the comet. They're very small," he said. "If there were a larger piece, and an icy piece of material, something about the size of a snowflake, it might well cause something like this. It would vaporize and leave a glowing cloud behind it."

MI-D52 TRAVERSE CITY RECORD EAGLE AUG 13 1986

Mystery light seen in GT

From staff and wire reports

TRAVERSE CITY — Local residents are among hundreds of people in the eastern United States who reported seeing a mysterious light in the sky Tuesday night, and officials today could not say whether it was an aircraft, a rocket, a meteor shower or something else.

"It reminded me of when the space shuttle blew up, when the booster rockets were doing loops in the sky," said Jeff Gendron of Traverse City, who saw the light while fishing on East Bay with Jim Oviatt, also of Traverse City.

"When I first saw it, it looked like a glowing cloud, and then it started like a tight spiral," Gendron said.

Another fisherman on Arbutus Lake also reported seeing the light, which lasted from shortly after 10 p.m. to about 10:30 p.m. and moved slowly, low in the sky, from the south-southeast toward the east.

"It started out real tight and bright. It looked like an airplane coming in," said Jon P. Benn, an employee of the Hagerty Insurance Agency of Traverse City. "Then it changed into a swirl of gas and gradually dissipated, as the smoke, or whatever it was, cleared. It was pretty strange."

Both men said they've talked to others who saw the mysterious object. They said they've never seen a UFO before, and that what they saw didn't look like any meteor or Northern Lights display they had ever seen.

The local reports are identical to those seen over a wide area east of the Mississippi.

Robert Gribble, a spokesman for the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, said he received more than 100 calls from a region bounded by Michigan, Maine, South Carolina and Louisiana.

Gribble said the light must have been at least 100 miles high to be seen over so large an area.

But an astronomer said the sightings as described could not have been related to the Perseid meteor shower, an annual event at this time of year that makes shooting stars visible with greater frequency.

NE. DIO LINCOLN JOURNAL
AUG 13 1986

¹³⁸¹Mysterious light sighted in East

People scattered over much of the eastern United States reported a mysterious light in the night sky, and residents of Kentucky said they heard a boom and felt their houses shake.

The phenomenon late Tuesday coincided with the Perseid meteor shower, an annual occurrence lasting several days.

"I glanced up into the sky at about 10:15 p.m., and I saw this white object spiraling. At first, I thought it was an airplane or something," said Edward J. Uiszkowski of Vestal, N.Y. "It looked like a bunch of fireworks followed by a white cloud."

There were similar reports in other parts of the East. Robert Gribble, a spokesman for the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle, said he received more than 100 calls from a region bounded by Michigan, Maine, South Carolina and Louisiana.

J. ANTONIO HUNEEUS

After Oberg Takes The Case, Another 'UFO' Is Bagged and Marked 'Identified'

On the night of August 12, thousands and perhaps millions of Americans saw a mysterious cloud-like phenomena over the Eastern and Central U.S. The reason there were so many witnesses was due to the late summer skywatching of the Perseid meteor shower. Although some experts suggested the luminous cloud could have been linked with the concurrent astronomical event, most did not.

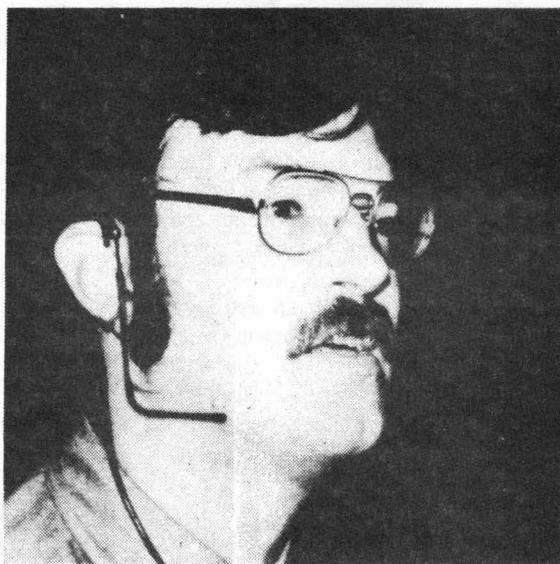
Others, like the National Weather Office in Columbus, Ohio, proposed the phenomenon was caused by "a controlled release of barium gas from a satellite," yet no such launches were reported by either NASA or the Department of Defense. UFO groups, like the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle or the Center for UFO Studies in Illinois, were swamped with calls reporting an explosion in the sky, moving lights, and so on. The sighting remained technically speaking a "UFO" for little over a day until it was identified correctly by James Oberg, the spaceflight expert and author from Houston, Texas, as the launch of a Japanese satellite.

Oberg has distributed a complete report of this interesting sky phenomenon, describing step by step how he solved the case. Of course, he could draw from his vast experience in solving similar cases, such as the "luminous clouds" seen in the Southern Cone which are linked to Soviet satellite launches from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome, as well as similar occurrences in Australia caused by launches from Cape Kennedy. I myself have assisted Mr. Oberg in the past regarding Argentine and Chilean reports of alleged UFOs, caused in fact by Soviet

J. Antonio Huneeus is a freelance science writer who has frequently covered space affairs for publications in North and South America.

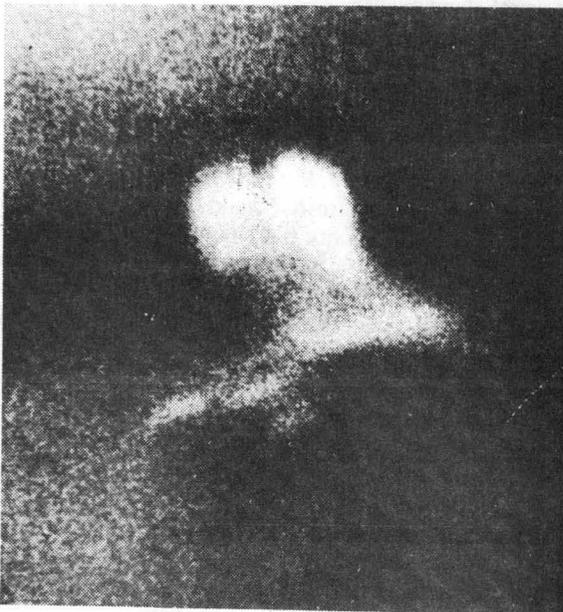
launches of Kosmos Early Warning and Molniya weather satellites.

"At about 10:00 PM EDT on Tuesday, August 12, 1986, nearly the entire eastern half of the United States was treated to a spectacular celestial apparition," begins James Oberg's report. With the exception of Florida which was covered with clouds, practically every other eastern and central state, from Texas and Oklahoma to Michigan, Illinois, New York and New England, and even Quebec and Ontario in Canada, were treated to the spectacle. "It had probably the largest audience of any UFO ever witnessed in North America," wrote Oberg.



Robert G. Nichols

SPACEFLIGHT EXPERT and author James Oberg (above) has identified numerous UFOs as plumes from space shots from various countries. A typical cloud phenomenon (below) caused by a Soviet rocket, which was widely mistaken for a UFO, was photographed in Naltchik, USSR, in 1967.



Jyri Lina/CUFON Archives

Serious UFO investigators have recognized for a while the problems of perception that human beings have in accurately describing a given visual stimuli. The great cloud event of August provides a good example. Here are some of the descriptions collected by Oberg and myself from the news media. "It started to get bigger and it had a tail. By the time we got out of the truck, it had begun to spiral. It lasted for a few minutes, then became like a dim star and floated toward the west."

CON'T NEXT PAGE

OBERG CONT

The descriptions of the object with a spiral shape are interesting because they may tie in with a series of so-called "spiral-shaped UFOs" reported in the People's Republic of China during the late '70s. We'll have more to say about this later. Here are some of the pertinent "spiral" descriptions: "I looked at the sky around 10:15 p.m. and saw this white object moving like a spiral," said Edward Uiszkowski from Vestal, NY. From the same area around Syracuse, amateur astronomer Denise Sabatini described the event "as a pinpoint of light . . . releasing some type of reflective gas into the air, and as the gas was released into air, it was as if it was spiraling around the pinpoint of light."

Other similar descriptions came from astronomer Karl Kemper from the Dunlap Observatory in Ontario, who spoke of a starlike object surrounded by a small spiral cloud; and Chuck Barnes from Detroit, who described it as "glowing like a spiral pinwheel standing on end and moving on a line from southeast to northwest."

By contrast, other descriptions were rather inaccurate and, in some cases, erroneously assimilated to unrelated events. An air traffic controller in Syracuse, for instance, talked about "three simultaneous red, green and white lights" hovering on and off over the airport. "It turned out," wrote Oberg, "he was watching B-52s land at nearby Rome AFB, several hours after the real UFO," although his account was confused in the news media with the spiral-cloud event.

Other cases involved an explosion in Clark County, Kentucky which coincided with the celestial phenomenon. According to Deputy Sheriff Larry Lawson, "the people said their homes shook and windows vibrated as if there had been an explosion or earthquake . . . They said the whole sky lit up!" In the end, the explosion was caused by the setting off of illegal fireworks and had, of course, absolutely nothing to do with the cloud in the sky. Oberg reflected that, "these cases illustrated the power of coincidence, in which two concurrent independent events can easily (and erroneously) be integrated into a single unsolvable mystery."

So what about the solution to what millions of Americans saw in the sky or heard through the media regarding the August 12 event? By the morning of the 13th, James Oberg, who works as a spaceflight computer expert at the McDonnell Douglas facilities near the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, heard about the previous night sensation. He also learned that the Japanese had launched two satellites during the same night. It immediately occurred to him that the two events were most likely linked. Because of his familiarity with similar cases of "luminous clouds" caused by space launches elsewhere in the world, Oberg indicated that "my initial hypothesis about a propellant venting sprang quickly to mind. Such a phenomenon was unheard of over North America," he added, "but the new Japanese rocket test was also the first of its kind."

The spaceflight expert explained that there were some initial difficulties due to a confusion of names, as well as the exact launch time and its terminology, but the full picture soon became clear. "Armed with a good liftoff time and with known orbital inclination and period," indi-

cates Oberg's report, "I was able to produce a hand-calculated map which showed the object heading up the east coast at about 10 PM EDT. Its altitude was about 1500 km (almost a thousand miles), well high enough for it still to have been sunlit even though the ground below had been dark for more than an hour."

With regards to the culprit itself, this is the full description of the Japanese rocket and its payload, as furnished by Oberg: "The names of the vehicles were a little confusing. The booster was called the 'H-1' and it was the first launch. Its second stage was powered by the new 'LES' engine, using super-cold liquid oxygen as fuel. Two payloads were deployed: an amateur radio satellite variously called JAS-1 (Japanese Amateur Satellite #1), JO-12 (Japan OSCAR 12), or 'Fuji' (by the builders); the geodetic mirror satellite, EGP ('Experimental Geodetic Payload'), or 'Ajisai' ('Hydrangia Flower'). The booster was launched from Tanegashima Island off Kyushu at 5:45 AM JST August 13 (2045 UT Aug. 12), after a 14-minute hold. Precise tracking data from NORAD allowed a perfect match of sightings to space vehicle."

With an iron-clad solution on his hands, Oberg communicated it immediately to the Smithsonian Scientific Event Network in Washington D.C., NORAD Public Affairs in Colorado Springs, NASA Public Information at the Kennedy Space Center, and two private groups he belongs to, the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) in Buffalo, NY, and the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) in Texas.

As mentioned earlier, Oberg has become known and respected within the UFO community for his accurate investigation and identification with space launches of several, some spectacular, UFO incidents in Russia, South America and elsewhere. He has tabulated over a dozen, well-documented cases both in the USSR and the Southern Cone which were directly related with satellite deployments from the Plesetsk cosmodrome, located in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Karelia, north of Moscow near Finland.

The cases were particularly difficult in the beginning because until 1983 the Soviets didn't officially recognize the existence of this space facility. This meant that perfectly prosaic rocket launches seen by thousands of Russians had to be ascribed to exotic UFOs because, officially speaking, the launches had taken place thousands of miles away at the Baikonur/Tyuratam Cosmodrome in Central Asia.

But there is also a South American by-product to these launches, due to the fact that the Kosmos early warning "spy" satellite and other military payloads are launched from Plesetsk. Because of the orbital path of the rocket, the satellites are placed on its final orbit in the sky over Chile and Argentina. When the separation of the rocket's last and fourth stage takes place during sunset, the sunlight interacts with the booster's combustion gases and forms large "luminous clouds" or tenuous "doughnut-shaped" objects interpreted as UFOs by millions of South Americans. A perfect match between a Plesetsk launch and a South American "UFO" sighting has been furnished by Oberg for at least half a dozen cases in recent years. In fact, the Plesetsk "luminous cloud" has become a distinct family of so-called Identified Flying Objects (IFOs).

OBERG CONT

Perhaps more curious, because they are still waiting for a final solution, are a series of night-time sightings of luminous "spiral-shaped" objects reported in China between 1977 and 1981. These cases became a *cause celebre* for the relatively new UFO movement in China, mainly because of the amount and the caliber of the witnesses. Astronomer Zhang Zousheng and other professionals described in detail what was called "a spinning vortex," "a material object that was rotating and propagating outwardly," and so on. The sightings were concentrated in Szechuan province, but were also reported in other provinces as far as Tibet.

"While UFO enthusiasts have accepted them uncritically," wrote Oberg, "experienced analysts have voiced the suspicion that they actually involved space launchings. These intuitive suspicions," continued the spacelift expert and author, "were encouraged by a recent official Chinese disclosures of the cancellation of the 'Windstorm' space booster, which through the 1970s was being developed in competition to the 'Long March 3' booster; there were several flight tests, including one unsuccessful satellite launching, although precise dates were not provided." Until the Chinese authorities do so, the "spiral-shaped" cases will have to remain catalogued as "UFOs," technically-speaking if not in actuality. Yet given James Oberg's highly successful track record of identifying famous UFO incidents with activities from the space programs of various nations, we suspect that his hypothesis to explain China's celebrated "spiral UFOs" with the "Windstorm" space shots may turn to be correct.

IN-D2 ANDERSON HERALD
AUG 14 1986

Mysterious lights in evening sky spark debate

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A mysterious light show that flashed across the night sky east of the Mississippi sparked earthbound debate Wednesday with few able to agree on what caused it.

It was described as everything from a pinpoint to a moving spiral to a glowing cloud to "a big ball of fire," although astronomers said it probably was related to the annual Perseid meteor shower.

RESIDENTS OF ONE KENTUCKY county said they saw a bright flash and then their houses shook when something went bump in the night with a bang like dynamite.

"It was the scariest thing I ever saw, but it was pretty, all white," said Brenda Newton of Rochester, N.Y., who saw the light about 10 p.m. Tuesday when she and her parents went looking for a place to watch the annual Perseid meteor shower.

She thought she saw a meteor, but "then it started to get bigger and it had a tail. By the time we got out of the truck, it had begun to spiral. It lasted for a few minutes, then became like a dim star and floated toward the west."

"IT WAS DEFINITELY NOT a meteor," said Denise

CONT

...lights

(Continued from Page 1)

Sabatini, vice president of the Syracuse, N.Y., Astronomical Society. "Meteors burn off after seconds. This lasted five to seven minutes. It was really quite spectacular."

Some speculated it was a satellite or rocket release of barium gas, used to study the upper atmosphere. But workers at Cape Canaveral, Fla., the North American Aerospace Defense Command in Colorado Springs, Colo., and the NASA facility at Wallops Island, Va., all confirmed there were no launches Tuesday.

Others thought it might be a satellite breaking up in the atmosphere.

"WE DIDN'T show any scheduled space objects to re-enter the atmosphere at that date and time and location. Right now that's all we have on it," said Capt. Sigmund Adams, media relations staff officer for the Aerospace Defense Command, which tracks satellites.

There was speculation it was the failure of a new Japanese satellite. But officials at Japan's Tanegashima Space Center said there was nothing wrong with the vehicle.

TOM BOONE, director of the Rauch Planetarium at the University of Louisville and a member of the Smithsonian's Scientific Event Alert Network, said the network received reports of the lights from nearly every state east of the Mississippi River.

Only residents of Kentucky's Clark County, east of Lexington, heard a boom accompany the light show. //

DETROIT FREE PRESS
SEPT. 7 1986

TAKE US

MI D14

'Flying saucers' captured the world's imagination in the 1950s. Now sightings are rare and interest is lagging — except for a few seemingly normal people who have seen UFOs in the skies. They include Tiger Darrell Evans, Betty and Joyce of Laingsburg, and Marie and Walter, who have seen nine and think they have been chosen.

TO YOUR BELIEVERS

BY SUSAN AGER
ILLUSTRATION BY BOB ZUBA

Deep in the heart of Michigan, in a small home with flowered wallpaper, miniature spoons hung on the wall and an embroidered dining room tablecloth, lives a middle-aged woman from the South who believes that when she was 9, she was abducted from the family farmhouse by two aliens.

Marie figured this out only recently, although for years she suspected something very strange had happened to her family. On her left thigh was a deep scar, in the shape of an upside-down heart, that she didn't remember getting. In her head was a vivid memory of her mother, a very religious woman, kneeling in a white nightgown in front of the window, her long black hair braided down her back and a shotgun on her shoulder. She was firing into the night at what she has always insisted were three little boys, dressed in white, trying to steal her chickens.

"My mother," says Marie, "wouldn't harm anything, or anyone. Now, why would my mother take a shot at three little boys, when she had 10 children of her own? She certainly remembers firing the gun, but oh, she won't talk about it. She gets so upset."

In 1983, Marie and her husband, Walter (they have asked that their real names not be used) began seeing UFOs. Between them, they have seen nine, the last one in April. Usually they appear in the couple's large yard, but once a UFO followed them home from bowling, and once it accompanied them to a Flint radio station

*Susan Ager is a Detroit Magazine staff writer.
Bob Zuba is a free-lance artist from Plains, Pa.*

where they were to appear on a talk show about UFOs.

Marie and Walter began to suspect they had been "chosen." To see a single UFO is the event of a lifetime. To see more than a half dozen raises eyebrows, even among UFO believers. So Marie documented their sightings, writing the details in perfect penmanship in a spiral-bound notebook.

They joined the Texas-based Mutual UFO Network (MUFON), the nation's last remaining organization for UFO devotees. Its membership has dwindled to about 1,500 people for whom UFOs are a mystery more profound than the Holy Trinity, more meaty than why there is air. The sky is their laboratory.

Marie and Walter, who had never belonged to anything but a bowling league and a few fraternal organizations like the Elks, became volunteer UFO investigators, hanging a map of local UFO sightings on their laundry room door.

Last year, at a MUFON symposium in St. Louis, Marie gingerly submitted to hypnosis by a New York City artist who claims success in helping people remember abductions by aliens.

Under hypnosis, she recalled the night her mother shot at the chicken thieves. She remembered, she says, being called from her bed by two short, skinny beings with enlarged heads, big eyes and slits for mouths. She remembered them helping her float through her home's locked front door. She remembered being examined in a spacecraft. She remembered a cut being made in her left thigh and samples of skin and blood and flesh taken from the wound. She remem-

bered the sound of something being shoved deep up her nose, "like when you bite into an apple and there's a snap."

She suspects a "teletracer" was inserted in her nose, to mark her the way rare wild birds are tagged. She believes the many UFOs she and her husband have encountered are no coincidence. She believes they are tracking her.

"We're awestruck by it," says Walter, "but we are trying to investigate it. We would like to experience more. I want to communicate with them. I want to see them. I would like to go on a craft if I could do it, and experience what they've got . . . I have tried to leave my mind as blank as I could, as receptive as possible, and I have tried to communicate by thinking, 'Come closer. I want to know you. I want to know where you are from, and what you are doing.' I've tried both," with no apparent success.

With Marie and Walter when she was hypnotized was Dan Wright of Lansing, a member of MUFON's board of directors. "I can't tell you with certainty that it really happened to her," says Wright, accustomed to incredulity. "But I think you'd be impressed by how traumatized she was in reliving it under hypnosis. If that's a fantasy, it's a real extreme one. She was crying her eyes out, just hysterical."

Each night before she goes to sleep, Marie sits on her bed and searches the sky, visible behind bowling trophies on the bedroom window sill. UFOs are table talk in that household. Although few of their friends know of her abduction, all know about the lights and shapes the couple have

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BELIEVERS CON'T

seen in a sky that's black and boring for them.

"Nine people out of 10 are envious," says Marie.

We may suspect Marie is nuts. But what a cosmic kick it would be to believe her!

Unless we dine at her table, we don't hear much about UFOs anymore. We're a nation grown weary of lights in the sky and suspicious tales of cryptic missives from Arcturus, popularized by Hollywood and trivialized by big, black tabloid headlines such as "I Bore a Space Alien's Baby."

Big-city newspaper editors dismiss most UFO reports as old hat or the gibberish of geeks. Establishment science won't embrace UFOs any more than it embraces the Loch Ness monster. The government closed its formal UFO investigation in 1969 and hasn't reopened it. And certainly very few people are seeing things anymore.

"The last three years have been virtually without UFO activity nationwide," says Dan Wright, who in his unpaid job with MUFON keeps track of UFOs in 17 Midwestern states. "We in the business feel we're overdue for another flap."

"We haven't had a major wave of sightings since 1973, which makes it the longest dry period ever," says David Jacobs, a Temple University intellectual historian whose specialty is the UFO controversy in America. He also teaches the only regularly scheduled course on UFOs at any American university. Enrollments for the course have fallen from about 30 in the mid-1970s to as few as eight in recent years.

Public opinion seems to have hardened on UFOs. The last Gallup Poll that asked about them, in 1978, found that one in nine Americans said they had seen a UFO, something in the sky they couldn't identify. Most Americans — 57 percent — said they believed UFOs were real, and not imaginary — about the same percentage as say they believe in angels. That poll never asked people what they thought the UFOs were.

But a 1985 poll by Northern Illinois University presented this statement to 2,000 Americans: "It is likely that some of the unidentified flying objects that have been reported are really space vehicles from other civilizations." Forty-three percent agreed; 46 percent disagreed. Only 11 percent weren't sure.

Documented within the computer system of the Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS) in Evanston, Ill., are some 180,000 UFO sightings dating back four decades. Most — more than 90 percent, experts say — are easily explainable as aircraft, satellites, birds, stars, planets, meteors or weather equipment. Others can be identified as rare but scientifically accepted natural phenomena: ball lightning that runs along utility wires for a moment, then vanishes; swamp gas that sends flames flickering over marshy areas; even strange, glowing plasmas that some geologists believe are forewarnings of earthquakes in seismologically unstable areas.

Only about five percent of reported UFOs cannot be explained away by conventional means. Most UFO researchers say only one possibility remains: We are not alone.

For much of the befuddled public — too smart to buy the extraterrestrial explanation without proof, too human to reject such a fantastic notion outright — the UFO issue is in the same bag as John F. Kennedy's assassination. Will we ever know for sure if Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone or as part of a conspiracy? What would we demand as proof? Who would we believe? Do we care anymore?

For others, UFOs are somewhat akin to life after death. There is no physical proof that heaven or hell exist, and God may be a figment of our frail psyches, too, but it can't hurt to believe.

Says historian Jacobs, "We're floating in a never-never land regarding UFOs. The evidence is not complete one way or the other. These are the most amazing and spectacular and extraordinary claims ever made. Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence." UFO researchers admit theirs is almost entirely circumstantial.

"It's really one of the most mind-boggling situations, yet my firm conviction is that this is not just a nonsense subject," says Jacobs. He pauses for effect: "It's either the most important, most amazing event ever, or it's an interesting-but-worthless trivial footnote to history."

Next June will mark the 40th anniversary of the Modern UFO Era.

Of course, folks have seen bizarre things in the sky since they started looking up.

concluding an object is truly unidentified and passing it along to MUFON headquarters in Seguin, Tex. There, the most legitimate of the cases are sent to CUFOS in Illinois, where a committee of scientists attempts to solve them.

"They're a group of more or less anonymous people, some known, some not," says CUFOS president Sherman J. Larsen, who founded CUFOS with skeptic-turned-researcher J. Allen Hynek in 1973. Larsen says CUFOS' review committee wants no publicity, partly because UFO research is not considered an asset on one's curriculum vitae. "We don't talk about them," he says, refusing to name any members.

Hynek, the godfather of the UFO movement, invested half of his life in UFO research. At first, he was a UFO investigator for the Air Force, a diehard skeptic who made enemies in Michigan in 1966 when he dismissed the lights that hundreds of people saw that year as "swamp gas," a conclusion he said he later regretted. By the late '60s, he had become convinced UFOs were a mystery worth pursuing, saying: "You can't call all of the people liars all of the time."

BELIEVERS CAN'T

In his first book, "The UFO Experience," he said of those who see UFOs: "They . . . have had experiences as real to them as seeing a car coming down the street is to others." He wrote that, after investigating the topic for many years, he felt "the frustration a person might experience in describing the colors of a sunset to one born blind."

Although his name is not well known outside UFO circles, he described in that book three categories of UFO sightings in words that, like a Biblical litany, raise goosebumps on the necks of those who believe, or want to.

In a "close encounter of the first kind," Hynek wrote, a UFO is visible in the air within 500 feet of the observer. In a "close encounter of the second kind," the UFO lands within 500 feet of the observer. In a "close encounter of the third kind," humanoids are visible within the UFO, or are seen on the earth outside of it.

Hynek died in April, a puzzled man. He never saw a UFO himself, and he never learned what it was that everyone else saw.

Betty Carlisle and Joyce Burt had never heard of J. Allen Hynek when they experienced their close encounter. Six years later, they consider themselves hostages to its memory.

"When I come home at night, I still run from my car to the door. I won't look at the sky, because I'm so afraid if I look it might be there," says Betty, 40, who lives next door to Joyce in Laingsburg, a small town near Lansing.

"It wasn't too long ago, maybe a month ago, that she called me," says Joyce. "She had just gotten home from the supermarket, and could swear it was there, and she would not go out to get her groceries. I went over and helped her." Joyce saw nothing, and felt no dread that something was lurking nearby.

Betty, a computer operator at Michigan State University, will not talk about what she saw six years ago. When she reluctantly agreed to appear at a regional MUFON meeting several years ago, she sat trembling as Dan Wright described the encoun-

"I just don't want to talk about it," Betty says. "I was very non-believing in this sort of thing, totally. It was extremely frightening to me, and it's not over. I've always felt it was something that would occur again . . . Even to talk about it now makes me shake inside."

ter to the crowd. She had refused to tell it herself.

"It's the type of thing — I just really don't want to talk about it," she says. "I was very non-believing in this sort of thing, totally. It was extremely frightening to me, and it's not over. I've always felt it was something that would occur again. It has interrupted my life for too long a time. Even to talk about it now makes me shake inside."

According to accounts the women wrote within days after their sighting, Betty was standing at her back door waiting for her dog to finish its business when she first saw it, an amber light, misshapen like a rising sun, that "was so bright I squinted." It was about 70 feet from her, she guessed, and 20 feet high and approaching her as if it intended to land in her yard. "I got 'spooked,'" she wrote, and came inside. "I leaned against the door and tried to convince myself I didn't see anything."

When she looked again, it was still there, 100 feet more distant, as brilliant as before. She called Joyce, who walked

over with her teenaged daughter. Joyce, Betty and their adolescent daughters all stood at the door of Betty's kitchen for an hour and a half, the drawn drapes behind them, and watched as the light blinked on and off, visible at times to only some of them, spinning and changing colors — red, blue, green, amber and off-white — occasionally flashing beams of light on the house. For a few moments Betty saw one of her rose bushes illuminated by a beam from the object.

Joyce urged Betty to call someone for help. But, at least for the first hour of the encounter, Betty wouldn't. "I felt I *couldn't*," she wrote. Now, she says, "I'm not a person normally controlled by anything but myself, but I absolutely felt I was controlled by this . . . It is something that does have power, and can more or less get you to do what it wants . . . I had the feeling this thing did not want me to tell anyone. Maybe that's part of my fear now."

"I've had friends say, 'I hope it happens to me.' I wouldn't wish that on anyone."

Betty will not read about UFOs. "I've told Dan (Wright), if you ever come up with something and can sit me down and say, 'These are the facts,' I wanna hear from you. Until that time it's so much theory."

Joyce at first found herself oddly frightened by lit candles, even in church, because they reminded her of the burning brilliance of the UFO she saw. Unlike Betty, she has read book after book about UFOs, although "before, I couldn't have cared less about it." Often, she sits up in bed in the middle of the night, as if a voice had called to her. "I wake up and think, 'It's out there. I know it is.' But I'm not going to go to that window to look."

Says Joyce: "We know what we saw. We know how we felt that night. It's in the past for both of us, but this little fear is around every once in a while. We have no idea why it picked her, or us."

What those Laingsburg women saw six years ago fits a changing pattern of UFO sightings, according to data collected by CUFOS. Experts say the pattern holds worldwide:

UFOs have gotten bigger from the size of a house to the size of a football field. Flying saucers, or disc-shaped UFOs, have given way more often to flying boomerang Silver and metallic objects have been replaced by things with very bright lights; some times witnesses aren't even sure there is anything tangible behind the light. The lights are almost always red green and white, or a combination of those. No one ever sees purple lights.

Almost 75 percent of sightings occur between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m., compared with the early days when daylight sightings were much more common. UFOs used to fly very high, but now they come down to earth. They hover over treetops, backyard sheds, freeways. Sometime they change colors. Some times they vanish, then reappear.

"They've come closer to the ground with each succeeding wave," says historian Jacobs. "Nobody knows that — it's not reported — so it not possible the whole world could be in cahoots (on) this."

Still, UFOs rarely land. Only about 2,000 cases worldwide include any evidence of landing, which may include a circle of scorched earth, a ring of swirled grass

The changing constellations amazed early man. Solar eclipses and lightning were signs from the gods. St. Paul was knocked off his horse by a bright light on the road to Damascus. The prophet Ezekiel saw wheels in the sky, "so high they were dreadful." The French philosopher Voltaire wrote in 1752 of visitors from outer space who traveled to the earth on light waves. Hundreds of people in Michigan and thousands more around the country reported a mysterious airship in the skies throughout 1896 and 1897.

Kenneth Arnold is the man responsible for the UFO hoopla of the past four decades, although if it wasn't him it certainly would have been someone else. A pilot from Pendleton, Ore., Arnold in June 1947 spotted nine bright, saucer-like objects flying near Mt. Rainier at a speed he estimated at 1,200 miles per hour. "It seems impossible," he said, "but there it is."

Within weeks, thousands of reports flooded in, including many from people who said they had seen something strange before Arnold had, but lacked the courage to speak up.

The first Detroit report came two weeks after Arnold's sighting, when a housewife said she saw a flying silver cake pan with a silver halo above it. Others saw donuts in the sky, washtubs, spiders, saucers emblazoned with the American flag. Most of the reports were junk, the ignorance and illusions of people propelled by news of flying saucers to scrutinize the sky for the first time.

Things got crazy. Jet fighters chased lights in the sky near the White House. Navy Hellcat planes were ordered on alert at the Grosse Ile Naval Air Base, in case any flying saucers threatened Detroit. The state of Kansas, which still observed prohibition at the time, announced that none of its residents had seen a flying saucer, but that proud claim didn't — couldn't — last long, since tiplers and teetotalers alike were seeing things.

Newspapers reacted with bemusement: "Here, There, Everywhere!" one headline read. It became "the flying saucer craze"; the nation was "disc-crazy." Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, the World War I flying ace, said, "There must be something to them, for too many reliable persons have made reports on them." But, he said with patriotic fervor, "If they do exist, you can rest assured that they are ours."

Hoaxes sprung up almost immediately. Students lit candles, wrapped plastic dry cleaning bags around them, then set them aloft, triggering a flurry of UFO reports until the candles burned out 20 minutes later and the hot air that kept the bags up cooled down. "Unretouched photographs of genuine spaceships" later proved to be pictures of hubcaps tossed in the air.

According to one psychiatrist, "hysteria over the world situation" was to blame. "Everyone affected," he predicted, "will recover."

Neither the world, nor the population, recovered. UFO sightings continued into the 1950s and '60s. Outlandish claims were made. Some people described long conversations with lovely women from Venus. A few recalled sexual interludes with aliens. Books like "Chariots of the Gods," which claimed astronauts from other galaxies had been visiting the earth for centuries, stretched credibility to the breaking point.

Folks have seen bizarre things in the sky since they started looking up. The changing constellations amazed early man. Solar eclipses and lightning were signs from the gods. St. Paul was knocked off his horse by a bright light on the road to Damascus.

Legitimate UFO researchers writhed and moaned. The lunatic fringe, over which it had no control, was casting all UFO reports into doubt.

In 1969, after a controversial scientific commission concluded UFOs were explainable or harmless, the Air Force shut down the formal UFO investigation it had begun in 1947 (which was only half-hearted at best, critics say.) Though sightings continued in spurts, the government's dismissal of the phenomenon was the beginning of the end of big-time UFOlogy.

Yet, the fantasy appeal of extraterrestrial visitors remains, fed by such Hollywood blockbusters as "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "E.T.," which depict aliens as sweet-tempered and even vulnerable.

Even those who would dismiss people like Marie as nuts are silenced by certifiably sane people — celebrities, even — who have reported UFOs. Among them:

□ Actors William (Capt. Kirk) Shatner and Jamie (Klinger) Farr.

□ Former WJR disc jockey Marc Avery.

□ A former Florida governor (who saw UFOs from airplanes on two different occasions) and a former Ohio governor (who saw one while driving through Michigan with his wife.)

□ Jimmy Carter, who as Georgia governor saw an object in 1973 that was "bluish at first, then reddish, then luminous but not solid."

□ And Detroit Tigers first baseman Darrell Evans, who spotted a UFO with his wife from the patio of their former Pleasanton, Calif., home in 1982. They waited two years before telling anyone about it.

Evans, a long-time believer in extraterrestrial life and UFOs, said this of the silent, triangular craft with brilliant white lights that he and his wife watched: "It was as if they had singled us out . . . I guess I'd always hoped there'd be something like this, something that would come in peace."

Dan Wright was 21 when his father, a trucker, returned from a long trip and told about a brilliant pulsating light, "as big as a house," that accompanied him up U.S.-31 near Hart. "I've driven thousands of miles, from 1947 to 1970, and that's the only time" he saw a weird light, said Marshall Wright recently from his home in the Grand Rapids suburb of Wyoming. "I'm convinced it was from outer space, although when it came out in the newspaper, they said it was a weather balloon released from Duluth."

But Dan shared his dad's conviction. Eight years ago, having read every book about UFOs that he could find, he

joined MUFON. "I wanted to do good," he says. "I wanted to be part of the solution."

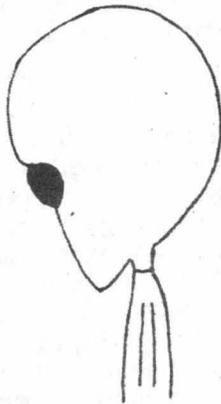
Binoculars accompanied Dan Wright everywhere those first few years with MUFON. He was a novice skywatcher. He didn't want to miss a thing. And he wanted to be sure before he allowed his heart to start pounding wildly.

So he was primed for something amazing that cool evening in September 1978, and he spotted it immediately. "Pull over!" he shouted to a companion who was driving. He leapt from the car before it had quite stopped and whispered "Wow!" as a craft resembling a huge boomerang, with two mammoth spotlights, whooshed silently over all four lanes of I-94, then over Dan Wright's head. He dashed after the thing and happily sprawled belly-down in a recently harvested cornfield to watch the craft through his binoculars as it hovered seductively over a nearby grove of trees; too distant to make out distinctly, too near to be mistaken for anything but unusual.

Dan Wright describes his first UFO as artfully as a fisherman describes the big one that got away, as poignantly as a poet describes his first lost love. The memory lingers sweetly years later.

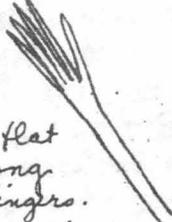
His second UFO, two weeks after the first, appeared while he was with his wife on the patio of their home. She shrugged her shoulders and strolled inside as he sped away, alone in his car, to chase the thing for miles on twisting country roads.

He finally came face-to-face with it in a moonlit field. Contrary to his deepest ambitions, he could not approach it. He stood paralyzed at his car, the door open, flashing his headlights at it like a fool.



Right Hand
blow up.

Smooth flat
hand long
skinny fingers.
They did not bend
but curl around
things.



The Boy gave
off beautiful colors.
violet, then blue, pink, purple
The colors radiated from the
center of sides & top in a
rapid motion, then it
would go slow, then
rapid



Boy sat on the palm.
Almost covered it because
it was so thin. No wrist
as such. The hand and
arm were just a part
of each other. No lines.
no wrinkles.

Triangle Blue
oo dots white
m red
• dot red
Belt blue



Then he got in his car, started it, backed it out of the field and drove away, waving goodbye to the lights. "I was probably five miles away before a fog lifted in my mind and I realized what I had done. I had acted exactly the opposite of the way I wanted to act. My conclusion was that I had been had. I had been kept at bay, perhaps for my own good.

"Whatever these intelligences are, they do not need weapons. They just bend your mind a little, and you go away."

Among Dan Wright's UFO collection is this drawing of an alien, with notes describing the vehicle it arrived in.

Hours later, shaken and awed, he told his wife the amazing things that had come to pass. "She thought it was interesting — but not compelling," he says. UFOs had become a tumor in their once-compelling marriage; they split soon afterward. The same thing has happened before, to those on the margins of science.

BELIEVERS CONT

Now 39, Dan Wright is alone, sharing a modest Lansing home with another man, a linen truck driver. On paper, the two are incompatible. Wright has a master's degree in political science, and makes \$32,000 a year as a policy analyst for the state Department of Social Services. He has a well-ordered mouth of chunky white teeth, wears knit ties and slip-on leather shoes. He looks like a young Republican.

He leads a Clark Kent existence: a mild-mannered bureaucrat by day, a leader in a shrinking national UFO movement by night, fighting a never-ending battle for truth, respect and the Intergalactic Way. In his bedroom are his bed and his MUFON office: a desk and two file cabinets.

He owns a videotape of "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," which includes the classic line, voiced by Richard Dreyfuss' whiny and disbelieving wife: "Was it like a taco? Was it like one of those Sara Lee moon-shaped cookies?" It is Wright's favorite movie. Last year, he spent about \$2,000 on postage and printing for MUFON, although the expense is deductible, since MUFON is a non-profit organization. This summer, he took two-thirds of his three-week vacation to research correlations between UFO sightings and Michigan's fickle weather conditions.

His housemate has a high school degree, tends toward jeans, T-shirts, motorcycles and stock cars, has more lady friends at a time than Wright has ever had, and "doesn't need to read books to be successful."

Yet the two have become friends of sorts. "He thought my interest in UFOs was a curiosity. He'd never read or gone out of his way to learn about them. He just accepts it. He's typical," says Wright. "He is Joe America."

Not money, but cookies and coffee have fueled UFO research in this country for the past decade and a half. "There's nothing as exciting as sitting across the kitchen table from someone who has just seen something," says Wright, who has investigated about 50 UFO sightings in eight years.

A small cavalry of amateur investigators around the country takes UFO reports (referred by local police departments and airports), then interviews witnesses and visits the area of the sighting. Standardized forms are filled out. Sample question: "Did the object(s) or light(s) flutter? Spin? Blink? Pulsate? Appear solid? Have fuzzy edges? Have outline? Wobble? Vibrate? Glow? Appear transparent?" Pencil sketches are made of the UFOs, many of which resemble onions, pickles and other kitchen items. Nerves are soothed.

Wright even sends Christmas cards to UFO-spotters he has interviewed, "to let them know I'm still here if they need me."

"Most observers don't want me to tell them it's a UFO," says Wright. "They want me to provide them with a prosaic answer that will relieve them. The closer it was, the more the person wants it to be something normal."

The investigative process is imprecise. A minuscule percentage of UFO sightings is ever reported. A UFO is there and then it's gone. Witnesses are startled and often terrified, especially if it came close. Recalling the event in exact detail may be as difficult as recalling a dream. Estimating the size of objects in space, especially when seen at night, is a challenge. Accounts from witnesses of the same UFO differ, as accounts

differ of the same auto accident. And UFO investigators, busy with their lives, don't have the time or energy to follow up every case.

Says Ron Westrum, a sociology professor at Eastern Michigan University who has been a UFO investigator for 12 years: "I wrote up one investigation just this month that I'd been sitting on for three years. A typical case, an ordinary, run-of-the-mill case, takes a good eight hours of time. You're talking chunks of three evenings. When there really is a big flap, as there was in Michigan after 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind' came out (in 1977), I had 25 cases. There's no way you can investigate 25 cases. At most, I did half a dozen."

Plus, it's a lot like working at an airport security check: most suspicious things turn out to be nothing, and the work can get boring. People call about UFOs that turn out to be Venus, for example. Westrum's favorite is one incident he calls "the Herbie case," in which a man nicknamed the UFO that nightly flew over his house "Herbie," and conversed with the thing by flashing his car headlights as it flashed its lights back. Westrum watched one night and concluded within moments that Herbie was an airliner switching from cruising lights to landing lights as it glided over the man's house toward a nearby airport.

So, an investigator calls airports and the National Weather Service to check out mundane possibilities before (always in a counterclockwise direction), and/or depressions in the earth, presumably from landing gear. In Michigan, says Dan Wright, the last good landing case was in 1968, in a farmer's field near Albion.

Here is where believing becomes a real challenge: In about 600 cases, investigators say, psychologically stable people have reported being abducted by aliens. Some UFO researchers believe aliens from perhaps a half-dozen different parts of the universe may be visiting the earth, because descriptions of the beings fall into several categories.

"In the 1950s, almost every charlatan went to Mars and did the two-step with Jesus, who was alive and well there. These people were an enormous problem" for serious UFO researchers, says Jacobs, and the researchers responded by rejecting as a hoax any story involving abductions. Until the stories started piling up.

Says Jacobs: "If you have one (abduction) case, you gotta say, 'Forget it.' But if you have 100 cases, or 200, and they all fit the same pattern, describe the same things, say the same things, and give details that are amazingly similar, you have to step back and say, 'What the hell is happening here?'"

Sociologist Westrum says abductions by aliens are real, but are not given credence because people don't want to believe such things can happen. "It's the same reason it took so long for the battered child syndrome to become a public issue — people just couldn't believe it."

Larsen, at CUFOS, is skeptical about any case involving humanoids: "That's primarily where the kook fringe fits in. We're very, very cautious of those."

Yet, because such reports are unbelievable and frightening and titillating, abduction cases recently have stolen almost all the attention in UFO circles.

"It's the longest shot, and there's more potential for fraud, but what a payoff you can get if you've got something!" says Marcello Truzzi,

BELIEVERS CONT

an Eastern Michigan University sociologist who directs the Center for Scientific Anomaly Research, reflecting on the publicity, mass public interest and scientific renown a well-documented abduction would generate. But he adds that he is "not personally impressed" with the stories. "I do think these



UFO tracker Dan Wright:
"Most observers don't want me to tell them it's a UFO."

people experience something potentially interesting to psychology. I don't know *what* the hell's wrong with them."

UFO researchers say the parallels among the abductees' accounts are inexplicable, since their stories rarely are published in newspapers. However, the researchers do not hesitate to describe out loud what some of the parallels are:

□ Many abductees have a straight-line scar on their upper left thigh, running from the buttock to a small gouged area. This presumably is where aliens cut into earthlings to take tissue samples.

□ The abductors never speak aloud to their captives. They communicate telepathically. If they make any audible noise, they hum.

□ Most often the abductees are not led fighting and screaming to the spacecraft, but are "floated" in against their will.

□ Although the aliens fall into several categories, the most common visitor is about 3½ to 4½ feet tall; extremely thin, almost flat; with smooth skin as pale as parchment; with absolutely no hair, not even eyebrows or lashes; with a slightly enlarged head, no neck, arms that reach to the knees, very large, almond-shaped eyes, and a slit of a mouth. They are often dressed in a silver, one-piece garment with built-in footies, made of a substance that resembles woven aluminum foil. No alien has ever been reported to resemble E.T.

□ The abductors show no emotion except surprise, and perform physical examinations of their victims very clinically.

□ The abductors communicate only rather mundane things like "Come with me" or "Lie still." They never make paternalistic promises or cosmic pronouncements about the fate of the earth. None has ever said, "Take me to your leader."

Now, for a word from the skeptics:

"They're just plain kooks. You wonder how they tie their shoes in the morning," says Jack McConnell of those who say they've been abducted. McConnell was, until July, an astronomer at Michigan State University. He has since taken a job with NASA's Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore. He is a member of a national organization called the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal.

Its acronym is CSICOP. UFO believers call it Cyclops.

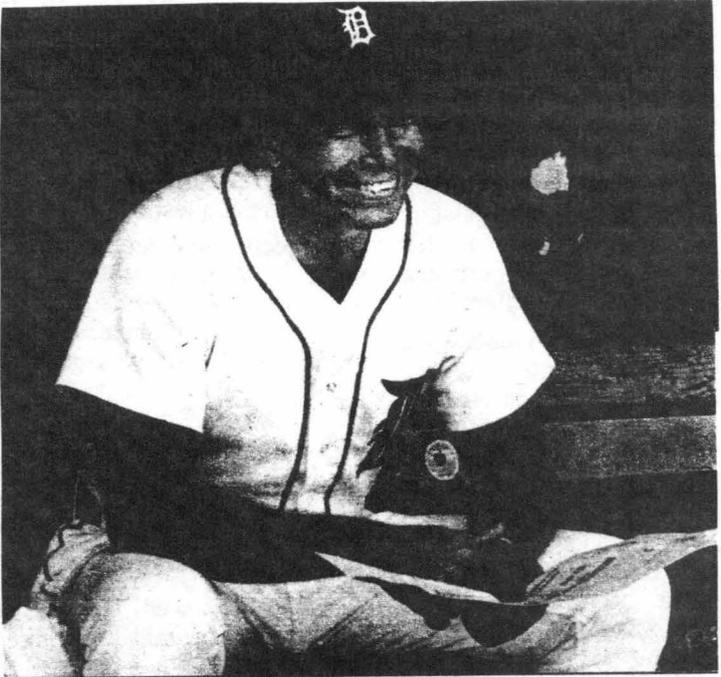
McConnell attended MUFON's annual national convention in June in East Lansing. Only about 150 people attended, about half the number that came in the late

1970s. "They are small-town people," McConnell says of those he met, "many of whom I would consider quite gullible."

"They are not scientific thinkers.

"This kind of stuff," continues McConnell, "whether faith healing or UFOs, (suggests) there's lots of illogical thinking and silliness out there, and that's dangerous for our society. We feel an educated, modern society should have as little of this

□ Why has one never landed in a spot where there are plenty of witnesses: on the White House lawn, or in Central Park, or in the Yosemite Valley, or even on a parking ramp in downtown Cleveland?
□ Why hasn't a single UFO ever crashed? Why hasn't a single being, clearly not of earthly origin, ever been left behind or expired here? Why hasn't a single rivet or screw



(UFO, from Page 17.)

kind of stuff as possible."

CSICOP's aim is to debunk not only UFOs, but astrology, numerology, the Loch Ness monster, Big Foot, the Bermuda Triangle, faith healing, reincarnation and other paranormal phenomena that many people have believed in for many years.

Its members, and other skeptics, pose three pointed questions about the notion that UFOs are piloted by extraterrestrial visitors:

□ Even if they have devised a miracle technology to allow them to travel close to the speed of light, it would take many years for them to get here. Why would they spend that effort to visit us, a planet in the boondocks of the universe, with technologies apparently far inferior to their own?

Darrell Evans, who spotted a UFO in 1982: "It was as if they had singled us out."

or piece of a headlight that is clearly not of earthly manufacture ever turned up at a UFO sighting site? *Why is there no physical evidence left behind — not even an alien earring?*

"They do the Japanese one better," says Dan Wright. "These things don't break down."

The grim fact remains: The ideal UFO has not arrived, the one to blast away all doubt, suck away millions of federal defense dollars for UFO research, and firmly establish UFOs in the public and scientific mind as a mystery worth solving.

"It would happen during the daytime," says Dan Wright. "It would be tracked by both a military base and a commercial airport on radar, with no other known traffic in the area. It would land after having been seen by hundreds or thousands of people at a low altitude so as not to be mistaken for a conventional aircraft.

"It would land on some public property, such as in a park. It would have been photographed by at least two persons from different angles and locations. It would leave landing traces, in the manner of depressions in the ground, scorched or swirled vegetation underneath, and a high incidence of magnetic radiation.

BELIEVERS CONT

"And following that would be a public official to say, 'Yes, it was real, and I saw it, too.'"

When that happens, those of us who didn't yawn or roll our eyes would certainly believe.

Teen gives

birth to mermaid after UFO encounter

A WOMAN who insists she was impregnated by an alien being from another galaxy has recently given birth to a mermaid.

The infant is completely normal from the hips up, but her lower torso ends in a mermaid-like tail with scaly skin instead of a pair of legs and feet.

Because of the young mother's hysteria, the baby (named Sirena because of her odd resemblance to the sirens of ancient times) has been removed to an orphanage until a family willing to adopt it can be found.

Neighbors say the unmarried, 17-year-old woman who bore the infant mermaid began to tell stories of meeting with an alien spaceship after her pregnancy was evident.

Drug

"She said she'd been out late walking one night when she came upon a glowing spaceship in the clearing. A creature came out and forced her on board," one neighbor recalls.

The unidentified young woman told authorities who asked her the father's name for the birth certificate that the alien called himself Aldar, and was no taller than herself. His human-like body was slightly built and his skin had a greenish silver cast to it.

"Of course, we thought she had taken some kind of drug," her neighbor continues. "But then, sure enough, she was pregnant. She never even had a boyfriend that we know of. She

insists the space creature made her pregnant."

"Yes, we have witnesses to the baby's birth," local missionary Matthew Perkins confirms.

"The infant has no legs and there is a gross anomaly in her lower torso, leading to a point like a tail or flipper.

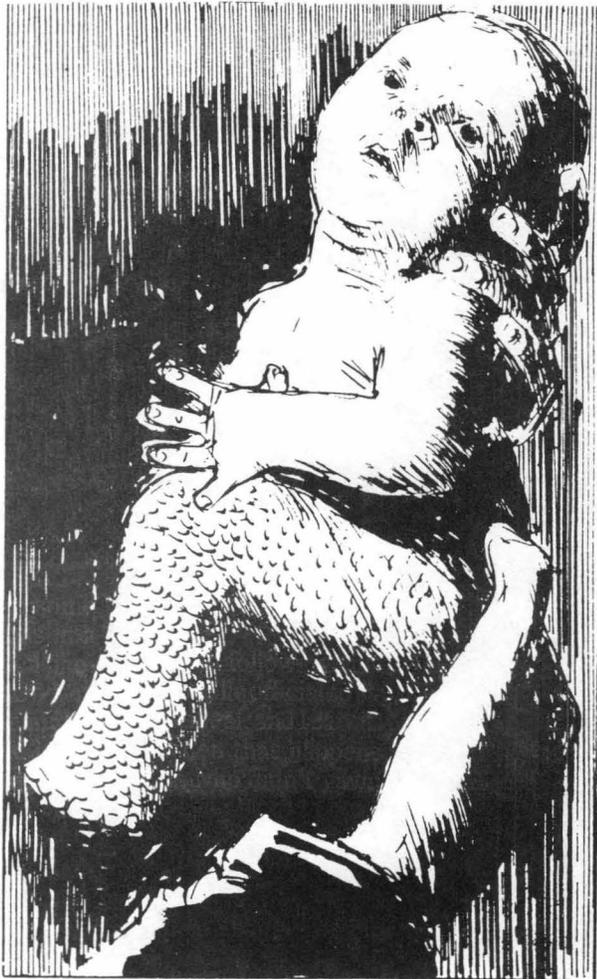
"She also appears to have a skin condition similar to ichthyosis, or snakeskin disease."

This bizarre birth was recorded in Manila, in the Philippines, after which the deformed newborn was whisked into seclusion.

A worker at the orphanage says when Sirena is bathed, she moves her "tail" rhythmically through the water "as if trying to swim. She seems to enjoy the motion."

Several other cases of mermaid births have been

recorded in medical history, although the cause is not known. The book *Medical Curiosities* (by George M. Gould, A.M., M.D. and Walter L. Pyle, A.M., M.D., Hammond Publishing, Ltd., Philadelphia, 1982) documents two of these cases.



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• **BABY SIRENA, mermaid infant, was conceived after an encounter with a UFO alien, her mom swears**

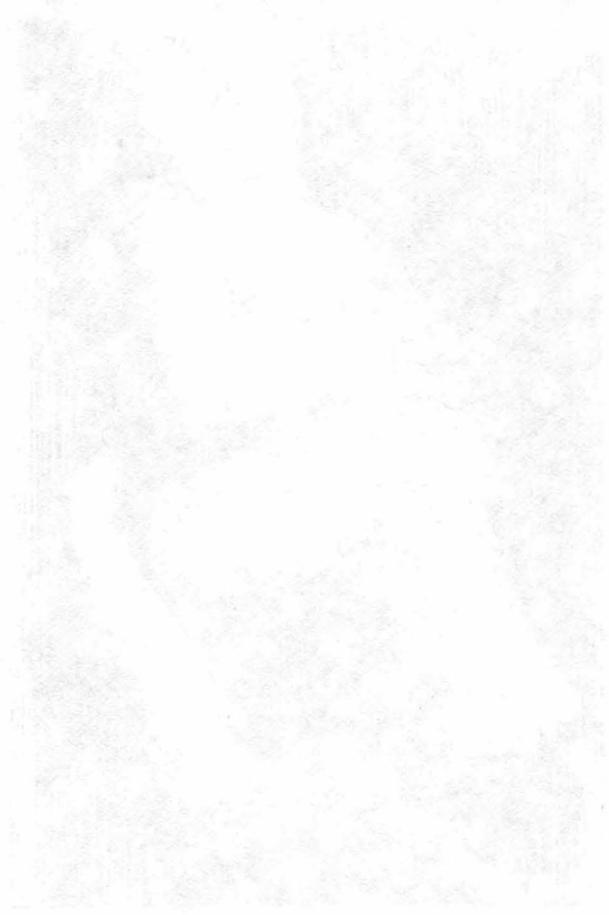
Some doctors speculate that early on in the development process in the womb, the legs were compressed.

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