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UFO UpDates Mailing List

P-1947: Re: Walt's Woes - The Decline of MUFON

From: **Steven Kaeser** <steve@KONSULTING.COM>
Date: Mon, 24 Aug 1998 14:27:00 -0400
Fwd Date: Mon, 24 Aug 1998 14:41:38 -0400
Subject: P-1947: Re: Walt's Woes - The Decline of MUFON

>Date: Mon, 24 Aug 1998 10:27:28 -0700
>From: Ed Stewart <ufoindex@JPS.NET>
>Subject: Re: Mufon's moribundus
>To: PROJECT-1947@LISTSERV.AOL.COM

>
>Hello list members,

>
>MUFON is a grass roots organization. It has always been such. It was
>and is only as strong or weak as whoever is in charge of the local
>group. Blaming Walt for the woes of MUFON probably shows a lack of
>understanding for what can and cannot be done at his level. He is no
>more to blame as he his for giving him credit at the peak of MUFON's
>time.

>
>Local groups looking for direction from headquarters are looking in the
>wrong place. It's like a lieutenant with his platoon stuck on the
>beaches on D-Day. Headquarters might have gotten you there, but the
>only one getting you out is that lieutenant and his own platoon
>resources. You either sink or swim at the local level with what you
>got.

>It appears to me that most local groups (at least the ones I was
>familiar with) do not know out to swim and are sinking.

>Ex-MUFON member,

>Ed

Your point is well taken, but I'm not sure the analogy in the second paragraph really fits this situation. We're not at war, per se, and the soldiers on D-Day were given a clear cut goal to achieve. I have this rather sick vision in my mind of soldiers sitting on the beach trying to philosophically analyze the orders they had been given and each platoon taking off on its own tangent.

As I understand it, MUFON was started as a grass roots organization that was centrally organized. But the philosophical differences between some MUFON Chapters is so great that one can hardly imagine that they are part of the same organization. As a group, is there much of a chance that the State Directors could come to a consensus of what constitutes scientific proof, or how they would define "Ufology".

I did not blame Walt for the problems that have now beset the organization, and I'm not convinced that the drop in membership is solely related to a lack of organization at the National/International level. This genre has grown to become a

monster that would be difficult for anyone to stay on top of, and while Walt has been criticized I think he has done the best that he can do.

The fact is that membership is way down, and the organization has been supplanted by the Internet for immediate information. Many people joined the organization to get the MUFON Journal, but for a short while it tended to provide an echo of the information that had previously been published on the "net". If it had added to the information, that would have been great, but that was not the case. In fact, a recent issue included a report that had already been refuted on the Internet, but it was published as factual in the Journal.

This raises the second problem that I think faces MUFON, and that's the issue of credibility. When Dennis Stacy left as the editor of the MUFON Journal, it seemed to become very uneven in quality of the material (which I know is very subjective). The Journal's new Editor is trying to regain that stability, and I sense that it's getting better, but regaining lost respect can be a difficult task.

I don't believe that MUFON needs to micromanage each of its local chapters, but I believe that it needs to develop a mechanism to monitor the local groups and allow those that stray too far off the "chosen path" to go along on their own. This wouldn't help the membership situation, but for some it would add to their credibility and perhaps people of similar beliefs would opt to re-join and (GASP!) a few new Members might sign up as well.

Steve

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