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NIDS Investigates Officer Sighting

From: Blair Cummins <ufoblair@hotmail.com>
Date: Thu, 13 Jan 2000 12:38:51 -0800 (PST)
Fwd Date: Thu, 13 Jan 2000 18:24:29 -0500
Subject: NIDS Investigates Officer Sighting

Greetings list -

From: <http://www.lasvegassun.com/sunbin/stories/lv-other/2000/jan/13/509709104.html>

Local UFO team returns home after studying a reported sighting
By Kim Smith
LAS VEGAS SUN

Two members of a Las Vegas UFO research organization returned home Wednesday after spending five days investigating a reported Jan. 5 sighting of a UFO near the Missouri-Illinois border.

The National Institute for Discovery Science sent John Velier, a former FBI agent, and Roger Pinson, a retired police officer, to the St. Louis area Friday, Colm Kelleher, deputy administrator for the institute, said.

The institute was founded in 1995 by Las Vegas businessman Robert Bigelow, who wanted to see UFOs, cow mutilations and paranormal phenomena studied by people who would use scientific methods, Kelleher said.

Five retired law enforcement officers and four doctorate-level scientists work out of the Las Vegas office, and an additional 15 doctorate-level scientists who work with the institute are located around the country, Kelleher said.

"Our philosophy is to use scientific methods to get facts. We are not trying to push an agenda," Kelleher said.

Velier and Pinson spoke with many of the people who reported seeing a two-story high, arrowhead-shaped object make its way over the Illinois towns of Lebanon, Shilow, Dupo and Millstadt early Jan. 5. Four of the witnesses were police officers from different jurisdictions, and all reported the object made no noise and hovered between 500 and 1,000 feet above the ground.

"The descriptions were not atypical from the other reports we've gotten, but we did have more eyewitnesses who appear to be credible than in other incidents," Kelleher said. "Our telephone investigation from here convinced us the police officers who claimed they had seen the UFO appeared to be sane and that this appeared to be a genuine sighting."

Kelleher declined to comment on the particulars of the investigation but said the institute plans to release its report within two weeks on its website at www.accessny.com/nids. He said Valier and Pinson are busy compiling their data now and

conducting further telephone interviews.

Typically investigators get detailed descriptions of what the witnesses saw, particularly details that will may help physicists determine what was seen, Kelleher said. They also ask the witnesses if they've had any other UFO experiences or suffered any psychological effects from the sighting.

Most UFO sightings are actually the result of people "misperceiving normal phenomenon," Kelleher said. What people think are alien spacecrafts are actually missile launches, meteor showers, weather balloons or other normal occurrences.

"Over 90 percent are usually tracked down and explained by misperceptions or delusions," Kelleher said. "Of course, we also get hoaxes, some morning deejays calling us as pranksters."

Institute members only go to those sites that can't be explained immediately, Kelleher said. Over the past five months, members have gone to only three or four UFO or cow mutilation sites.

The institute has gotten between 200 and 300 calls during that time frame, he said. The number of calls has gone up dramatically in past months because the institute has been urging law enforcement agencies and the media to make use of it's hotline number, 1-702-798-1700.

Kelleher said the phone is staffed 16 hours a day and an answering service is employed for the remaining eight hours.

The institute takes pains to ensure the privacy of people who report unusual occurrences because the media has often either ridiculed them or trivialized the reports, Kelleher said.

Surprisingly, in this case, "very few jokes have been made about little green men," Kelleher said.

Bigelow, who owns the Budget Suites of America hotel chain, also has pledged \$500 million to build a 100-passenger luxury tourist cruise ship that will orbit the moon. The headquarters for his space tourism company is being built near Red Rock Canyon and is expected to open in May 2001.

Bigelow also is well-known for being the benefactor of UNLV's Consciousness Studies program, which studies the paranormal.

Best regards,

- Blair Cummins
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