

UFO

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SEATTLE WEEKLY, Seattle, WA - Nov. 3, 2004

NEWS THE CITY

Minority UFO Report

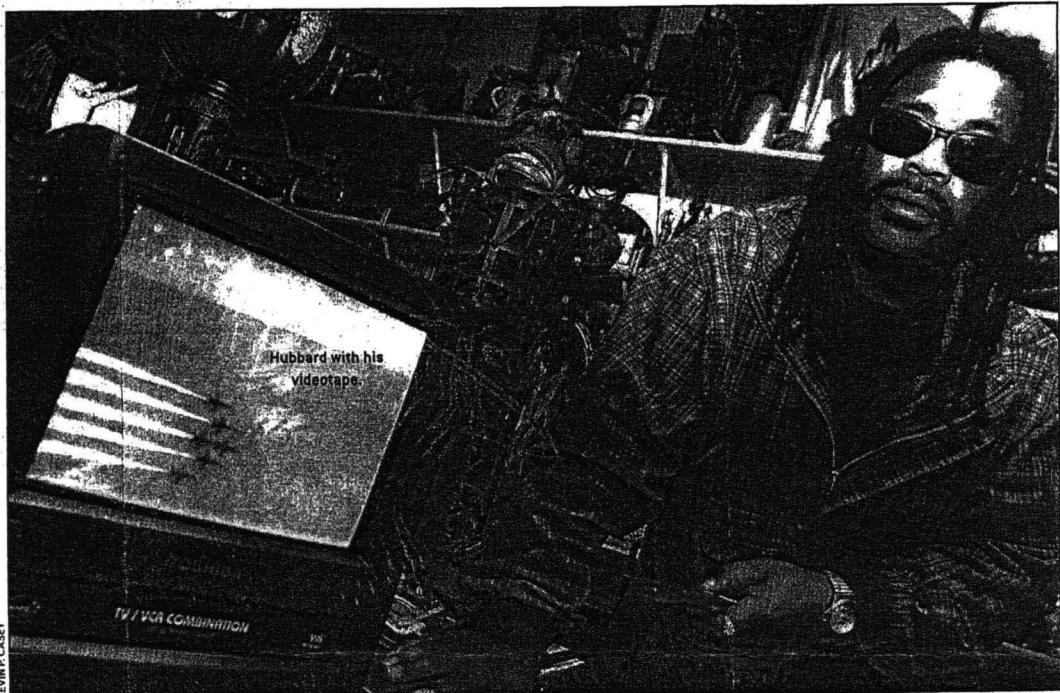
If something happens, the
feds can't say Ricky Hubbard
didn't warn them.

BY RICK ANDERSON

RICKY HUBBARD comes rushing up the stairs to the bar with a TV set cradled in his arms. He pauses at the top to catch his breath. "You've got to see this, man!" he says, waving a hand and ordering a drink. He goes to a table in the corner near an electrical outlet. "The FBI, Homeland Security, nobody knows what this is."

He puts the TV/VCR combo on the table and plugs it in. The small screen flickers, then blue sky and fluffy jet trails appear. Charlie Bailey, a bartender at the second-floor bar, Lowell's at Pike Place Market, sits down. "He showed it to me earlier," she says. "It is weird."

OK, watch this, says Hubbard, 52, a Seattle cab driver and budding videographer. The day of the video is Aug. 8, Seafair's hydroplane Sunday. There's a break in the boat races on Lake Washington as the Blue Angels perform. The airspace over Seattle is restricted. The sky is supposedly empty except



for the famous Navy aerobatic team. "There, did you see it?" Hubbard says, excitedly tapping the screen. I lean forward, squint, and shake my

head. "It happens fast," says Bailey. Hubbard runs the videotape again. He shot it from a home he was visiting that day atop Queen Anne Hill. The segment is about

a minute long. Hubbard wanted to catch the Angels in flight and had missed the team's first two passes over the hill. So he held the camera on the sky, constantly recording the

DAILY SOUTHTOWN ECONOMIST, Chicago, IL - Nov. 1, 2004

Flying objects hovering over Southland yet to be identified

Police field nearly 200 calls from concerned residents who saw three red lights in the sky

By Lauren FitzPatrick
Staff writer

Is it a UFO?

Hundreds of Southlanders asked that question Sunday night after three red lights appeared in the dark, overcast sky.

And literally speaking, the answer is yes, as three flying objects yet to be identified were spotted floating east high over Tinley Park and beyond.

It was Halloween, true, but it also was two days before the presidential election and two days since Osama bin Laden released his latest videotape of threats against the United States.

So maybe this phenomenon has a perfectly rational and earthly explanation.

Maybe not.

"They were an unusual color of light for an aircraft," said Tim Janecyk of the 7400 block of 63rd Place, who grabbed his videocamera to film the lights from his yard. "It was very reddish orange, almost like a neon."

Janecyk has been a privately operating small-aircraft pilot since 1989 and keeps an eye on

the sky.

He called Tinley Park police to see what was going on. Dispatchers said they had received upwards of 100 calls — closer to 200 — since about 7:30 p.m.

Tinley Park Sgt. T.J. Grady said the mild weather had lured many people into sitting outdoors to greet the neighborhood children who were out trick-or-treating. He went outside to see for himself what callers were reporting.

"They sit in the sky for a while and barely move," Grady said, adding that the lights were moving east.

Grady speculated the lights could be related to this week's heightened national security, possibly some infrared surveillance by the Department of Homeland Security.

The lights were visible over the parking lot of the Daily Southtown at 6901 W. 159th St., although not immediately apparent through the streetlights.

A trio of intense, steady red lights seemed to hover high in the sky after 8 p.m., hardly making any noise. They moved slowly east. Then at 9:30 p.m., a

single light appeared again in the same southwest part of the sky before it disappeared, possibly into the night's thick cloud cover.

An area Federal Aviation Administration spokesman said nothing unusual appeared on the radar screen at the FAA's center in Aurora.

"There's nothing that they've seen on the radar," Tony Molinaro said.

The military, the Drug Enforcement Administration and small-aircraft pilots do not have to report their activity to the FAA unless they approach an airport's airspace. But Tinley Park is 18 miles from Midway Airport, well out of reporting distance.

"We see things," he said. "If it was a helicopter flying, it would show up as a helicopter."

Janecyk remained unconvinced. There was no helicopter noise coming from the lights, and they were not blinking like airplane lights, he said. He didn't buy into a homeland security sweep either.

"Why would a surveillance aircraft of any kind broadcast some kind of light?" he said.

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dissipating jet trails, waiting for the Navy jets to fly into his viewfinder.

"There!" Hubbard says. "See it that time?"

He doesn't tell me what to look for. But I think I see a white dot streak across the screen. The Angels, in a wedge formation, follow shortly.

"Yes, a white dot. You saw it? Oh man, thanks. I don't feel so nutty now," says Hubbard, who is African American. "Black people aren't supposed to see this freaky space shit. It's always hillbillies."

HUBBARD PUTS the tape on slow motion, forward and reverse. The white dot of possible mass destruction flitters through the jet trails, splits in two, re-fuses, then flies out of the picture.

"That was no plane. It was no bird, no flaw on the tape. It was something out there chasing or flying along with the Blue Angels, man!" says Hubbard. He didn't notice the blip until viewing the tape in September and immediately decided to call the government.

"I told the [directory assistance] operator I need to talk to the Air Force because I got this thing on film chasing the Angels, and he starts laughing and says, 'No way, dude. They'll think you're crazy and lock you up!'"

But Hubbard reached an Air Force official who thought it was important enough to refer Hubbard to the Navy, home of the Angels. "I got the department in charge of the Blue Angels," Hubbard says. "And the guy tells me, 'If there was something up there, we would have seen it.'"

Hubbard wasn't going away that easy. "I said, man, forget this! I called the FBI and said, 'You guys need to see this.'" Come on down, they said. Hubbard went to the Federal Building on Second Avenue. He strolled toward security screeners with his TV set in a bag on wheels. "They see

a brother in braids come in with a big-ass suitcase that looks like a bomb," says Hubbard, "and everybody wants to hit the floor."

To boot, he tells screeners he's got pictures of a UFO. He clears security nonetheless, only to learn the FBI is located in its own building a few blocks away. In federal headquarters already, he decided to stop at the offices of the Homeland Security Department.

"They watched the thing go back and forth, like 50 times. 'Just take it to the FBI,' they said. They didn't want to deal with it," Hubbard recalls.

Finally, at FBI offices, an agent watched the white dot go back and forth.

Maybe it's something, maybe not, said the agent. "I don't know what to tell you," Hubbard remembers her saying. She took his number and said they'd call.

A SEATTLE FBI spokesperson last week confirmed Hubbard brought in the film. "We watched it," he says. "It was inconclusive."

Still, Hubbard thinks he did the right thing. It was an eerie white blip in the edgy days of orange alerts. "I figured the government should know," he says, dragging a finger across the screen behind the dot. "Except, now I'm probably in their files."

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SW

Residents report UFO in Ridgecrest

Share your story

Have you ever seen an unidentified flying object or experienced something that made you question if there is life on other planets? If so, submit your story to *The Daily Independent* and the most interesting ones, will be printed.

BY JESSICA TAMTURK

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A bright circular-shaped flying object was seen soaring over the skies of the Indian Wells Valley late Saturday evening, startling at least five eyewitnesses.

At around 10:45 p.m., as each of three friends was returning home from a shared community event, a large object allegedly moving along the west side of the Valley caught their attention.

"It was neither a plane or a rocket," said long-time Ridgecrest resident Bonnie Mathis Tuesday evening. "It was very bright, and diffused colors within the object could be detected upon closer examination. Whatever it was, it scared the crap out of

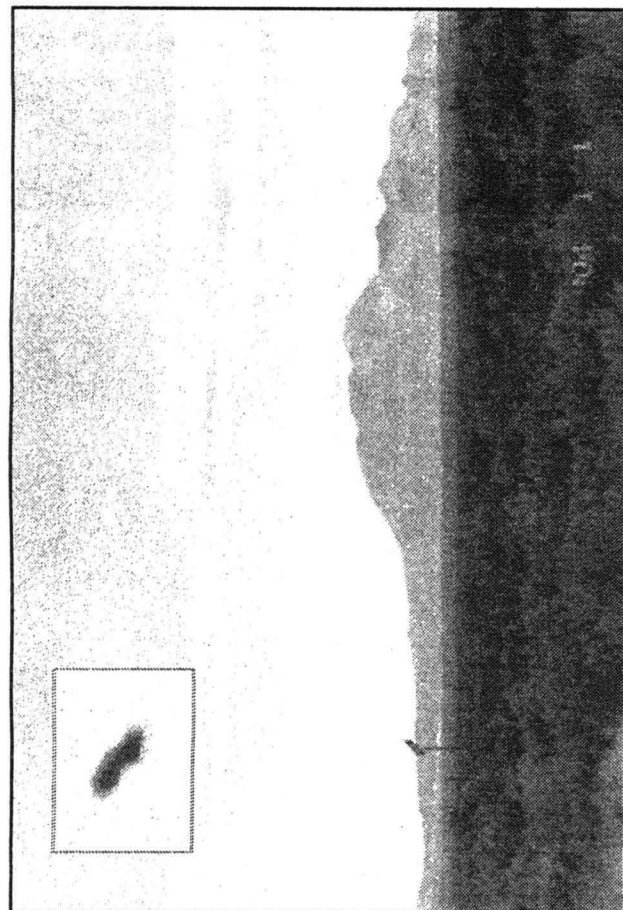
me."

In the three days since the incident, Mathis said she has been able to rule out that a jet or rocket incident had occurred that night for the lack of flames or the absence of emergency support, nor did she suspect the object to be a meteor since it was moving too slowly.

"I've seen lots of meteor showers and this was too big and too slow to be a meteor," said Mathis, adding that the entire sighting lasted about a minute.

"My husband was driving the car, so my attention was on this thing, whatever it was, for the entire time," she said. "Towards the

Turn to UFO, A11



A 55-year-old professor with a Ph.D. in music, Mike Burdick, from Placencia, took two photos in January of Red Mountain and Scodie Mountains in Johannesburg. When he developed the film, he said he noticed an object on his photos. He enlarged it, but could not determine what it was.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY UFOEVIDENCE.COM

end of its trajectory it just faded. It didn't lose its intensity it just got smaller, until it crossed the horizon and was out of sight."

UFO investigator Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center based in Seattle, Wash. said in a telephone conversation Tuesday that over 100 UFO sightings from the North American continent and beyond had been reported to his organization over the weekend.

Among them was a report filed by a Newport Beach resident, which corroborated Ridgecrest eyewitness accounts.

The individual described that he had seen a large bright object moving low across the skies Saturday at 10:45 p.m., and rapidly made its way over the Pacific Ocean "at speeds no man made object could move," said Davenport.

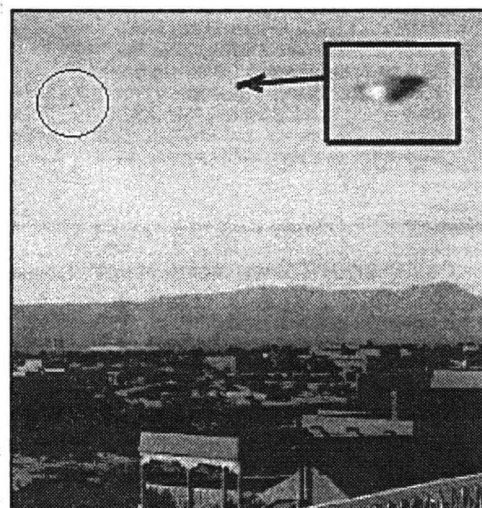
No reports from Ridgecrest, nor the greater Mojave area, were reported to NUFORC for Saturday evening.

"It doesn't mean it didn't happen, it's just that as of yet we do not have a report filed," said Davenport. "Our belief is that out of 1,000 sightings, only one or two individual reports are filed. But if you have more than that, then perhaps several thousands have seen the object."

Upon description, Davenport would not commit to any specific confirmatory statement, but that sightings in the Mojave area were quite frequent.

Jerry Johnson, Mathis' friend, said Tuesday that she also had witnessed "a huge, bright light moving westward."

Johnson added that she had perceived a greenish glow around the object, a report that was corroborated by the third friend, who rendered a statement on condition of



CONTRIBUTED BY NUFORC

This photo was taken in Las Cruces, N.M. Oct. 5, 2002.

anonymity.

"I've seen lots of meteors in my life, and at the time I didn't think it was one, but in hindsight I don't know what else it could be," said Johnson.

Sgt. Jon Wheeler, who commanded the Ridgecrest Police Department Sunday and Tuesday, said yesterday that no such sighting reports had been filed with RPD.

Saturday's sighting comes on the heels of at least three other instances reported by NUFORC to have occurred in the Mojave Desert area since early September 2004.

Reported sightings

Sept. 4, 2004, 8 p.m. — Two lights were reported as moving very quickly and erratically through the skies over Red Rock Canyon State Park. Objects were moving in instant 90-degree turns, performing looping and circling acrobatics throughout

(continued on page 3)

Ridgecrest, CA - Nov. 10, 2004)

clear night skies for approximately 15 minutes. Scared, the witness quickly left the area, convinced that sightings were neither satellites nor meteors.

Sept. 17, 2004, 1 a.m. — Two campers, who were en route to a camping area east of Ridgecrest on State Route 178, reported seeing two red blinking lights circling a single white light right above their vehicle. After about five minutes, the lights that had begun moving northward an "unbelievable speed" vanished."

Oct. 28, 2004, 3:35 a.m. — While traveling northbound, a Ridgecrest resident sighted an orange object three times brighter than Venus to the northwest of his location, just above the mountains. As the individual continued northbound for about a quarter mile, he noticed that the object had moved behind a cirrus cloud, at which point "a large brilliant flash took place." While progressing further on his itinerary, the man reported that the unidentifiable object to be hovering in plain sight about 1,000 feet away from him for 20 to 30 seconds. As he looked upon the object, a black dot on the top of it was momentarily apparent. The witness report included that the object was "of size, color, and speed of likes he had never seen before."

Davenport spoke at length to the witness of the Oct. 28 sighting and reported that the person filing the statement, who allegedly is affiliated with the United States Navy, was "exceptionally serious minded."

NAWS Public Affairs worked all morning to release an official statement but could not get one by press time. An update with their comments will follow.

DAILY INDEPENDENT, Ridgecrest, CA - Nov. 28, 2004

Local UFO sightings still remain mystery

BY LAURA DOBBINS

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Several military aircraft from the Air Force and Marines were testing in China Lake airspace two weeks ago when some people reported unidentified flying

Inside

Readers offer UFO views, stories and theories. See

A11.

objects but Navy authorities insist none of the testing occurred during the time of the UFO sightings.

It seems more questions than answers have been raised with each piece of information revealed about the unidentified object or objects.

A bright circular-shaped flying object was what Ridgecrest resident Bonnie Mathis saw Nov. 6. Her ac-

count, similar to others that day, was followed by more sightings of "unexplained hovering lights," — the most recent on Tuesday, Nov. 16.

Some residents believe the object or objects may be some type of hot air balloon. One person believes it is a hoax.

Some people are open to the idea of UFOs but most are convinced it's military testing.

Military testing?

Edwards Air Force Base Public Affairs spokesperson Sgt. Christopher Ball said there were a number of aircraft tests conducted in the China Lake area between Nov. 6 and Nov. 9.

"There were all types of aircraft in that area including squadrons from Nellis Air Force Base, the Fresno National Guards, the Marines, the Army and even aircraft

in that area including squadrons from Nellis Air Force Base, the Fresno National Guards, the Marines, the Army, and even aircraft from the Mojave Airport," Ball said.

Edwards Air Force Base officials did not receive any UFO reports, said Ball.

"I know sometimes there are weird reflections off the aircraft, especially in the daytime. Lights hovering in the dark are usually the Marines who use helicopters," Ball said.

China Lake authorities have checked their sources twice, after Edwards Air Force Base announced there was numerous testing in the China Lake area, and contend that no testing was done on the dates or times in question.

"According to our airfield sources, there weren't any flights or testing scheduled in that area on any of the days that have been questioned," said China Lake officials. "The airspace has not been used by China Lake or any other services on the nights in question."

Could it be a hot air balloon?

Bob Anderson was traveling north on Ward Avenue when he spotted the lights on Nov. 8. He said he parked his car and watched the glow for a while. The lights appeared to be hovering south of Norma Street.

Anderson tried to follow the lights when they started moving. At one point, he said, the lights were low, about 500 feet in the air, near Drummond Avenue and Norma Street.

"The lights were unique. I was trying to figure out how the glow was created since it didn't seem to burn out," An-

derson said.

There was no wind in Ridgecrest that day, Anderson, who said he is not a UFO fanatic, noted. "I thought it might be some type of hot-air balloon, but it was strange and it lasted a while — between 5 and 10 minutes."

At one point, the lights seemed to land.

"Then, they disappeared," Anderson said.

Is it a hoax?

Another local, Garon Harris, also has followed the object, but his sighting was at 5:55 a.m. and it was on Nov. 9.

"I think it's someone playing a hoax," Harris said.

The object Harris saw was traveling east near Downs Avenue. He followed it and got underneath what he described as a one foot by one foot wide object that had containers like dry cleaning bags on it.

The object was descending 100 to 150 feet before Harris lost sight of it.

"I think it was a hot air balloon with candles used to lift it up. It had a translucent covering. I am convinced it is someone playing a hoax," Harris said.

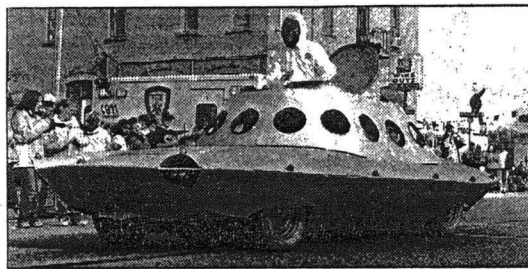
Mystery remains

Meantime, on Nov. 16 another sighting of strange flickering lights has been reported. This time, at least 20 people saw the phenomenon.

It was neither a plane or a rocket, say witnesses.

Until it can be proved otherwise, the lights will have to be classified as "UFOs," said UFO investigator Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center based in Seattle, Wash. in a Nov. 10 phone interview.

USA TODAY, Washington, DC - Oct. 28, 2004

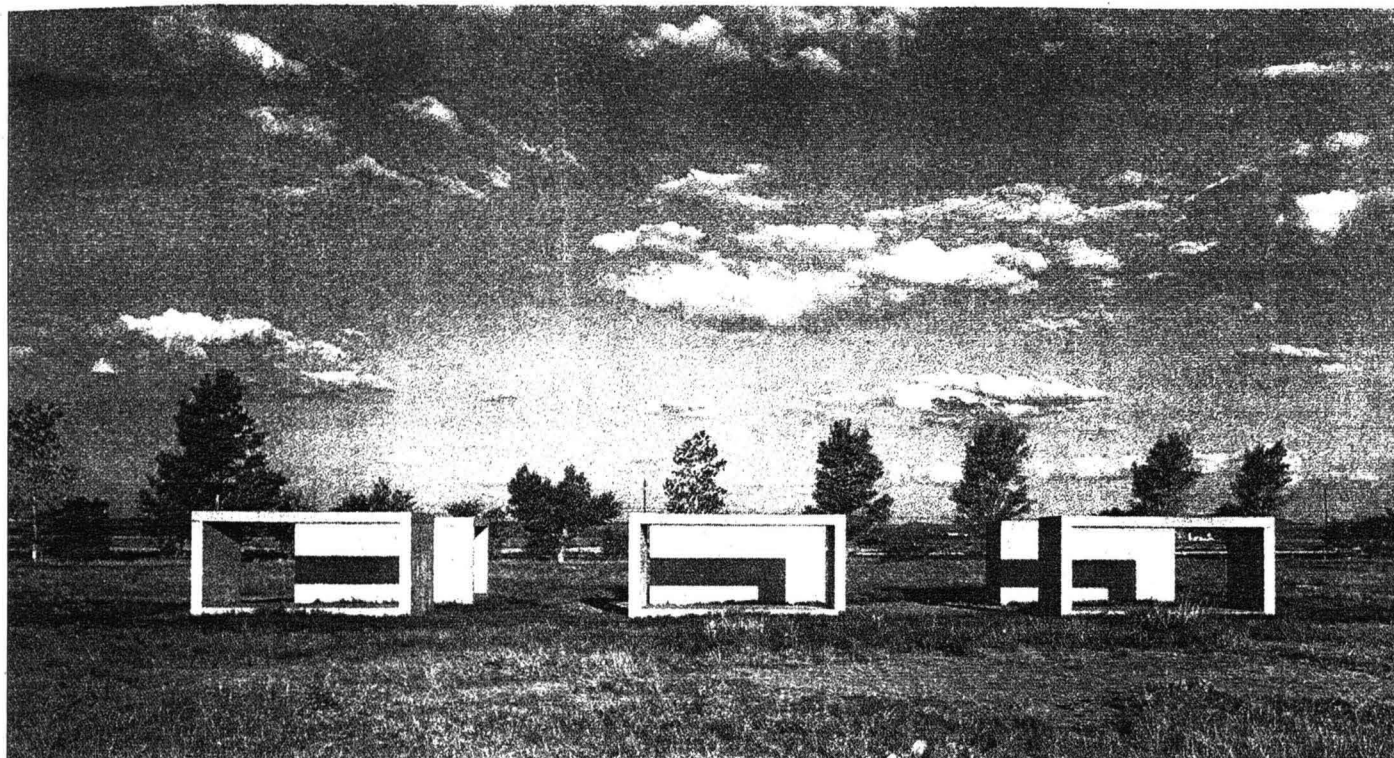


By Stuart Shapiro, Belleville (Wis.) Recorder

In 2003: The UFO Day parade had flying-saucer floats.

Belleville recalls its close encounters

Seventeen years ago, more than a dozen accounts of UFO activity were reported within a four-month period in tiny Belleville, Wis. Although some residents were initially embarrassed by the attention that followed, others decided to celebrate the town's experience with an annual festival. On Saturday, Belleville's 17th annual UFO Days kicks off with a parade featuring spaceships driving down Main Street and aliens lining the sidewalks. The self-proclaimed "U.F.O. Capital of the World," with a population of about 2,000, draws a crowd of 3,000 to 5,000 for the parade each year, says Stuart Shapiro, editor of the *Belleville Recorder* newspaper. Though the initial UFO sightings took place in January, event organizers think October is a more fitting time for the festival. "It's close to Halloween, so it coincides with crazy things that happen at Halloween," says Shapiro.



Donald Judd's sculptures at the Chinati Foundation in Marfa, Texas.

Florian Holzner/2002 Judd Foundation

Light up your life

Tiny Marfa, Texas, boasts weird natural phenomena, nice people

By ZOFIA SMARDZ
The Washington Post

The sun was gone, the sky getting inky. The wind had started to whip. And even in the Texas desert, the winter wind can be cold. I hunkered deeper into my jacket and jiggled for warmth. Behind me, my 16-year-old son loped restlessly back and forth, lupine, waiting. Suddenly a long lanky arm thrust past my face. "There's one!" he cried, pointing at the horizon. "And over there!" his younger brother echoed a moment later.

Off in the distance, about a quarter-mile away, a bright, star-like light glimmered into view just above the horizon, followed quickly by a second one. As the first flickered out, a third took its place, materializing out of nowhere. "Ooo, another one!" I squealed, and again, as yet another twinkled momentarily above the other two. All at once, they disappeared together, as if an invisible hand had snuffed them out.

At my cries, the boys instantly dropped all airs of excitement. "You don't have to say, 'Ooo,' every time, Mom," they muttered, dripping with teenage sarcasm, and



slid their eyes furtively left and right, though there was no one else around.

That was a mercy for the boys, since it spared them any humiliation at maternal vocals. And it was a treat for all of us to have the viewing station pretty much to ourselves. But it was a shame, I thought, for all the people who weren't there, because on this January night, the Marfa lights were putting on a spectacular display. As we gawked, they blinked on and off, shifted position, appeared high in the sky one moment, hugged the horizon the next.

This time out, the lights were livelier than the first time we'd

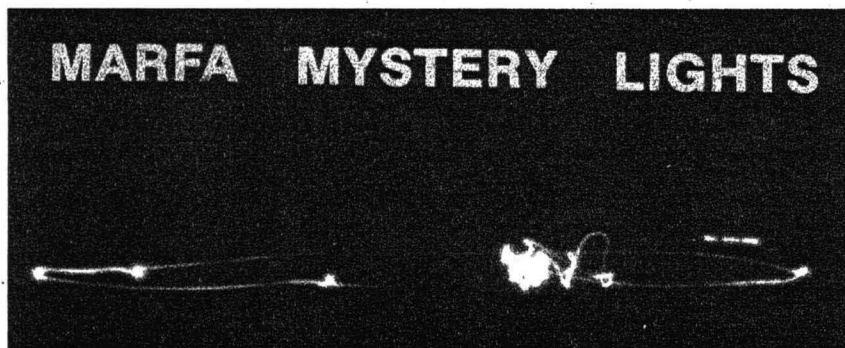
seen them six months before — at least it seemed so to me — and much closer to the descriptions I'd read of them. Still, my skeptical husband couldn't help quipping: "I think the local chamber of commerce just pays a few guys to go out there and stand around with some really big flashlights."

The Marfa lights — spontaneous bursts of illumination that materialize, year-round, on clear nights over the Chihuahuan Desert in West Texas — are a bona-fide unexplained natural phenomenon. They've defied scientific rationalization for more than a century. Are they swamp gases? Bent light? Electrostatic discharges? Signal lights from alien spacecraft? Nobody knows where they come from or why they appear when and where they do. Oh, and they have their debunkers, who claim they're nothing more than the headlights of cars driving down the Chinati Mountains. Right.

Bottom line: They've stumped physicists and photographers and engineers, some of the best minds of the nation, for years.

I just love it when that happens. In the remote, remarkable desert-mountain region of far West Texas, a wedge of country three hours south of El Paso and 1½ hours

(continued on page 5)



Detail of postcard by James Crocker/Marfa Chamber of Commerce.

In the desert-mountain region of far West Texas, three hours south of El Paso, the Marfa lights are the premier tourist attraction.

north of Big Bend National Park and the Mexican border, the Marfa lights are just about the premier tourist attraction around. That is, of course, if you're looking to attract tourists, which doesn't seem to be that high on the agenda of the folks who live here. They seem fairly content to poke along from day to day in the midst of some of the most spectacular scenery in the continental United States, greeting interlopers politely, warmly, but incuriously. They don't push anything on you, and they don't try to market themselves.

Mostly, in fact, they talk about how little there is to do here. "Well, we're not the big city," a staffer at my son's boarding school in Fort Davis, Texas, mused modestly on our first trip a year ago, helping us consider sightseeing possibilities. He gave us a short list — historic Fort Davis, the pre- and post-Civil War U.S. Army post after which the town of Fort Davis is named; the McDonald Observatory, high on a peak in the Davis Mountains; the scenic loop drive through and around said mountains; the local history museum in Alpine. Then after a pause: "Oh, yeah, and I guess there's always the Marfa lights."

They're called the Marfa lights after the nearest town, a low-lying little burg of 2,424 that supposedly got its name, in turn, from a character in Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov* (that being the book the railroad executive's wife, who suggested the moniker, was reading when she and her husband passed through this railway watering stop in the late 1800s).

Marfa can make a few other claims to fame. It has one of the most beautiful courthouses in Texas, it was the location of the 1956 Elizabeth Taylor-Rock Hudson-James Dean movie *Giant*, and it's home to the Chinati Foundation, a celebrated museum of contemporary art begun

If you go ...

GETTING THERE: Marfa, Texas, is about 520 miles from Santa Fe if you drive through El Paso. **WHERE TO STAY:** In Fort Davis, the historic Hotel Limpia on the town square is a charming throwback to the frontier days of the Old West, with broad porches, a Victorian lobby, wide corridors and high-ceilinged rooms and suites. And it's a bargain: Double rooms start at \$89 per night, less if booking online. On our last trip, my family stayed in the hotel's cottage, a delightful 1940s two-bedroom bungalow with original furnishings, nestled in the shadow of Sleeping Uton Mountain, for \$139 a night. Call (800) 662-5517 or visit www.hotelimpia.com.

The Limpia's sister hotel in Marfa, the Hotel Paisano, 207 N. Highland St., is equally beguiling, in more of a Southwestern, Spanish-Rancho style. You can ask for the James Dean room or the Rock Hudson or Elizabeth Taylor suites. Rooms start at \$79 per night. Call (866) 729-3669 or visit www.hotelpaisano.com.

Alpine offers the historic Holland Hotel, 209 W. Holland Ave., in the middle of downtown, with 14 rooms and suites starting at \$45 per night, double. Call (800) 635-8040 or visit www.hollandhotel.net. **WHERE TO EAT:** With its old-fashioned soda fountain, the Fort Davis Drugstore on Main Street is great for breakfast and lunch. I love the BLTs.

If it's Mexican food you crave, head for La Casta, 1102 E. Avenue H in Alpine. The ambience isn't much, but locals say the food is the best north of the border and I'm with them. Lunch for four is less than \$30.

For dinner, Pop's Grill on Highway 17 just west of Fort Davis offers good down-home food at reasonable prices, although there's no wine. Jeff Davis County is dry. Dinner for four is about \$60.

For a somewhat fancier but still moderately priced meal, try Lett's Grill at the Hotel Paisano in Marfa, where dinner with wine runs about \$120.

For a splurge, the Reata Restaurant, 203 N. Fifth St. in Alpine, serves great steaks; dinner for four with wine was just under \$200.

Marfa's 103 N. Highland Ave., down the street from the Paisano in Marfa, will deceive you into thinking you've stumbled into someplace on the Upper West Side, with its avant-garde menu, chic decor and New York (or at least D.C.) prices; dinner with wine came to nearly \$350, including the tip. Good, though.

WHAT TO DO: The largely restored Fort Davis National Historic Site is considered one of the best remaining examples of a frontier military post. Call (432) 426-3224, ext. 20, or visit www.nps.gov/foda. The McDonald Observatory, 17 miles from Fort Davis on Highway 118, is a major astronomical research facility and hosts constellation-viewing star parties three nights a week, as long as the weather is cloudless. Call (432) 426-3640 or visit www.as.utexas.edu/mcdonald/mcdonald.html.

In Marfa, the Chinati Foundation, a Cavalry Row is a contemporary art museum that sculptor Donald Judd founded in the late 1970s. Dedicated to permanent installations of large-scale works, it features art by Judd, Claes Oldenburg, John Chamberlain and others. Call (432) 729-4362 or visit www.chinati.org. The price is \$10.

The Scenic Loop, a 75-mile drive through the Davis Mountains, is full of surprises from Sawtooth Mountain to the cattle that just might be taking a snooze in the middle of the road.

INFORMATION: Fort Davis Chamber of Commerce, call (800) 524-3635 or visit www.fortdavis.com. Marfa Chamber of Commerce, call (800) 650-9696 or visit www.marfact.com. Alpine Chamber of Commerce, call (800) 551-3735 or visit www.alpinetexas.com.

Zofia Smardz

ried 19th-century travelers between the two towns, still runs through the heart of Fort Davis.

"They decide who gets to move in and who doesn't," she said conspiratorially, as I leafed through a bin of old, laminated turn-of-the-20th-century photos. My husband and I were her only visitors that day. "That's why you don't see a McDonald's or any chain stores around here," she said. "They want to keep Main Street looking like it did 100 years ago."

She didn't sound exactly happy about that, but I was. None of us missed McDonald's. And fast, I'm sorry, just isn't the mode in these parts. "What's your hurry?" Betty Nunnally, the proprietor of Starr's Emporium in Fort Davis, chided my menfolk when they tried to pry me away from her eclectic shop on our most recent trip. "You're in far West Texas now. You got to slo-o-o-w down."

Seems like the right prescription to me. Fits the spell of this place. It tickles me that our cell phone doesn't work everywhere down here, that the Limpia and its sister hostel, the Hotel Paisano in Marfa, don't have phones in the rooms. I love that you might see someone riding horseback down the highway, that you can catch the occasional glint of spur on someone's cowboy boots around town, that one of the oldest working dude ranches is around the bend from Fort Davis. I savor the sense of having stepped into another world, of being in a place that, while modern enough, is still cut off from the narcissistic, plugged-in present.

So I'm sure you'll understand my reaction when, after having read that Marfa is experiencing a yuppie boomlet, I saw a couple of bikers in full tight-shorted, speed-helmeted racing regalia working the scenic loop the day we drove it last July. "Where did you come from?" I screamed. (Don't worry, the car windows

scrabble lives and braved the wilderness and the elements to make a home in an inhospitable place, where water was scarce and other people scarcer.

The cattle ranchers who staked out vast tracts of scrubland for their steers had to have what it takes to persevere here. Even today, a handful of ranchers, descendants of the first settlers, still control most of the land in and around Fort Davis. At least that's what the elderly lady minding the desk one day in the town's curio-filled Overland Trail Museum told me.

A dusty, unpaved stretch of the local "overland trail," the San Antonio-El Paso stagecoach road that fer-

UFO fans flock to hear speaker

By Jon Krenek
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The couple didn't want to give their names. Talk of extraterrestrial intelligence buzzed all around them in a crowd of about 350 people close to their age. Anticipation about the release of government documents purporting to prove UFOs exist filled the room.

"We're amazed by the age of the crowd," said the anonymous woman, afraid revealing her name might expose the couple to ridicule from friends. "The average age is about 50."

A lecture on UFOs at Kankakee Community College on Wednesday attracted a standing-room-only crowd. The featured speaker, Robert Hastings, who has lectured at over 500 universities, promised recently released government documents would "prove beyond a reasonable doubt" that UFOs exist.

Many in the crowd already believe. "If we're on this planet, why can't there be someone else?" asked Mary Whittington, 52, of Kempton. "It's out there. I know it is. I hope I'm there when it's proved positive."

Hastings' 35-year career researching the UFO phenomenon started in 1969 when he saw a UFO at a U.S. Air Force air traffic control tower in his youth. The lecturer said it is fairly common for people to shy away from the subject.

"I used to ask for a show of hands as to who had seen one," said Hastings. "I had very few raise their hands, but I always had a few who would come up to me afterwards, and say 'I saw one.'"

At least one audience member has. Kankakee resident Bob Renee, 74, told *The Daily Journal* he saw a UFO while he was driving near Winona, Minn., on his way to a fishing trip. A

silvery disk approached the vehicle head-on, and suddenly darted off at 180 degrees. Renee and his five friends kept the encounter secret for years.

"Other than our group, we never told anybody," said Renee. "They would have thought we were nuts."

Many professors at KCC apparently took the subject seriously, and encouraged their students to attend.

"A lot of our professors were very open to this, and they offered extra credit," said KCC Student Advisory Council President Janna Enders. "It presented new ideas I had never thought about."

A few "imaginative" people also sprinkled the crowd.

One man, who refused to give his name, purported to be building a UFO engine in his basement. Claims from the mentally ill are a common part of the UFO phenomenon, according to Hastings, and those claims have to be sorted through and dismissed.

Hastings invites healthy skepticism.

But there is a clear difference between "scoffers" and "skeptics," according to Hastings. The scoffers will dismiss discussion of UFOs or extraterrestrial intelligence with prejudice without first researching the issue. The skeptics will suspend their judgment until considering the evidence and alternative explanations.

Skeptics were included in the crowd.

"I'm interested in UFOs, but I don't believe in them," said Bob Keller, 84, of Kankakee, who remains a skeptic even following the lecture. "The fact that we have these powerful telescopes, and the space shuttle, and they find no evidence, and that something would have to be traveling at the speed of light is just beyond my comprehension."

were all up.) "Go away!"

The Marfa lights have been around since at least 1883, when a rancher by the name of Robert Reed Ellison supposedly first saw them shining in the distance as he bedded down in the desert one night. Ellison assumed they were Indian campfires. Only when he rode out the next day to the area where he'd spotted them, he found — cue *Twilight Zone* music — no remains of any campfires.

Today, there's an official viewing area erected by the Texas Department of Transportation, complete with telescopes and restrooms. It's a little weird to have someone lay out the red carpet for what some people think could be UFO-landing lights, but it's nice to be told where to have the best look-see.

Of course, "best" in this case is relative. In fact, it's downright idiosyncratic. For they say that everyone sees the Marfa lights differently. You can be standing right next to someone who's ooh-ing and aah-ing and essentially see ... nothing. That was my experience the first time out: One of the boys or my husband would

point and say, "There!" and I'd ask, "Where?" I didn't see many that time, nor on our most recent trip this summer, when the lights seemed sluggish and coy.

Apparently at least one other person had the same experience. "Well, now we can tell the folks back home we done seen the famous Marfa lights — not," cracked a woman in a group of Texas Junior Leaguers who had descended on the viewing area in a chartered tour bus. I could tell she was disappointed, and I wanted to say, "Come back in the winter." Because I've got my own theory of the lights, you see. I think the cold winter air makes them brighter and friskier, more playful and powerful.

Or maybe it doesn't. Who knows? It's a mystery. And like the place they haunt, a marvel.

Betty Hill, 85, Figure in Alien Abduction Case

By MARGALIT FOX

Betty Hill, whose assertion that she was carried off by otherworldly beings in 1961 inspired a national obsession with alien abduction that remains a staple of American popular culture, died on Sunday at her home in Portsmouth, N.H. She was 85.

The cause was lung cancer, her niece Kathleen Marden said.

Mrs. Hill was not the first person to tell of an alien encounter. But her account was the first to capture the public imagination on a grand scale, defining a narrative subgenre that has flourished in the decades since.

Mrs. Hill's account was the subject of a book by John G. Fuller, "The Interrupted Journey: Two Lost Hours 'Aboard a Flying Saucer'" (Dial, 1966). In 1975 it became a television movie, "The UFO Incident." The film starred Estelle Parsons as Mrs. Hill and James Earl Jones as her husband, Barney, who also said he was abducted.

The incident, the Hills said, occurred on the night of Sept. 19, 1961. Driving in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, they saw a light that seemed to grow larger and larger. Back home, they found what appeared to be shiny spots on the car's exterior. They could not account for a two-hour segment of their trip.

The Hills later saw a psychiatrist, who put them under hypnosis. Gradually, a narrative of the couple's lost hours emerged. They recounted many times that a group of short gray-skinned beings stopped their car and took them aboard a waiting spaceship. There, the Hills said, they were subjected to rigorous medical examinations that included inserting a long needle into Mrs. Hill's navel.

The account fit squarely in the Western narrative tradition. With a dark night, ghostly apparitions and sexual undercurrent, it had many Victorian gothic hallmarks, and it shared the common Western folklore theme of being spirited off and ravished by an otherworldly creature.

In the Hills' account, these traditional elements were transplanted to a modern but no less anxious time, the height of the cold war, when many people gazed nervously skyward.

"It's not unlike the Leda and the swan myth," said Terry Matheson, a professor of English at the University of Saskatchewan and the author of



Betty and Barney Hill in September 1966. Their account of abduction by otherworldly aliens was seminal for many books and movies.

A dark night, a bright light and then two mysterious lost hours.

"Alien Abductions: Creating a Modern Phenomenon" (Prometheus, 1998). "The alien comes in, probes women in a distinctly sexual way for purposes that are equally inscrutable, but which may, we're told, make sense down the road."

Mrs. Hill was born Eunice Elizabeth Barrett on June 28, 1919, in Newton, N.H. A graduate of the University of New Hampshire, she was a social worker for many years. Besides her niece, survivors include three sisters, two children and three grandchildren. Mr. Hill died in 1969.

The Hills' cultural legacy includes films ("Close Encounters of the Third Kind"), television programs ("Roswell") and books, like those by Whitley Strieber and John Mack, that treat alien abduction as a plausible phenomenon.

STAR, Chicago Heights, IL - Oct. 17, 2004

Strange lights have residents looking at the night sky

More than a dozen UFO sightings reported in August

By Erika Enigk, The Star

Some area residents are searching for the truth in the skies these days.

Investigators from a UFO network are interviewing witnesses to an unusual aircraft observed flying above the South Suburbs this summer.

More than a dozen people reported to National UFO Reporting Center on www.nuforc.org that they saw strange lights above Tinley Park, Orland Park and Matteson on Aug. 21. The incident has been given a featured spot on the website.

David Schultz, a self-described skeptic, said he's not sure what he saw but knows he'd never seen anything like it before.

Around 10 p.m. on that date, the Chicago resident was outside a restaurant on Oak Park Avenue in Tinley Park when he noticed four red lights in the sky.

"Each light had two separate lights that were really close together," he said. "They moved

very slowly and then they just stopped."

Schultz said he heard no noise, like one would associate with an airplane flying overhead. Then, one by one, the lights went out, as if turned off.

"I just figured they were satellites or something," he said.

Schultz said he didn't think much of the incident until he saw the numerous reports on the Internet from people who had seen the same thing.

"People all over that town had to have seen it," he said.

Samuel Maranto, an investigator with the Mutual UFO Network, an international UFO reporting group, said he's heard from many people who saw the lights and wondered what they were.

"It was seen over quite a bit of the southwest region," he said.

Most witnesses on the website describe three red lights, but the other details differ. Some say the lights moved or changed formation, and some say they stayed still.

Maranto, who keeps an office in the Orland Square mall, said one witness provided a video of the incident.

"It was a large, triangular craft," he said. "Another object came in and displayed lights that were spinning around and disappeared. I believe that object went into the larger object."

Maranto said he's not convinced the craft was extraterrestrial, but he's not ruling out the possibility.

"When we see this kind of thing, we have to say, is it ours or is it theirs?" he said.

Maranto has been interviewing witnesses since the incident and making calculations based on their accounts to determine the shape, height and size of the object.

"Either it was extremely close to them or very big," he said.

When investigating sightings like this one, Maranto said he takes into account the color and shape of lights, the sounds and the area in which it was spotted. From

certain angles, even a passenger jet's lights could look highly unusual, he said.

With all factors taken into account, Maranto said he determines whether the witness has seen a conventional aircraft or something else. Every sighting must be approached with skepticism, he said.

"You have to take everybody's word as a lie and let it prove out," he said. "It's just lights in the sky until we can prove otherwise."

Tinley Park resident Chris King witnessed the incident from a block party in Brookside Glen. He believes the lights came from some sort of experimental airplane, he said.

King — who is the Tinley Park village engineer — says he also saw three red lights moving slowly, but said when they turned, they took on the appearance of an airplane.

"You could hear the engines," he said. "I'm 99 percent sure these were experimental airplanes."

Because of the wide area in which the lights were seen, combined with the formation in which they were seen, Maranto said he's certain it wasn't a conventional airplane or blimp, but he believes it could have been an experimental man-made aircraft.

"We may never know (what it was)," he said. "But we know what was there was a non-conventional source."

Tinley Park Police Chief Mike O'Connell said he's heard from a few residents who saw the lights but concluded that they had seen an airplane.

"We checked with the FAA, and they said they hadn't heard anything," he said.

Maranto is planning a meeting this week with witnesses to the lights over Tinley Park to further investigate the incident. He may be contacted through www.illinoisufo.com.

Erika Enigk may be reached at eenigk@starnewspapers.com or (708) 802-8847.

DAILY INDEPENDENT, Ridgecrest, CA - Nov. 28, 2004

Unexplained lights

Local thoughts and stories about UFOs

BY LAURA DOBBINS
ldobbins@ridgecrestca.com

Many readers responded to a Nov. 10 UFO story in *The Daily Independent* where we asked residents to submit any thoughts or stories they had to share on the subject.

As you can imagine, we received all types of calls and submissions.

Stories ranged from strange tales posted at Web sites, to local alien abductions.

Most comments were from people who were open to the possibility that the object wasn't from outer space but it was indeed an unidentified object of some sort.

Living near a military facility, most people thought it was related to some top secret China Lake test. Still, most people doubted China Lake would be testing over residential neighborhoods in Ridgecrest.

After looking at different possibilities of what the UFO sightings might be, there are more questions than answers, but all of the information on the subject has been interesting. Some of it, even amusing.

Initially, *The Daily Independent* offered to print the top three stories submitted about UFOs, but most people didn't want their names published. Instead, we have included some excerpts of our e-mail and phone calls.

General UFO ideas

"I'm not a UFO buff, but I think there are people watching us," wrote a Ridgecrest resident.

"After a couple beers, I've been known to spot a few objects myself," from an Inyokern reader.

"Here in Trona, we see flying objects all the time. Most people that visit Trona, think of us as aliens as it is. But when you get to know us, it's as if you were on another planet, we're so nice," wrote a Trona resident who said he was being

sarcastic.

Thoughts on military testing

"We are in the desert, and now that Area 51 is no longer a secret, what better place to test than China Lake," said a Ridgecrest woman.

"The government does not generally conduct test flights of sensitive, new large technology over our part of the world — certainly not when it is probable that such flights might be observed by the general public," wrote in one person.

UFO letter

One Ridgecrest couple gave us a letter from their cousin, who responded to our Nov. 19 UFO article. Here's a short version of it, some of it has been paraphrased:

"After leaving Old Yellow House and having had one strawberry margarita, parking my car in the garage, I noticed a strange glowing object in the sky far to the north. It was headed this way. At first I thought it was a helicopter, except I've never seen one all glowing orange, (or any other color).

"As it got closer, AND I DO MEAN CLOSER, I saw it was an orange globe the size of a VW Beetle ...

"If it was a meteorite, we were going to have a giant hole in a few minutes where Randsburg is ...

"It had a bubbly surface with sparks falling off the bottom edge ... I backed off so the 'sparks' wouldn't burn my hair ...

"I was told, by an engineer friend who works at China Lake, who also saw the thing on the way to Lancaster, that it appeared to be a candle balloon that someone might be experimenting with ...

"But no one else I spoke to saw anything. They were all watching TV. To think, we could be invaded by aliens from planet Cucamonga and people would be watching 'Joey.'"



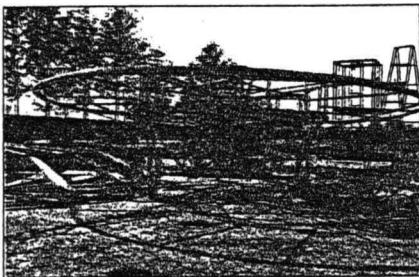
FOREIGN NEWS

[All British clippings courtesy of Timothy Good, unless otherwise credited.]

EXPRESS-NEWS, San Antonio, TX - Nov. 13, 2004

The idea of building a UFO isn't alien to Chinese man

This is Du Wenda's disassembled saucer. On its first test flight Oct. 22, it briefly rose 4 or 5 inches. His team is trying to ignore snickers from the Chinese news media.



GADY EPSTEIN/BALTIMORE SUN

But his plate is full in actually constructing a flying saucer.

By GADY A. EPSTEIN
BALTIMORE SUN

DUANYUAN, China — Tucked away down an unpaved cart path, behind a high brick fence, is about the strangest thing anyone could expect to

find in the middle of nowhere, short of a UFO — an "experimental base" for building one.

Technically, it's not unidentified, and it's not flying, but what Du Wenda is building in eastern China is indisputably an object.

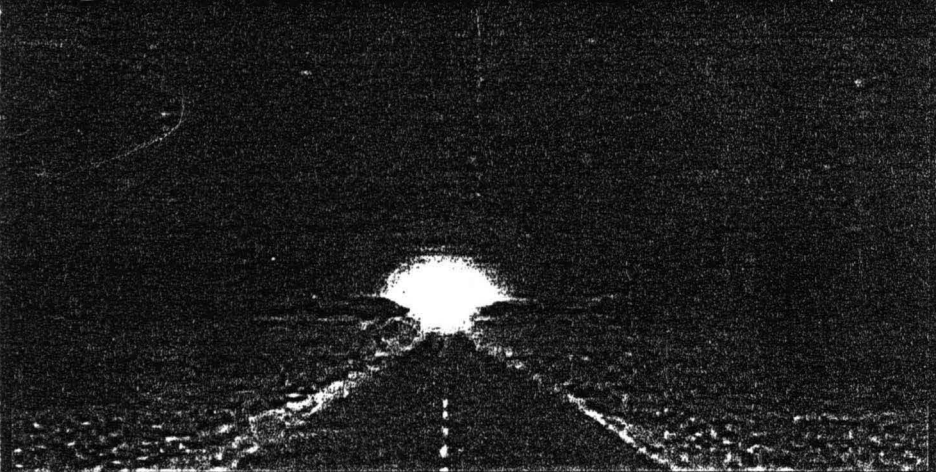
Du, the son of a horse-cart driver, is founder and president of the Global UFO Scientific and Technological Research Institute of Xiao County of Anhui Province, an institute with a single proposition: to make a flying saucer for earthbound travel.

Lacking money, formal education and a full understanding of the science of flight, Du has an unlikely proposition. Certainly, the first test "flight," observed by fewer than 20 people Oct. 22 at his experimental base, didn't conjure up images of the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk.

The UFO-looking saucer, with huge horizontal rotors powered by a used eight-cylinder car engine, rose about 4 inches off the ground for five or six seconds, he said.

EVENING POST, Reading, England - Oct. 5, 2004

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE TILEHURST KIND



OUT OF THIS WORLD EXCLUSIVE

BY ANTHONY MOORE

A STARGAZER is asking people to look to the heavens after spotting what she can only describe as UFOs flying in the night skies.

Benita Kwiatek, from Tilehurst, has documented three separate sightings of strange purple and pink objects in the past three years.

The 56-year-old said: "People think I'm crazy but from my heart this is a true story."

The cleaner has always been interested in the stars but her sightings, first in Henley and then Tilehurst, have left her spellbound and unable to explain the phenomenon.

She says on each occasion she hadn't been drinking and is

not on any medication, and she wants to know if others have seen the same thing.

So far Mrs Kwiatek has had no direct contact with any extra terrestrials but she said: "Something is going on. Nothing on earth can move this way."

She describes the objects as being large pink or purple discs that are dark on their flipside.

They fly as high as aeroplanes but move smoothly in a manner no man-made object she has seen could repeat.

She describes them swinging in the sky, moving in an almost staccato, fly-like way.

Mrs Kwiatek also has exact times and dates of when she has seen the unearthly objects and recommends anyone interested should look to the stars between 10pm and midnight.

Her first sighting happened on Wednesday, October 4, 2001, when she and her husband Stan drove home from a cleaning job in Henley at midnight.

Mrs Kwiatek says a bright

pink or purple object appeared to follow their car from the Tesco roundabout in Henley to the roundabout at Sonning Common, casting a light like a "spider's web" through the sky.

"It wasn't a clear night so we couldn't see it properly but it seemed to fly around the front and back, all around the car."

The couple chose to forget the incident until this summer when they experienced two more sightings.

At 11.15pm on Thursday, August 26, Mrs Kwiatek saw three objects from the window of her home in Coombe Road and then weeks later another sighting at 10pm on Wednesday, September 8, from her back garden.

"One of my neighbours said he saw something that night and thought it was probably a weather balloon but it can't have been."

"They just don't move like these objects do."

Anyone who can verify Mrs Kwiatek's sightings should call (0118) 918 3010.

Du, 39, a former maintenance man, has spent \$95,000 in 2½ years, including his family's savings, investor contributions and proceeds from the sale of a cow, but he remains undaunted.

"I don't believe you have to think that building a flying saucer is that hard. What I'm building will have similar capabilities as a UFO, but the speed will be much slower," he said.

Du's experimental base could hardly be more modest. Parts of Du's futuristic machine rest on concrete slabs where cotton once was stored.

The guts of his contraption — disassembled after the Oct. 22 test — are surrounded by patches of sweet potatoes, turnips, cabbages and carrots being grown to feed about 20 workers devoted to the flying machine.

The 17-foot-wide chassis and a main rotor sit next to a spinach patch.

The crops are there in part as a replacement for cash, because Du has been unable to pay his workers, and there's little prospect of paying them soon. The workers who remain, along with investors who have contributed about \$50,000 to the project, believe the machine could become a profitable product.

Some, like Xu Ying, describe their belief as faith, in a way that hints at a search for meaning in the countryside. She quit her small business manufacturing clothes and her husband quit his accounting job at a state-owned company to work on Du's flying machine not long after she heard about it from friends. They invested \$2,400.

"It's said to be the transportation tool of aliens," said Xu, 54. "So I thought this thing that aliens have, can we have them, too?"

One recent weekday, Xu and a few other workers were taking calls from the Chinese news media, which, after a nationally televised segment on the project, has swamped them with coverage, all extremely skeptical.

"We do not like the satire, this way they say peasants are building this UFO," Xu said. "Not only do they not support us, they did not comfort us spiritually."

Xu and others have placed their faith in Du, a self-confident figure who established a local reputation as an inventor almost a decade ago, when he sold a patent for a bamboo-weaving machine to a coal mine company for more than \$20,000.

Du has dreamed of flying saucers since he read a comic book in fifth grade that featured a UFO in a dogfight with an airplane. (The UFO won.)

A graduate of middle school and vocational school, he has long read anything he could find on UFOs and on aviation.

Du borrowed design theories from cars, airplanes and helicopters. He staged crude experiments, from tossing a home-made saucer as a child to operating a small battery-powered toy saucer that is sort of a miniature of his grand project.

Two years ago, he earned a Chinese patent for his flying machine design, which includes horizontal rotors of differing sizes spinning in opposite directions at differing speeds.

"The UFO will have three functions: moving on the ground, in the air or underwater," Du explained in an interview last week. It will be useful for short-distance travel, he said, because it would be unaffected by bad roads or traffic.

China's annual air show in Zhuhai invited him to show the saucer, and he's taking a small demonstration model.

Unfortunately, the demonstration version, a Styrofoam and plastic model on display at the institute's office in the Xiao county seat, clearly demonstrates a fundamental obstacle confronting Du: aerodynamics.

As a UFO institute employee powered up the toy, its propellers whirring, it levitated off the ground and wobbled this way and that during its brief demonstration flight.

It seems that it could sell as a toy — an option Du is pursuing — but it fails as a model for something larger.

There's no question that a flying saucer can fly, but the problem is that without adjustable flaps like on a plane, or a tail rotor like on a helicopter, it's inherently unstable.

Du and his supporters have heard Chinese aerodynamics experts express such criticism, especially in news coverage in recent weeks, but have chosen to disregard their views.

"Because UFOs are different from airplanes, aviation experts are not qualified to comment on the UFO," Du said. "Right now, there are no experts on the UFO."

The truth is out there...and world's top academics believe that life forms from other planets do exist – and they look like us

The 4400: Why experts are starting to believe 'alien kidnap victims'

WE ARE told that the truth is out there. But the truth may be getting closer and closer, according to academics. Indeed, the university establishment is now saying that aliens *do* exist and that they may look more like us than your common or garden monster from Doctor Who.

The extraordinary claim is made in a new Channel 4 documentary series which begins next week, called *What We Still Don't Know – Are We Alone?*

What gives this theory a little more credence than usual is that it comes from several of the world's eminent academics. And, to top that, one British university is due to publish its research into alien abductions early next year.

Film and television producers can't get enough of extra-terrestrial goings-on right now. The Channel 4 series coincides with the start on Sky One of drama series *The 4400*, which focuses on alien abduction in America. The story follows the disappearance and return to earth of 4,400 abductees over the past 50 years.

Time has stood still for the returnees. There's a young girl abducted from the forest in the Thirties, an American soldier who disappears in the Korean War, a teenage boy snatched from beside a lake two years ago as he camps out with his mate.

It is compelling and atmospheric. A *Close Encounters Of the Third Kind* for the small screen. The show has hit America like a meteor storm, becoming the most-watched drama series on the cable networks.

And Hollywood has got into the act too. *The Forgotten*, starring Julianne Moore, was released on Friday. It deals with the death of a boy and the suggestion that his mother has been brainwashed by aliens.

So from fiction to supposed fact. In Channel 4's *Are We Alone*, Peter Ward, a palaeontologist from the University of Washington, couldn't be more definitive about alien existence. "In my heart I can't help but believe that there are not only other intelligent species but many of them. There are just too many planets out there. So yes, I suspect indeed there are alien intelligences."

But the film doesn't stop there. What do they look like? Professor Simon Conway-Morris, a palaeobiologist from the University of Cambridge, said that he has an idea, based on his researches into evolution. He said: "They will have something which I think will be curiously human-like. Now, how precisely? Will it have five fingers? I don't think so. It's difficult to think it wouldn't

By **David Stephenson**
Television Editor

have some kind of head. It seems the nervous system is a jolly good invention. Probably quite a big brain. Yes, the eyes have got to be close to the brain, so you can see you begin to cascade this argument down.

"It could be four-legged or six-legged possibly but at least two of those limbs would almost certainly have some sense of opposability."

"I suspect as soon as we get underneath the alien's skin we will realise it is basically us all over again. My hunch, which is definitely unfashionable, is it will be eerily similar to humans."

So why haven't we met these wonderful creatures? Why haven't they visited earth, as they do in *The 4400*, when they deliver their cargo of abductees to a bewildered Department of Homeland Security in America. Peter Ward says: "I would love to meet aliens. It would be great to have those wonderful, knowledgeable, big-headed creatures come down and give us world peace and fix all the food problems. The only

reason that they haven't visited is that there are very few of them and they may be as we are, isolated in their own stellar systems." But Professor Conway-Morris says we are bound to be disappointed with the image of the alien when – and if – we finally encounter one.

"In science fiction, when they come out of the spaceship, they normally look repulsive and arthropod-like, whereas my view is that we'd be unlikely to tell the difference from us."

"You wouldn't know whether to laugh or cry!"

BUT time is running out to discover alien life, he says. "If all the plans go ahead to scour the universe with radio telescopes looking for alien life, then by 2040 if we don't find anything we should give up. We will have gone as far as we can. We already know so many stars and so many planets, that surely some of them would have produced life."

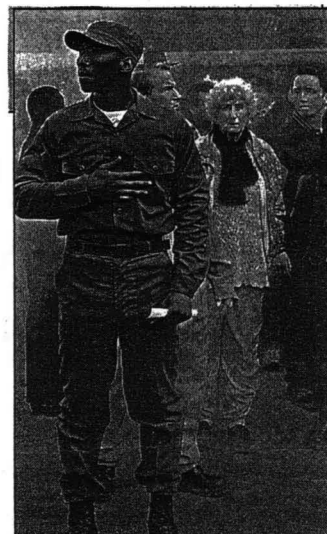
"They are a billion years older than us, so their potential life would have developed by now. The only alternative is that they're so much more advanced than us. An alien could be the chair I'm sitting on now that remorphs itself into something else when I get home and writes poetry."

The academic establishment has suddenly embraced research into aliens, after decades of scepticism. Psychologists at Goldsmiths College, part of the University of London, are expected to publish their findings early next year. Professor Chris French,

head of the anomalistic psychology research unit at Goldsmiths, said: "The project is essentially collecting data relevant to various psychological theories that attempt to explain the experience, as well as interviewing 'experiencers' regarding abduction and any other ostensibly paranormal experiences they may have had."

"Abductees often report a wide range of experiences. The research aims to test not only the psychological aspects of abduction but also to find out more about the other kinds of experiences that abductees report, including some tests for psychic abilities. I am known to be sceptical regarding any extra-terrestrial explanations of the experience but the fact is that no one really knows what the true explanation is."

● *Have you had an "extraterrestrial" experience? Write to Aliens, Sunday Express Features, Northern & Shell Building, 10 Lower Thames Street, London EC3R 6EN.*



TV TALE: A scene from *The 4400*, which has taken audiences by storm

We were abducted by a UFO

ONE OF the first documented cases of "alien abduction" was that of Eunice "Betty" Hill and her husband Barney.

On September 19, 1961, the couple, from New Hampshire, USA, were driving through the White Mountains late at night when they spotted what looked like a "white star" that seemed to be tailing them.

They stopped the car and Barney got out to get a better look. The object got so close that he said he saw several beings staring down at him.

Some time later the Hills realised they could not account for two hours of their

By **Beverley Glick**

journey. Betty experienced nightmares in which she was taken into a room and examined by strange beings.

Under hypnosis, the Hills told a story of how a group of "aliens" with pear-shaped heads and wrap-around eyes subjected them to a series of gruesome tests.

The Hill abduction case passed into folklore and has since been the subject of a book and a film.

Betty, who was called "the grandmother of UFOlogy", died on October 17, aged 85.



FOLKLORE: Betty and Barney Hill

GAZETTE, Peace River, B.C., Canada - Oct. 8, 2004 CR: G. Conway

Local resident impresses top UFO expert

By **SYDNEY SELVON**
R-G Editor

Canadian UFO (unidentified flying objects) researcher Brian Vike called the *Record-Gazette* following the publication in our issue of September 7, 2004 ("Weird photo", page 1), of a picture taken by local resident Bill Devitt (wrongly spelt as David in that issue). Vike made some comments on the photo.

Vike heads an organization he has founded, the HBCC UFO Research, to compile records of UFO sightings. He said Alberta has the highest number of sightings than any other place and last year in Airdrie, there were several sightings that made news in the local newspaper, the *Airdrie Echo*, were reported to his organization.

Devitt's photo made a big impression on him, he said. He also

contacted Devitt to discuss the circumstances in which the photo was taken.

Vike, who is sought for interviews by media organizations across North America and in other countries on the topic of UFOs, made comments on the Airdrie sightings to editor Paul Wells of the *Airdrie Echo*.

He believes the Peace River photo could yet be another case of UFO sighting, though Devitt himself saw nothing



Sydney Selvon/*Record-Gazette*
Bill Devitt of Peace River

actually until the photo was commercially developed in town and printed.

UFO

Close encounter with mystery object in sky

UFO FEVER has hit South Devon with one amateur photographer snapping this "flying saucer" over Brixham.

The Herald Express switchboard was swamped with calls yesterday from readers who said they spotted mystery objects over Torbay.

Some reckoned what they saw was a Jumbo jet-sized party balloon while others accepted it as a UFO.

There was a suspicion the cigar-shaped craft was nothing more harmless than a an "8 Metre Airship" sold for £12.95 by local shops. Police and coastguards said they had no reports of any close encounters.

By COLLEEN SMITH
and PAUL JAMES

Chef Nick Borne from Paignton, who took the main picture, was enjoying a meal out with his family on Tuesday evening when the flying phenomenon strayed into view.

Nick, who works at Aromas Cafe in Hyde Road, was using his mobile phone to snap panoramic views from the Berry Head Hotel when the craft suddenly appeared in shot.

A bemused Nick secured a couple of images and continued eating.

But the object, which he captured for posterity at 6.30pm, was witnessed by at least 20 others elsewhere in the Bay at around the same time.

One mystified sky-watcher was retired British Aerospace engineer Roy Dutton.

He tracked an object for 20 minutes through a high-powered telescope.

He reckoned it was flying at 10,000 ft and was at least the size of a Jumbo jet.

Mr Dutton, of Brunel Park, Watcombe, Torquay, said: "The telescope magnifies by 80 times.

"At first I thought it was just an airship but I could see it clearly and there were no signs of control or propulsion. There were no features whatsoever. It was jet black. It was just like a great big party balloon.

"It moved slowly along from north to south over Torquay.

"I have never seen anything like this before. I know from my experience of aircraft that it was flying at about 10,000 ft and it

was very big, at least the size of a Jumbo jet. After about 15 minutes it stopped.

"Then it just wobbled and ascended to probably double the altitude, drifting away quite quickly broadside on towards the south east out over the Channel.

"What concerned me was that it was in the flight path often used by aircraft approaching Exeter airport.

"My first guess was that it was some sort of experimental balloon, in which case the authorities should be investigating."

Teenagers Helen McGregor, 15, and her 14-year-old cousin Hayley Tucker, reported seeing an object in the sky from Ellacombe.

Helen said: "It looked like a kite but it was really high.

"It was just a long black tube. We ran back to tell my auntie but when we looked again it had gone."

Laura Lamont, of Moore Lane, Watcombe, was with a crowd of about 10 people on Babbacombe Downs who looked up in astonishment.

Amazing

She said: "It was amazing. We were all stuck for words.

"It was so high and it just seemed to have stopped there, dead. Lots of others were pointing up to it too."

Five golfers in Torquay interrupted their game to gaze in wonder at the cylindrical object which they said remained still in the sky for 15 minutes, the length of time that Nick Borne saw it before leaving the Berry Head Hotel with

wife Claire and daughter Maddison, nine.

"I was just panning around with the mobile when the UFO popped up and I took the pictures," said Nick.

"I'm still sceptical. At the end of the day it was something I could not identify.

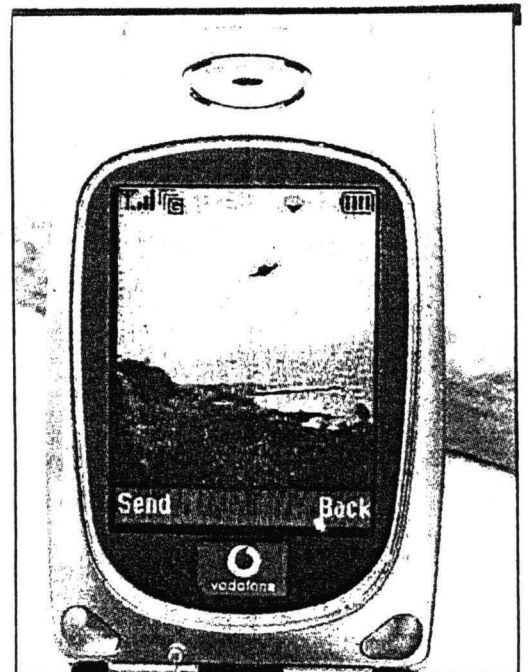
"It was stationary and conical shaped with a dome in the middle. I've no idea what it was."

Simon Wills, who runs Babbacombe Model Village, who also saw the object, said he thought it might have been a balloon of some description which came away from its mooring.

He said: "It was long and black with a shiny texture. It floated over Oddicombe Beach to



■ **EYE-POPPING SHOT:** Nick Borne with his mobile phone and, right, the image he captured.
PHOTO: Andy Styles HAS00823_AS_00



Hello! Is there anybody out there?

NEAL TALBOT
Herald-Tribune staff

GIROUXVILLE - A loud humming noise breaks the silence of night, causing Ron Cloutier's dogs to bark crazily, and announces the arrival of Unidentified Flying Objects in the Girouxville skyline.

The skin-tingling X-Files-like scene has haunted Cloutier over the last five months, as he is awakened to watch strange lights and shapes cutting through the darkness above his home.

The appearance of the unexplained objects has deeply shaken the 41-year-old oilfield trucker.

"It's really disturbing to witness something like this and not know what it is," he said. "It's bothering enough to see this once, but it happens all the time now... and it gives me the creeps."

In hopes of having the objects identified, Cloutier has been carefully recording their appearance with precise times and dates through film, photos and his notebook since they began appearing in mid-July. Thus far he has received no answers as to what they may be.

The longtime UFO nonbeliever says



Ron Cloutier points to the section of sky above his Girouxville home where he has photographed and filmed UFO sightings over the last five months like this one on the right.



Photos: Neal Talbot/supplied

he has seen up to four objects in the sky at one time, appearing from the north, and moving eastward until they all disappear.

Approximately 150 kilometres southwest of Cloutier's home, Grande Prairie resident Beverly Kettner admits she too has witnessed a UFO-like object move erratically through the night's sky on at least three occasions.

"Over the last couple of months I've watched what first looked to be a star dart across the sky and stop dead in its tracks, start up again, then stop and then finally disappear," said Kettner.

"It wasn't a plane, satellite or shooting star... it didn't appear to be anything from this world."

Especially unsettling for Kettner is that her four-year old daughter has recently discussed late-night conversations with alien-like people. She says the girl describes the stereotypical short, grey large-headed alien without having ever seen them on television or read about them in storybooks.

The sightings reported by Cloutier and Kettner are part of a record number of Albertans who have reported possible UFO activity in 2004.

UFOlogy Research of Manitoba numbers show Alberta has already broken last year's UFO sighting record of 76 with more than a month left in the year.

Canadian UFO researcher Brian Vike says a growing social acceptance to the unexplained has made Albertans more willing to report potential sightings.

"The acceptance of UFOs into popular culture, increased media attention, and the discovery of new planets in the galaxy have all helped convince people it's OK to come forward with unexplainable sightings," said Vike, who from his home in Houston, B.C., maintains a website tracking Canadian UFO sightings.

Vike points out Albertans have reported seeing triangular, round, square and glowing flying objects, an unusual beam of light enveloping an unidentified figure and claims of missing and stopped time so far this year. Those reports come from nearly every section of the province including metropolitan Edmonton and Calgary.

CHIPPENHAM NEWS, Trowbridge, England - Aug. 6, 2004

CROP CIRCLES MYSTERY

Have aliens paid a visit to Wiltshire?

By Jenny Haworth

A CROP circle and an apparent attack on horses at a field near Westbury has led one owner to believe aliens have paid the county a visit.

A 40-ft circle, discovered off Capps Lane, was discovered in a field of grass where two horses were grazing.

Bob Waring, 22, said his horses' mane hair had been ripped out in the unexplained incident.

"The grass has been scorched and pressed down into a perfect oval shape and all the grass is lying in one direction. It's really weird," he said.

"It looks like weed killer has been used but nobody could get it that perfect."

"You hear things about people being abducted and this sort of thing and you never know they could have been trying to do the same to the horse."

"In the middle of the circle there's about six little pads of grass that look like little feet have come down."

"Some are triangle shaped and some are square."

UFO believer Mr Waring said a spaceship could have burned the circle in the field, with aliens trying to abduct the horses.

"Dad has had the field for 20 years and nothing like this has ever happened before," he said.

"I've seen some weird stuff before but I've never seen anything like this."

A second circle was dis-



SPOOKY: Bob Waring with a piece of horse mane found near the circle "burnt" in the grass (15625/1)

covered in Nine Acres Field near Warminster on Saturday morning.

Sue Elliott, 40, who runs North Farm, in Norton Bavant, with her husband Andrew, said: "We haven't seen any around here for ages and then all of a sudden that one just appeared."

"It is a complete circle and then down on the bottom half there is a semicircle with a little circle above it. It looks like a nose and a mouth."

The family has no idea what caused the circle and refused to rule out

extraterrestrial visitors.

A tramline running adjacent to the field could have been used as an access point, but Mrs Elliott said it was down to hoaxers, they did a very neat job.

Edward Moore, chairman of the Norton Bavant Parish Council, said: "It would be nice to think it was caused by aliens. It means they are nice and friendly."

"It was most likely done by people with a sense of fun I think. Anything that brings a smile to people's faces is a good thing."

jhaworth@news.wilt.co.uk

Former High Prairie resident and UFOlogist Rick MacDonald points to a 2001 poll by Leger Marketing suggesting 40.7 per cent of Alberta residents believe in aliens - the highest of any province - as an example that Albertans are starting to believe.

"More people than ever before are looking at the existence of UFOs and aliens as a real possibility," said MacDonald, whose Disclosure Project group claims Canadian and American governments already know of alien existence.

"After watching UFO sightings on TV and reading sighting reports from hundreds of Albertans on the Internet, disbelief is dwindling."

The increased sightings and growing acceptance of UFOs are both positive steps towards finally unveiling proof of extraterrestrial life, says Alberta UFO Study Group member Jim Moroney.

"There is now enough solid evidence from reputable people in Alberta and across the globe to support the idea we are being visited," said Moroney, who spent the last 18 years investigating Alberta UFO sightings.

"It is now just a matter of time now before we'll be able to prove the existence of UFOs."

UFOs on the web

- Canadian UFOs on the web
- Alberta UFO Study Group: www.aufosg.com
- HBCC UFO Research: www.hbccufo.com
- Canadian UFO Reporting Centre: www.geocities.com/hbccufo/home.html
- UFO Sightings in Canada: ufoinfo.com/sightings/canada.shtml
- Canadian UFO Sightings Database: ufosabout.com/library/bldata/blsight.htm

NOVOSTI, Vladivostok, Russia - Dec. 29, 2004

Watching the heavens from Dalnegorsk

By Tamara Kaliberova

"I got scared of a UFO only once. It was during a 1980 expedition to Kamchatka when we saw a strange disc landing near a 90-meter-deep lake bottom," reveals Valery Dvuzhilny, one of Russia's most notable specialists in the investigation of unidentified flying objects.

Dvuzhilny, a biologist by occupation, residing in the town of Dalnegorsk some 500 kilometres north of Vladivostok, made investigating UFOs the main purpose of his life. In his four-room apartment, the scientist has established a laboratory equipped with obsolete Soviet-era tools and a collection of about 1,000 samples of materials found at nearby sites where at least one UFO is thought to have touched down.

Dvuzhilny was the first to suggest that space visitors use geological fissures in the planet's

crust to orientate themselves with Earth before descent. Dalnegorsk County, which is considered the most anomalous zone in Primorye and is also notable for its 14 caves, is located on a geological "break" that contains a field of powerful electromagnetic and gravitational energy. The counties of Ternei and Olga and the city of Arsenyev are also locations of interest for UFO researchers, with more than 10 unexplained sightings in the past 20 years.

According to Dvuzhilny, on January 29, 1986, a UFO was observed in the Vysota-611 Mountain near Dalnegorsk. Burnt fragments found at the site revealed the rare-earth metal lanthanum and silicon shales discharging magnetic radiation.

In 1995, Dvuzhilny participated in the International UFO

Conference in California, America. Pavel Reshetnikov, head of the anti-aircraft forces in the Russian Far East, was also invited to the conference but was prohibited from leaving Russia because of his military status. However, he later confirmed that a UFO was tracked by radar over the Amur River in the early 1990s. According to Reshetnikov, the object could not be identified as either a missile or a plane.

Each sample found at the Dalnegorsk site has been subject to multiple scientific tests, including isotope analysis. Of the samples found 50 kilometres away at the Krivaya River, dozens were proven to have been burnt at a temperature exceeding 2,000 degrees C. According to Dvuzhilny, thorough analysis of burnt metal pieces found at sites so remote from each other suggest

they were affected by extra-terrestrials, who may have been interested in them as sources of lead and silver.

With his modest laboratory tools Dvuzhilny lacks funds to perform his scientific activities. To conduct an isotope analysis in Moscow costs \$1,000, but Dvuzhilny, who earns very little money teaching students at an ecology club, does not give up. He is an ample enthusiast, as are his colleagues at the Science and Research center 'Kosmopoisk' (Search of Cosmos) where Dvuzhilny works as a coordinator.

Dvuzhilny, the energetic sky watcher featured in both Japanese and American documentaries, is currently planning an expedition to the Amgu territory, and dreams of creating Russia's first UFO museum in Dalnegorsk.

THE TRUTH IS HERE

The UFO Triangle
Houston • Smithers • Terrace

By David Connop Price
The Interior News

Houston sightings
captured by an amateur
photographer



The sun's first rays were creeping into the morning sky Sept. 22, when Beverly Evans* saw a strange object in the sky heading towards her. Little more than a hundred metres from her car it changed direction, flying up and out of sight.

Beverly is not alone in seeing mysterious objects in the sky. So many have been seen in the Houston-Smithers-Terrace region in the last few years, that Houston ufologist Brian Vike has called this area the UFO Capital of Canada.

Houston and Terrace have had the third and fourth highest number of UFO sightings in Canada for the last two years. In 2003 Houston's 33 reported sightings were just one less than Toronto and just eight behind Vancouver, the leading city for UFO sightings.

The following are eyewitness accounts of some of the events that have some calling this area... the UFO Triangle:

Mellow Yellow — Wednesday Sept. 22, 2004 6:40 a.m.
Beverly, a Telkwa resident, told her story to Brian Vike.

Beverly was on her way to work in Smithers. As she came to the Babine Lake Road turn, she saw a bright yellow-white light coming in a downward motion from the Telkwa Mountain range.

It crossed Highway 16 about a hundred metres ahead of her and at an altitude of two-to-three telephone-pole lengths. As it passed she noticed the object appeared round in shape and glowed light-green underneath.

Just as she thought it was going to crash, the object rose up and disappeared into the clouds. The object had made no sound and left no trail. She reports the incident lasted 15-20 seconds and that there were two vehicles behind her that may have seen the same light.

Bright Light of Houston — Aug. 11, 2004 2:45 a.m.

Eddie Westgarde was having trouble sleeping and headed to the kitchen for a glass of water. He noticed a strange light through his kitchen window.

"It was strange because the light that came behind our place didn't seem like it was the moon, it seemed like a different light and it (was) kinda startling," said Eddie.

"It was standing in behind the trees, but it came through the trees so that you couldn't see any trees, because the light came right through the trees. But there's heavy trees there and there shouldn't be light coming through there."

The light wasn't high in the sky. "It was right down more towards the horizon. It went down there, disappeared in there."

The light caused no visible damage to Eddie's yard. "There's nothing there. I couldn't see nothing around."

"It just seemed like an awful strange thing that the light can shine through trees."

The Pink Thing — April 8, 2004 11:20 p.m.

This bizarre phenomenon was seen by two different Smithers

was by retired

teacher Anne Lauderdale

"I just went out to give my dog

some dog biscuits before I went to bed, he

has a dog house right on the deck, and I just turned

around and there was the thing in the sky" Anne said. "It was a large pink spherical object, very bright pink, a colour all the girls like."

"It was not above the mountain, it was hovering above the ski hill road and then it moved towards town in front of the mountain, you could see it moving down the valley and it just sort of disappeared. I only saw it for a few seconds I guess."

There were no sounds coming from the object nor did it have a tail she said. But it did have "a dark blue aura around it." Anne believes it was at least the size of a big truck tire and "it wasn't moving like a plane or anything like that."

Anne, 62, laughs saying "I haven't lost my marbles yet so I wasn't imagining things!"

"I was fascinated. I'm like, what am I seeing here? You know it's really strange."

The Pink Thing II — April 16, 2004 10:45 p.m.

Eight days later Ruby Charlie, 42, saw something remarkably similar. She said she saw a "big pink light" in the sky. At the time she had not heard of Anne's sighting.

"I was going to work on graveyard (shift) and I seen it in the sky on Billiter Road there" said Ruby, a house care worker at Bulkley Lodge. [The UFO was] coming west above Billiter Road, towards me. [Then] it backed up and disappeared."

Ruby estimates the distance from her to the object was "a few blocks" and it was "three tree lengths" up in the sky. It was "about the size of a full moon."

The object made no sound, but Ruby admits she may not have heard anything because she was in her truck. She said the pink light had no distinguishing features.

"I just couldn't understand what it was," said Ruby. "Then I went to work and told one of my friends that I just seen a UFO and she was jealous."

The Bulkley Valley Speed Ball — July 29, 2002 10:20 p.m.

Mike Hill*, a Canfor employee in Houston, stepped from a forklift to examine a phosphorescent-like white ball of light with yellow undertones, which appeared to hover, before slowly crawling across the skyline.

Mike called out to two co-workers, who caught sight of the glowing light. "I called them over because I wanted to prove that I saw something and that I wasn't crazy," Mike explained.

The object grew a tail as it gained speed towards Tweedsmuir Park and shot out of sight, ending the 20-second display.

"In my mind it looked like a meteorite, but it was like no meteorite I've ever seen. I've seen meteorite showers before, but they never looked anything like this. I really don't know what it was," Mike concludes.

10:40 p.m. Dina Hanson, a teacher in Quick, saw a white ball of light travelling silently in a south-westerly direction, from Quick to Telkwa. Her son Ryan Hanson also saw the object.

10:45 p.m. Gordon Stewart settled down to watch a movie after spending the day on his Telkwa farm. The bay windows facing his chair overlook the valley. A bright light flashed by his field of vision and he was astonished by its peculiarity and speed.

He walked

onto the porch, where he

was greeted by only silence and a sky with light cloud cover.

Gordon, who used to drive 200-mph dragsters,

estimated the speed of the object at 650 miles per hour.

"If you had blinked you would have missed it," he said. From

where he was sat, the light appeared the size of a pickup truck.

He woke his wife Joanna and upon sharing his description of the round, white light with a yellowish hue, he learned his wife had seen the same light in the same location a few months earlier.

"I didn't want to tell him because he'd think I was crazy,"

Joanna recalled.

The flat trajectory and lack of sound would rule out a meteorite. A comet was spotted the same night, but its glowing green light, arc-shaped flight and Hudson Bay Mountain location do not tally with Gordon's sighting.

Gordon called the RCMP and learned there was no air force activity in the area. Central Mountain Air reported there was one training flight aloft from 10:07-11:04 p.m. However a Central Mountain Air spokesperson saw no connection between the occurrences.

She speculated that the tiny Cessna 185 would not emit a bright light of that magnitude and its engines would be heard at a close proximity.

Dina's observation in Quick shared many characteristics with Gordon's. Their phenomenon also moved silently, but at a speed exceeding the propulsion of a man-made object. The description of size, awe-striking brightness and the white-yellow hues of the light are similar too.

Dina's light was an elongated circle shape, whereas Gordon's was round. Dina also noted a slight downward trajectory on the object she saw, but Ryan contends that because the object was moving away from them, it may just appear to be dropping because of their perspective.

(continued on page 12)

(continued from page 11 - INTERIOR NEWS,
Smithers, B.C., Canada - Nov. 17, 2004)

Although Gordon admits an open mind to the possibility of other life forms existing in the universe, he talked himself through the possible explanations and still came to the same conclusion:

"I knew I saw something out of the ordinary."

Ufologist, Brian Vike believes all these reports can be classified as high-quality unexplained events. For example, he thinks the pink object descriptions appear to rule out usual suspects like aircraft, meteors and planets.

Hoaxes aren't common either, said Vike.

"I would say the percentage is pretty high that people are credible and I'm not saying they're UFO's, some of the things are very explainable, but the majority are credible."

Chris Rutkowski is the Research Co-ordinator for the Canadian UFO Survey. He collects data on sightings from across Canada and is the repository for UFO reports received by the government.

He said the activity in the Smithers-Houston-Terrace area is "very significant for the population."

While noting that sightings are down this year, Rutkowski said, "We've had many dozens of reports from British Columbia, particularly the Smithers, Houston, Telkwa area, compared to other regions over the past number of years."

"In fact, for the past five years or so it appears that British Columbia has had far more than its share of UFO reports than we would expect, based simply on population."

If, as the saying goes, the truth is out there, it may be right here in the B.C. Central Interior towns of Houston, Smithers and Terrace.

* The names Beverly Evans and Mike Hill are pseudonyms.

CITIZEN, Prince George, B.C., Canada - Aug. 14, 2004

UFO sightings seen as boon

MOONBEAM, Ont. (CP) — This small northern Ontario town is hoping to draw tourists, both human and extraterrestrial, thanks to numerous UFO reports and a recently unearthed letter from 1969 that speaks of strange lights in the sky.

"When we found that letter we thought that was an interesting story," said Michel Guilbault, a consultant working with the town on a number of UFO projects. "So we decided to do an E.T.-related project in tourism."

The town's UFO tourism campaign includes a website launched last week where local residents can share stories of flying saucer sightings. There are also newly opened nature trail hikes led by an alien mascot, and plans for a UFO museum.

The town of 1,300, some 330 kilometres northwest of Sudbury, has been living off its spacey reputation since the early '90s. Instead of the standard animal mascot, the town erected a statue of a flying saucer — complete with flashing lights — outside the town limits.

On the Web:
<http://www.village.moonbeam.on.ca/>

BIGGLESWADE CHRONICLE, Bedfordshire, England - Sept. 24, 2004

Theories fly in on ET mystery

Secret military testing behind strange lights?

Report by Laura Hutchinson

MYSTERIOUS lights spotted above Chronicle country could have been a result of military testing.

A freelance journalist for Eye Spy magazine, which covers espionage and intelligence issues, contacted the Chronicle after seeing last week's front page story.

Together with contacts, including an astrophysicist, he is putting together a report on the lights phenomenon, which has been witnessed in Somerset and Seattle in America.

He said: "We believe it to be a high level missile laser test. The same thing was actually seen over in Yeovil in Somerset at exactly the same time at the same time."

"It might be a fake test to take people away from the real testing taking place that night elsewhere."

A local Somerset newspaper reported earlier sightings of the unusual lights in the sky earlier in August.

More people have come forward after witnessing the strange flashes of light around Biggleswade.

Chris Davies, of Trinity Road, Stotfold, said: "I did see something that definitely wasn't fireworks."

"I saw a light in the sky that



Has ET been spotted in the night sky above St Andrews Church in Biggleswade?

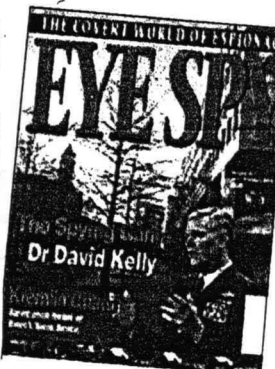
was very high up. I commented on it because I saw the light going past and it wasn't a plane and was flashing every few seconds."

"It was moving ever so quickly. I'm a bit sceptical about all that sort of stuff, but I did comment because it was so unusual. It flashed very brightly and then was covering a huge amount of sky before it flashed again."

A Henlow resident also spotted the strange lights.

He said: "It soon became apparent it wasn't fireworks, the lights were too vicious. I have never seen such powerful lights."

A more down-to-earth explanation is that the flashes were caused by intercloud lightning, which are often not accompanied by sound and illuminate the night sky for miles.



A freelance journalist for Eye Spy magazine put forward a theory on the mystery.

EAST LONDON ADVERTISER, London, England - June 24, 2004

Is the truth really out there, or are UFOs all in the mind?

East End ufologist to take part in pioneering study at Goldsmiths College



Chris Martin, who claims he has been the victim of an alien abduction and (below) a UFO picture taken by himself



LAST time Chris Martin was subjected to probing experiments he claims he was orbiting the earth in an alien space ship.

Now Chris, one of the East End's leading UFO researchers and alien abduction victims, has volunteered for more of the same treatment.

But this time the probing will be done on earth by psychology boffins instead of little green men.

Readers may have spotted an unusual ad in the Advertiser. It asked: "Do you believe that you have had an alien abduction or alien contact experience?"

Anyone answering 'yes' was urged to contact researchers at the Anomalous Psychology Research Unit at Goldsmiths College.

We checked the Advertiser X-file and found Chris Martin who revealed his own abduction experience last year.

Chris, who has also filmed UFOs over the East End, agreed to take part in the test and undergo para-psychological testing — to see if he has ESP (Extrasensory Perception) or is capable of PK (Psycho Kinesis).

BY ROB MACKINLAY

The man doing the testing will be Professor Chris French who said that thousands of people across the world are convinced they have had some sort of alien contact.

He said that either some of these cases really do involve aliens or there is something very important going on psychologically.

He believes that, with or without the aliens, the project should unearth some interesting results.

Professor French is also keen to find more abductees to take part in the research which has been running since October last year.

Chris's own interest in aliens started six years ago.

He said: "I was going out with a girl who told me she was being visited by aliens. It was a classic abduction scenario."

He said that one night the girl woke up with hieroglyphic style markings on her back and an inexplicable mark on her wrist which all disappeared after two hours.

Chris has given the Advertiser



Alien probe: Goldsmith's Professor Chris French

tiser pictures of this writing on film. His girlfriend also told him that he had been there with her but he cannot remember it.

He said: "I investigated her claims and as far as I could tell she wasn't suffering from any mental problems and there seemed to be no reason why she would be lying."

Professor French also believes that most people that have these experiences are convinced by them and that they should contact his researcher, Julia, on 020 7919 7171, extension 4389.

For more information on Chris Martin and UFOs check out www.crowded-skies.com

EXPERT ON TRAIL OF IRISH UFO

Plan to probe mysterious near misses involving jets

EXCLUSIVE By KEVIN JENKINSON

A RENOWNED UFO investigator has described two mysterious, mid-air near misses involving Irish passenger jets as about the most compelling cases of a close encounter of the third kind that he has ever come across.

Timothy Good, the British journalist and author of *Unearthly Disclosure* and *Alien Base*, met in Dublin with two Irish colleagues investigating the incredible aerial incidents.

And he plans to help Dermot Butler and Carl Nally of UFO and Paranormal Research Ireland get to the bottom of the mystery.

Glow

"It is one of the most compelling aerial encounters I have ever come across," Mr Good told *The Star*.

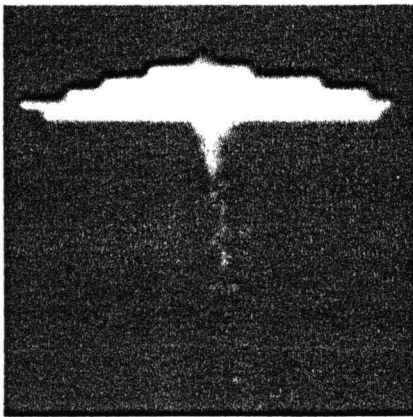
The two UFO researchers, who have been cataloguing Irish paranormal incidents since the 1970s, said they were contacted by pilots on condition of absolute anonymity not long after the two encounters.

The first encounter came at 8.30pm last January 4 when pilots of a British Airbus said they saw a flashing bright triangular object take off from the ground as they passed 3,000 feet over the Slane area.

The UFO was circling an Irish 737 passenger airline in front of them and the crew experienced a power drain. The Pilots said a purple glow surrounded the Irish 737 jet.

The mysterious object flew in front of the aircraft forcing its pilots to change course to avoid a collision.

The jet then experienced wake turbulence and violent shakes and the outside temperature rose to 164C for around 15 seconds.



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: UFO

The pilots told the two Irish UFO investigators that the aircraft's wings were badly dented and there was some skin damage.

Two hours later another triangular flashing UFO was seen by another airbus passenger airline over the Slane area.

Aggressive

They too were advised to avoid a collision with the object, which then began to circle the plane in "a very aggressive manner" before shooting off.

Mr Nally and Mr Butler want passengers from the flights to contact them.

The Air Accident Investigation Unit in Shannon said they have contacted Aer Lingus and Air Traffic Control and they have received no reports of the incidents.

But Mr Good said the encounters shocked him mostly because they allege aircraft were endangered by a UFO — and now he wants to help solve the mystery.

EVENING TELEGRAPH, Nuneaton,
England - Nov. 4, 2004

Can you help to explain UFO sightings?

I AM a retired West Midlands police officer who became interested in researching the UFO subject after being contacted by police officers who witnessed a gigantic domed-shaped object seen hovering over trees in a Birmingham suburb in January 1995.

Over the course of some years, together with my partner, Dawn Holloway, I was able to establish that many other people had witnessed strange phenomenon during that evening.

I decided to write my own book after discovering how prolific UFO activity had been, especially during the great waves of 1965/1977/1979, when all manner of strange things were seen over the UK.

Recently I managed to track down Bob Tibbitts who was responsible for many early investigations into UFO sightings that had taken place in the Coventry area during the 1970s, which included reports of domed shaped objects seen in the Meriden area in the 1940s, and of another occasion when a meteorite landed on a city street.

On one occasion I spoke to a retired police chief inspector who was one of three police officers who sighted three mysterious 'stars' in an L shape moving across the early morning sky in 1971 — something he has never found an answer to.

I'm hoping that readers may be prepared to contact me should they want to bring any UFO reports to my attention, taking into consideration that I may be able to supply them with other sightings made during that particular period.

I can be contacted at 31, Red Lion Street, Alvechurch, B48 7LG Worcestershire.

**John Hanson and
Dawn Holloway**

TRANSLATIONS

[The following translations are all courtesy of Scott Corrales and the Institute for Hispanic Ufology, with translation copyright being retained. Credit for individual contributors will be given at the end of each article. All articles are from South American and other Spanish-language newspapers and media sources.]

November 1, 2004 — *UFO ITALIA*, Italy — **UFOs OVER LANZAROTE (CANARY ISLANDS)** — Our newsroom has just received a bulletin from the Spanish Canary Islands. The eyewitness is an Italian national and has sent in the following report: "My name is O. U. and I live and work on Lanzarote. Only a few minutes ago, when the local time was 18:20 hours (19:20 Italian time), my secretary stepped out of the office and saw a strange sphere with a luminous orange surface and called me outside to see it. The event lasted about one minute. Another object in the sky, with a long orange tail, followed an even higher trajectory. An airliner in flames? I don't think so and nothing was said on TV. A meteorite? It could be, but the trajectory of the object flying above the first one does not lend credit to this theory." — CREDIT: Federico Dezi

November 24, 2004 — *La Nave de los Locos* No. 29, Chile — VARGINHA CASE MOTION PICTURE IN THE WORKS — A new movie production directly related to ufology is in the works in Brazil. Director Regina Mattos Leao and her colleague Wemerson Martins de Faria are currently filming a motion picture devoted to the Varginha Incident, in which a number of girls witnessed an alleged ET in a vacant lot of this Brazilian city. The "little Martian" was allegedly captured by the military.

The directors have promised a movie based on "brainy" research, with skeptics reserving their judgment in this regard until they have seen it on screen. Mattos stated: "We will avail ourselves of science fiction, we will tell the story with hitherto unexplored emotion and action, yet without altering reality."

The project is supported by the Varginha Cultural Foundation as well as the Secretariat of Tourism and Commerce. — CREDIT: Daniel Zuniga

December 10, 2004 — *El Centro*, Talca, Chile — CHILE: STRANGE AVIAN DEATHS NEAR TOWN SQUARE — ***Owners heard nothing in the early morning hours, when the unusual attack occurred*** by Rodrigo Jimenez — PENCAHUE - The affected parties cannot agree on what species caused them so much damage yesterday morning. They think that the author of the slayings could have been a dog, a cat, the small feline known as quique or even the mythic Chupacabras. Eighty birds being raised on the property of Eliana Nunez and Reinaldo Sepulveda on Alonso Rivera street, near the Plaza de Armas (town square) of Penciahue met a grisly end.

It was Nunez who found out what happened, as suggested by her routine when she stepped out to her vast yard at 9 am. A large henhouse stands amid fruit trees and dry pastures. Terrified, she found a multitude of lifeless chickens, hens and roosters scattered across the property. Their bodies were complete, but they displayed small and deep bite marks.

"I was frightened to see my little chicks dead," Eliana told *El Centro*. She cannot imagine who or what could have committed such an atrocity.

No sooner did she find her birds, she notified her husband. "The entire sector was filled with hens," recalled Don Reinaldo, still surprised.

The couple gave notice immediately to the Carabineros (state police) headquarters at Penciahue. Officers reached the scene and began looking for traces that might lead to the author of the slayings. But they found nothing—not a track, not a trace of the party responsible for the savage attack that occurred while the commune slept.

Juan Orellana, who works for the Penciahue environmental program, was also in attendance. "We saw about 80 chickens scattered all around the henhouse and they showed no signs of having been masticated. They were scattered throughout almost the entire sector. They are complete and some chickens have signs of bite marks. We cannot establish an effective working hypothesis. The case is strange and it could have been dogs, cats, I don't know ... if the quique was involved," he theorized.

"The henhouse was closed with lock and key and the gate appeared to have been forced from the bottom, showing that something had gotten in. I locked it up last night around 9 and heard no strange sounds," said Don Reinaldo, who believes that the one responsible for the deaths arrived via the irrigation ditch that passes by his house.

The affected parties, the Carabineros and the official from the environmental program had counted 25 chickens, 28 hens and 2 roosters as deceased. "Look, there's another!," said a uniformed officer as he surveyed the yard, which was covered in feathers.

The background information was collected in a police report and forwarded to the District Attorney's office at Talca for the crime of "damage to farm birds". According to Juan Orellana: "The Agriculture and Livestock Service (SAG) asked me to bring in two hens for analysis. We're going to bury the rest, since they're a source of disease. I also contacted environmental hygiene."

Once initial inquiries were done, the dead birds were buried in the rear of the house, amid a strange sensation. No one dared establish in an authoritative manner what exactly attacked the property, located only meters away from Town Hall. What they did say is that such incidents had never occurred in the peaceful commune of Penciahue. — CREDIT: Christian Quintero, *Planeta UFO*

December 17, 2004 — *Notimex* and *Cronica.com*, Mexico — NUMEROUS UFOs REPORTED IN SOUTHERN YUCATAN — In recent days a considerable number of UFO sightings have been reported in this locality, mainly in the southern region.

The latest and clearest sighting took place last Sunday and filmed evidence of the presence of a circular UFO, surrounded by multicolored lights, was captured near the city of Ticul. This city remains the focal point for such encounters, according to groups devoted to "night watches," except that on this occasion clearer images were obtained.

Silvestre Leal and Emilio Cetz Aguiar, in charge of the Sociedad Internacional de Rastreo e Investigacion OVNI (SIRIO) were responsible for filming the "craft."

The event occurred on Sunday the 12th during the celebration of the feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and whose encounter had a duration of some two minutes approximately, although only 54 seconds of video footage were obtained, 150 photographs were obtained for detailed study. Their pixels were analyzed along with their clarity (sic) to confirm that they indeed showed a UFO.

The object in question is a circular structure that was at a height of between 40 to 50 meters over the ground of the "San Benito" Football Field, explained Cetz Aguiar. He described the "craft" as measuring some 5 meters in diameter with an orange center bordered by lights of various colors, of which blue, green and red were the predominant hues. It made no sound whatsoever, he added. Initial tests aimed at ascertaining if the object was a UFO were made during the encounter, but given its shape and movement, other possibilities -- an airplane or a helicopter -- were discarded. The possibility of a balloon was also dismissed, despite the festivities of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the "Feria del Zapato" being held nearby, since the object was moving against the direction of the prevailing winds.

He added that the purpose of the visit was to verify a UFO video taken by Ivan Garma -- a Ticul resident -- in recent days.

"After determining that Garma wasn't home, we toured the city and I suddenly thought I saw the object, but there was so much light that I lost it. The time was around 21:00 hours."

Subsequently, he continued, the object appeared at another location, and when he took out his camcorder, it lost itself amid the buildings of the community.

Both members of the Grupo SIRIO decided to mount a "night watch" at the Soccer Field and were rewarded for their efforts, since the object appeared again--and this time much closer. The sighting took place at 22:15 hours and could be the same object filmed on two earlier occasions--August and October-- by members of a family surnamed Mata.

The UFO "wave" in the southern region began last August to such a degree that up to 400 people would meet in the very same field where the flying artifact was recorded, hoping for an encounter. — CREDIT: Guillermo Gimenez

December 22, 2004 — www.diarioeldia.cl, Chile — EXPERTS CONFIRM UFO PRESENCE IN PHOTO TAKEN IN VALLE DE ELQUI — A variety of tests established the veracity of the material taken in Pisco Elqui. The image shall be evaluated by ufologists from the U.S., France and Mexico, consolidating the area's reputation as a hot-spot for sightings.

Once more the skies of the region offered surprises to its visitors. On November 6, 2004, a group of travel agents from the capital reached the area to tour the valley. At around 17:00 hours, visitors reached Pisco Elqui with the intention of redoing a traditional post card of the region. Tatiana Cornejo, representative for the Deltour Travel Agency, decided to have a photo taken of herself in the town square, using the local church as a background.

Back in Santiago, Cornejo noticed something: the upper part of the photo shows a strange lenticular object. In spite of her skepticism in these matters, she submitted the photo to the Altovalsol Space Center to discard the possibility of a UFO presence.

After taking this decision, several expert analyses were made and experts from Ovnivision Chile validated that the object appearing in the photo was indeed a UFO. Now the material shall be subjected to scrutiny by ufologists from Mexico, Spain, France and the U.S..

According to Cristian Riffo, director of the Altovalsol Space Center, photographic and filmed material that records the UFO presence is subjected to several analyses in order to establish its veracity. For paper photos, negatives are inspected to discard the presence of dirt or film anomalies; digital photos are subjected to exhaustive review to discard possible hoaxes using special software.

"The possibility of satellites, atmospheric balloons or airplanes must also be discarded. With regard to the Pisco Elqui photograph, Ovnivision considers this to be a legitimate image, since it made it through the tests. It is further impossible that it could be a bird, since to be seen thus, it would have to have a 5 meter wingspan," explains Riffo. — CREDIT: Liliana Nunez O.

December 27, 2004 — www.elpueblo.com.mx — CHIHUAHUA RESIDENTS EXPERIMENT WITH UFOs by Ing. Gilberto E. Rivera — In mid-April 1997, one Sunday night, a group of girls aged between 15 and 16 decided to tour the outskirts of Aldama, since it is customary among the locals to go out on weekends and have a good time. Riding in a truck, Rosana Madrid and Berenice Lucero Ontiveros, both 15 years of age (at the time), accompanied by four girlfriends of similar age and two 10 year-old girls, drove their vehicle along the Aldama-Ojinaga road at approximately 21:40 hours. They noticed that a luminous object was following them -- apparently an airplane -- and for this reason they didn't pay it much attention.

However, upon approaching the 31.5 km marker, they decided to pull over and take an unimproved road off to the left. Having gone some 200 meters along this road, they turned the engine off to remain there for a while. They then became aware that the object following them was now directly overhead, some 15 meters up in the air.

Rosana and Berenice, who were in the rear of the truck, were able to make a detailed observation in spite of the shock and fear of facing the unknown. The object was bell-shaped, measuring approximately 10 meters in diameter, was metallic and grey-colored and spun on its axis. The object had a rhomboid-shaped base and projected a greenish beam of light that was spinning in a 360-degree angle (sic) and startled the young women with its intensity.

What also drew their attention was the strange noise issuing from the object--a sound they compared with "how air is interrupted due to the wind." The UFO remained only some 20 seconds above their vehicle when it suddenly ascended into the sky, leaving only a whitish luminescence in its wake.

After interviewing the girls and inspecting the sighting area, Jose Luis Balcorta and Gilberto Rivera, who writes this, reached the conclusion that it would have been impossible for an airplane or airliner be in the area, given the existence of pine trees and the altitude at which the object was hovering.

In the Sierra Tarahumara

Mr. Ramon Murillo Betancourt, a retired Chihuahua railway worker, says that in 1964 he worked and traveled aboard the Topolobampo line (Ch-P) with other co-workers. The time was approximately 23:00 hours when the train was approaching the Sanchez station in the Creel-Divisadero region of Barranca del Cobre. Suddenly, they noticed that at a certain distance ahead on the track, above the pine trees, there was a silvery, disk-shaped UFO measuring some 25 meters in diameter. The view was spectacular for the passengers, since this region is very dark.

Mr. Murillo says that an intense bluish-white, triangular-shaped light descended from the object without touching the ground, but able to illuminate even the train. The sighting time was approximately 3 minutes. The object then moved away to vanish, leaving behind only a triangular luminescence. Among the witnesses to this event he could name Antonio Espinosa Benavides, assistant porter; Humberto Mendez Perez, pullman conductor, Alberto Reza Loya and other workers aboard the Ch-P train at the time.

Over Coyame

Mr. Murillo remarks having had other sightings. In 1966 the Topolobampo line suffered a derailment while on the way from Ojinaga toward the Sierra Tarahumara, between Coyame and Aldama, exactly by the Chapo Station between La Mula and Falomir. The train was carrying some 120 passengers, including a band of norteno musicians.

While the crew awaited the rescue train at approximately 23:00 hours, Mr. Murillo, accompanied by Jesus Villalobos Quinonez, the Express's engineer, witnessed how the train was lit from outer space by a powerful beam of light, resembling a giant neon projector, that shot down from above.

The GIFAE group is currently investigating some very important cases related to the UFO phenomenon, such as the CE-3 experience by a hearing- and speech-impaired 11-year-old boy, who showed in pictures his encounter with a small Grey-type humanoid. Standing beneath a disk-shaped object, the being gave him a message, apparently through telepathy. This message is written on the drawing and GIFAE is attempting to decipher it to ascertain its content (this case is in the advanced stages of research). — CREDIT: Guillermo Gimenez

December 28, 2004 — *Planeta UFO*, Argentina — University of Chile (Usach) to offer certificate course — UNIVERSITY WILL OFFER UFO COURSES — "Something is happening in the world. We don't know what it is," said the course's director, Chilean Air Force General (Ret.) Ricardo Bermudez — The handbill for a ufological "marathon" is a visual example of what the new college program seeks to eliminate.

"Something is happening in the world. We don't know what it is, but the fact is that it can no longer go unnoticed by governments and the scientific establishment." This cryptic quote was issued by Gen. (Ret.)

Ricardo Bermudez of the Chilean Air Force (FACH), director of the first certificate course in anomalous aerial phenomena to be offered in the continent, and which will be held at the University of Santiago. It was unveiled yesterday at the Planetarium of the University of Santiago.

With a faculty consisting of specialists, the academic program issued by the university was announced as a necessity for these times, but above all as a response to media mountebanks and gurus who, in Bermudez's opinion, have profited off the UFO subject. For this reason, faculty stressed that there would be no ufologists, or anything resembling them, teaching courses. "This will be done by persons from the scientific community. These [other] gentlemen can perhaps participate as students." This was the unequivocal message given by Cristian Neto, the Planetarium's extension director.

Despite the expectations that this initiative might trigger among SF fans, interested in motherships from distant worlds and oval-headed beings, Bermudez, who also presided [over] the *Comite de Estudios de Fenomenos Aereos Anomalos (CEFAA)*, stressed the goals that have been put forth: "Those participating in this certificate course will have the opportunity to acquire scientific tools and investigation methods," he said, highlighting the attraction of having star faculty such as Klaus Von Storch, Chile's first astronaut.

Registration is open and 70 students are expected. They will have up to March 18th to register for the course which shall end in October 2005 and whose cost will be between 60 and 70 UF, according to the registration date.

Startled by the news, Roderick Bowen, a member of the *Instituto de Investigacion de Estudios Exobiologicos*, manifested his skepticism at the course's contents, because in his opinion, it is essential to see "what focus [the course] will be given." However, he found the offering attractive. "This will be an effort to set forth the knowledge needed to guide ufology's basic premises, since there are many variants and the extraterrestrial one isn't necessarily the only one." — CREDIT: Guillermo Gimenez

January 2, 2005 — MEXICO: UFOs OVER MEXICO CITY AIRPORT — Aviation technician and UFO researcher Alfonso Salazar Mendoza has reported the following sightings:

On December 20, 2004, the staff at the Mexico City International Airport witnessed a strange flying object shaped like a black-colored saucer with what resembled "a golden spinning top" located on its upper section. It was observed at an altitude of approximately 200 meters at 12:00 hrs.

On December 24, 2004, an aviation technician located unknown traffic flying from east to west, passing very close to an airliner inbound from South America. According to the witness, the UFO stopped and then ascended before vanishing into the heights. This event occurred at 4:30 a.m.

Subsequently, Horacio Rodriguez shot video of a cylindrical object having a metallic appearance to the east of Mexico City.

On December 27, 2004 and at 15:00 hours, a spherical white flying object was seen suspended in the sky for several minutes near the Control Tower at Mexico City International Airport.

All these reports were published in the *La Prensa* newspaper dated November 30, 2004 and written by Pablo Chavez in the General Information Section.

Alfonso Salazar believes that UFO phenomenon to be real, since the airport's radar has detected them repeatedly and he himself has been an eyewitness to unidentified flying objects. — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid

January 3, 2005 — *La Segunda*, Santiago, Chile — UFOs REPORTED IN CHILE'S 10th REGION — VALDIVIA - An unidentified flying object (UFO) was captured in a photograph taken by a tourist, identified as Raul Jara, at the Los Molinos beach resort in the 10th Region.

Jara claims not having been aware of anything abnormal when he pointed his camera toward the heavens of the Valdivian shoreline, while members of the Aedo Lovera and Jara Lovera families were startled by the find, pointing out that "at no time was anything strange seen in the skies."

The foregoing is due to the fact that they acknowledge that the object located over the subjects of the photograph has a certain resemblance to a helicopter, according to www.australvaldivia.cl

When consulted about this, Boris Lovera stated that "in spite of the noise on the beach, the motor of any aircraft flying over the area would have been heard at the time." Both families, however, were skeptical when it came to confirming the presence of what could be an alien spacecraft.

The phenomenon seen by the Valdivians was recorded at around 19:00 hours when both families were about ready to leave the Los Molinos beach and head back to the city of Calle Calle.

At that time the temperature was around 24 C and the skies along the coast were clear. Despite the "showy" nature of the object, Raul Jara stressed that "no one else on the beach appears to have seen anything at all," adding: "we didn't notice the UFO. It was only when we got home and downloaded the photos into the computer."

In fact, one of two photos taken shows the presence of an object in the air, but it is no longer visible in the second shot.

According to Boris Aedo, who appears in the lower left of the photo: "I was crouching when they took the first photo and in a few seconds, there was nothing at all in the skies."

Carabineros (state police) of the Reten de Niebla barracks noted that no phone calls had been received involving the presence of any unusual flying object. This was confirmed by the Pichoy Airport Traffic Control Tower, whose officials were completing their day's work at that time.

The Los Molinos sighting can be added to others recorded in the area, which brings up the old question: Are we alone in the universe? — CREDIT: Guillermo Gimenez

January 5, 2005 — *Planeta UFO*, Argentina — MEXICO: UFOs OVER GUANAJUATO — On December 23, 2004, Messrs. Eduardo Ortega and Salvador Ortega videotaped small structures crossing the solar disk at high speed and in different directions.

Upon examining the recorded images in slow-mo and frame by frame, certain images were seen. Consideration was given to the possibility that these may be the oft-mentioned "Rods," without dismissing any other type of known event.

The researchers in question were in the city of Salvatierra, state of Guanajuato, and the time was approximately 13:00 hrs. These are the same individuals who recorded the transparent spheres over Tepoztlan.

The very same phenomenon was reported to the "Ojos de la Ciudad" UFO group that same week by Mrs. Vicky Mendez, a well-known photographer of UFOs and a member of this organization, located in the Mexican state of Queretaro. The group is led by Pedro Avila, who provided the report.

Mexican UFO videographer Ana Luisa Cid Fernandez has had the chance to witness this phenomenon and recorded it in the year 2000. The nature of the phenomenon was never established. — CREDIT: Ana Luisa Cid



"Bigfoot investigators need to approach any sighting or evidence as if a crime has been committed. They should go there to gather evidence and to establish a basis of proof. That's where the use of forensic science is essential."
—Craig Woolheater, Texas Bigfoot Research Center

In search of Sasquatch

The curious and converted convene at annual conference

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ANTHONY DAVIS
Texarkana Gazette

"When you are dealing with a subject like this, it's best to keep your 'skeptical' on." —John Kirk, Sasquatch researcher

The subject at hand is Bigfoot or the Canadian anglicized Sasquatch, derived from a Native American description of a very large, hairy, foul-smelling, man-like creature reportedly seen in various locations around the North American continent.

And, for that matter, for more than 400 years around the globe.

For a group of about 40 members of the Texas Bigfoot Research Center based out of Dallas, the sole purpose of this weekend has been to share information and experiences about this mysterious "bipedal hominid" at the Fourth Annual Texas Bigfoot Conference held in Jefferson, Texas.

Representatives of the Texas group and the national body of the Bigfoot Research Organization exchanged new information and rehashed old data in lectures and group discussions. Respected researchers from British Columbia, the American Northwest and other locations enthusiastically addressed members and curious individuals from near and far during the proceedings at Jefferson High School.

Craig Woolheater of Dallas, a former software programmer, was pleased by the ever-increasing interest in his organization's investigations and reports.

"There are a lot of people here today. We are expecting more than 300 to attend before the conference concludes, so there must be a lot of interest from the public," Woolheater said. "A lot of people saw 'The Legend of Boggy Creek' back in the 70s, and there has been interest in the subject ever since."

The gathering was made up of perhaps die-hard believers, the curious and the skeptical. "Sometimes we pick up new members, and some people come to report sightings. We take every sighting seriously and look into its validity. It's mostly anecdotal evidence in most cases. No one is going to be put through a polygraph or asked to swear under oath before a judge," Woolheater said.

He and some of the key presenters revealed the nature of their interests Friday at a pre-conference luncheon and an outing to the deeply wooded area of Big Cypress Bayou near Karnack, Texas.

Along with Woolheater were Rick Noll, a Seattle, Wash., researcher for almost 20 years; Jimmy Chilcutt, a member of the Conroe, Texas, Police Department and forensic print expert; John Kirk, author and researcher from Vancouver, B.C.; Marc DeWerth, a BFRO member from Cleveland, Ohio; Lee Murphy, an author conducting research for a new fiction novel; and Chris Buntonbah, BFRO videographer.

Accompanying the group was a team of independent filmmakers from Australia who have been tracking the story of Sasquatch for a spring 2005 showing of "Planet X" on the Discovery Channel.

The crew has already been shown areas of sightings in Oregon and the Big Thicket area of East Texas. The 10-part series will feature Bigfoot along with other mysterious creatures of myth and legend, such as lake and sea monsters and winged



British Columbian researcher John Kirk examines a Bigfoot casting during the Fourth Annual Texas Bigfoot Conference in Jefferson, Texas.

creatures. Zoologist and show presenter Natalie Schmitt of Perth, Australia, led the film crew.

There are about 30 to 40 groups across the United States similar to the TBRC, said Woolheater. Though a certain degree of competitiveness between groups may exist, the Texas group is more interested in sharing the results of its findings with the entire scientific community. The TBRC is one of only four such groups that conducts an annual conference, he said.

"Some beliefs are based on faith. Our beliefs are based on evidence," Woolheater said. "When a track or footprint is left behind, that is a scientific reality."

Kirk, as president of the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club, has invested most of his adult life in the study and research of hidden animals or out-of-place animals. Unlike the image of a gullible, easily swayed enthusiast, Kirk is firm in his commitment to reliance on measurable, tangible facts and evidence.

"Bigfoot investigators need to approach any sighting or evidence as if a crime has been committed. They should go there to gather evidence and to establish a basis of proof. That's where the use of forensic science is essential," he said.

"There was talk recently of the possible discovery of a new primate in Africa they termed the biliapi, which is supposed to have some

bipedal movement. If similar evidence of a bipedal hominid like Bigfoot were found in Africa, scientists would be equally excited and interested."

It also seems that other countries outside the United States do not share the degree of rejection out-of-hand as the research attempted by Sasquatch investigators.

"In other countries such as Russia, China and Mongolia, the study of hominology is taken very seriously. A Russian researcher took one look

at the Patterson film (the alleged videotape of Bigfoot shot in Northern California) and knew immediately that the kinesiology of the creature's movements and his speed of movement was different from a man dressed in a costume. The Chinese government even sponsors expeditions to gather information related to hominology," said Kirk.

When the caravan of researchers and film crew arrived at its destination on the Big Cypress Bayou, the comments and reactions registered clearly endorsed the location as a prime environment for a Sasquatch creature. These mostly unseen animals are said to thrive in densely wooded areas with swamps, shallow lakes or streams nearby. In addition to providing good cover, the bottomlands are rich resources of available food supplies such as berries, roots and insects.

Meeting the group at the site were Charles DeVore, Daryl Colyer, Mike Hall and Chad Brooks. DeVore, a retiree for 14 years, resides on the bayou and had his first "smelling encounter" in the winter of 2001-2002. He discussed his experience as the film crew went about the business of interviewing Woolheater at the water's edge.

DeVore was living in Texarkana when the story of the Fouke Monster broke, and he was among those at the time who didn't give it much credibility. He does now.

"I was walking the woods with my five dogs when I walked into this gosh-awful stench," he said with an accompanying look of disgust. "It's impossible to describe in a way that you can write it just how horrible it was. I turned around to see what my dogs' reaction was, and they had all disappeared, abandoned me. I didn't know what else to do but keep walking and looking around. I walked a circle and found my dogs and went on home. The next night I took them out again on the same route, and they shut down and ran again from the same spot."

Six weeks later and intermittently since then, DeVore has heard sounds from the swampy areas of the bayou from his kayak as he explores the local flora and fauna, but he is yet to have an actual sighting of the alleged creature.

Brooks' first visual encounter of a creature fitting the traditional description of Sasquatch occurred in 1987.

"I was deer hunting out around
(continued on page 18)



Craig Woolheater sits at the edge of Big Cypress Bayou while being interviewed for 'Planet X,' a show on Discovery Channel.

Benton Lake when I caught some movement about 50 yards away out of the corner of my eye. I looked over in that direction and it stood up. It was real tall, black and hairy. It looked both ways and then just walked off. I told my dad about it, and he couldn't explain it. I've also seen some huge footprints and have had them scream at me in the woods," he said.

Schmitt, who has spent weeks following the story of Bigfoot from the

Pacific Northwest to the deepest woods in South and East Texas, gave a studied response to her stance on the matter today.

"I started out as a total skeptic. How could there be a creature such as this in sufficient numbers to survive and never be actually seen? We heard return calls in the Big Thicket and saw some big, dark, hairy figure before he disappeared into the woods. We tried to chase him, but it seemed like he just disappeared.

"I can say that I have been impressed with the people investing their time in investigating Bigfoot and I admire their

dedication. The most convincing evidence to me has been the footprint castings. The dermal ridge of humans are horizontal, and the ridges on the creature are vertical. We have an arch in our feet which doesn't allow us to tread as lightly. They are able to flex their footpads more than humans, almost like a gorilla."

For the final word on Sasquatch, Kirk offered these conclusions:

"Because I work in policing, I look at the evidence. From what I have seen personally and professionally, I believe there is overwhelming evidence of a bipedal hominid in all of the Americas.

They share common characteristics in size, hairiness and coloration. Some creature is leaving footpad ridges, which precludes most hoaxing.

"I have found tracks on two occasions, each of immense size, about 18 inches long. I have seen some photographs of tracks recorded in the same area I saw tracks recorded 24 years earlier," he said. "I am a skeptic on a big scale. I am not easily swayed by people's stories, although I am a respectful listener. You are essentially the judge and jury, but you can't approach it using folklore, myths or legends."

In His Own Words

Encounter has haunted hunter for years

By ANTHONY DAVIS
Texarkana Gazette

One of the presentations at the Fourth Annual Bigfoot Conference held in Jefferson, Texas, this weekend was a report by an investigator of the Texas Bigfoot Research Center on a sighting reported in Miller County, Ark.

Although the alleged sighting took place in February 2000, the person reporting it had not come forward with his story until last winter. After being tormented by continuing nightmares and tired of keeping the information bottled up inside, the person sent the sighting information to the BFRCC, where it was assigned for investigation.

The individual's account is reprinted here with potentially identifying information excluded out of respect for privacy.

Many people have formed their own opinions about the existence or falsity of a creature such as Bigfoot, and this is not an effort to side with any camp on the issue.

Observed: "I'm probably going to regret telling this story. Everyone I know will laugh me

out of the county. I, myself, would laugh every time someone mentioned these creatures ...

"Several years ago on a cold night in January/February, I was coon hunting in Miller County, Ark. We were in an area old-timers called Thornton Wells. While we hunting in flooded timber, our dogs split-treed (went in different directions). I went to my dogs who had treed on the other side of the swamp. Everything seemed to be okay so I decided to go back toward the others. Suddenly I heard some walking in the timber. This whole area was flooded within 8-15 inches of brackish water. I could tell by the gait it was someone coming from the flooded woods. So I called to them, thinking it was my hunting companions.

"No one answered. Instead all I heard was a deep-throated gurgling growl and the awful putrid smell. The smell was like when you kill a wild hog and grab him by the hind leg and then you give out dragging him and put your hand to your nose and it just about knocks you over. I also heard a whining kind of whistling sound. My dogs were on my leash and they were whimpering ... Still, in all, I was not concerned about

any of this and got my dogs and started back across the swamp. After a few minutes I heard this sound of someone or something walking in the water again. So I stopped and turned around, and standing right behind me was a creature of immense size. Talk about the hair on the back of your neck standing up. I was scared. I don't ever remember being that scared. He made a hissing sound and reached down and took his hand and started scooping water and throwing it up at me and making a deep throaty noise.

"The only person I ever told was an old coon hunter from Doddridge. He's dead and gone now, but I do remember something he said to me that day. He said, 'If you're smart, you'll keep that to yourself. I know from experience that people will laugh at you and call you a liar.'"

Description: He must have been about 8 or 9 feet tall. He was covered head to toe with a real dark hair, and when my light hit it in the eyes, they glowed like a deer in a spotlight.

Physical Evidence: While making my way out that night, on a dry knoll I saw a huge footprint about 22 inches long with four toes.

IN MY OPINION

Coyotes, imaginations running wild



Bud Kennedy

■ OK, so maybe the Devil Beast wasn't the legendary goat-killing monster. But there's sure a bad case of mange going around.

The Texas Devil Beast is stalking South and East Texas again, just in time to give television a news story to replace Scott Peterson's trial and Nicolle Sheridan's towel.

When last we saw the mysterious Devil Beast, he had stirred up a near-panic in

suburban San Antonio, where a rancher killed an ugly little hairless blue animal with big eyes, a long nose and fangs.

Wildlife officials called it a sick coyote.

But a television station said it might be the famous Chupacabra — officially El Chupacabras, a legendary fanged, goat-killing monster, sort of the borderland's Bigfoot.

With that single word — "Chupacabra?" — the newscast sent crowds

mobbing a small-town grocery to see photos.

Now, two more blue creatures have turned up near Lufkin in East Texas. Yet another was seen this week sauntering through a San Antonio neighborhood.

Wildlife officials say they're simply coyotes with a particularly fierce strain of mange. But a cable television crew in San Antonio this week found a British expert to call the animals a new species.

With elections over and sweeps week on, San Antonio newscasts have gone crazy over El Chupacabras.

"I think the others are just trying to get their share of the attention," said Nancy DeLeon of DeLeon Grocery & Market in Elmhurst. Thousands of visitors have studied photos there and bought hundreds of T-shirts stamped "Chupacabra Tour 2004."

"I think the rest are all copycats," she said. She laughed. "They're copy-Chupas."

Whatever Bexar County rancher Devin McAnally shot and buried in May near Elmhurst is the only genuine Texas Devil Chupa/Beast, she said.



NEWS 4 WOAI

Debate continues over a fanged, blue, almost hairless animal killed by a rancher in Elmhurst. Wildlife officials call it a sick coyote.

The others must be coyotes.

Game wardens say they're all coyotes. As the coyote population goes up, mange cases spread and outbreaks grow more common, said John Young, a Texas Parks and Wildlife mammalogist. It's nature's way of thinning out the species.

"We've all looked at the photos, and there's no question," he said from an Austin office. "It bothers me that news reports keep pushing the sensational side."

The coyotes shed their hair

and turn blue from "very severe" mange, he said.

The Chupa/Beast resurfaced last month when one was killed in East Texas at Pollok, near Lufkin. The *Lufkin Daily News*, joining in the fun, named it the Pollok Mystery Beast. Former Lufkin zookeeper Stacy Womack shot photos of the dead animal.

She's taken the tale to a celestial level.

"I don't think it's an alien," she told WOAI News 4 in San Antonio, your station for 'round-the-clock Chupacabra

coverage.

"But I wonder about that spaceship [Columbia] that blew up over here. Something might have come out of it, and caused some type of genetic problem," she said.

A state health official said there's nothing alien about a sick coyote. It only looked weird because of poor nutrition and genetic abnormalities, he said. Dr. James Wright of the Texas Department of State Health Services in Tyler was quoted by the regional *Country World News*. "The real story here is how excited people got over a coyote with mange," he said.

After the wet summer, coyotes are on the prowl all over Texas. In Austin, Travis County commissioners have hired biologists to manage the population in northwest Austin, where coyotes have been peering into windows and stalking homeowners carrying groceries.

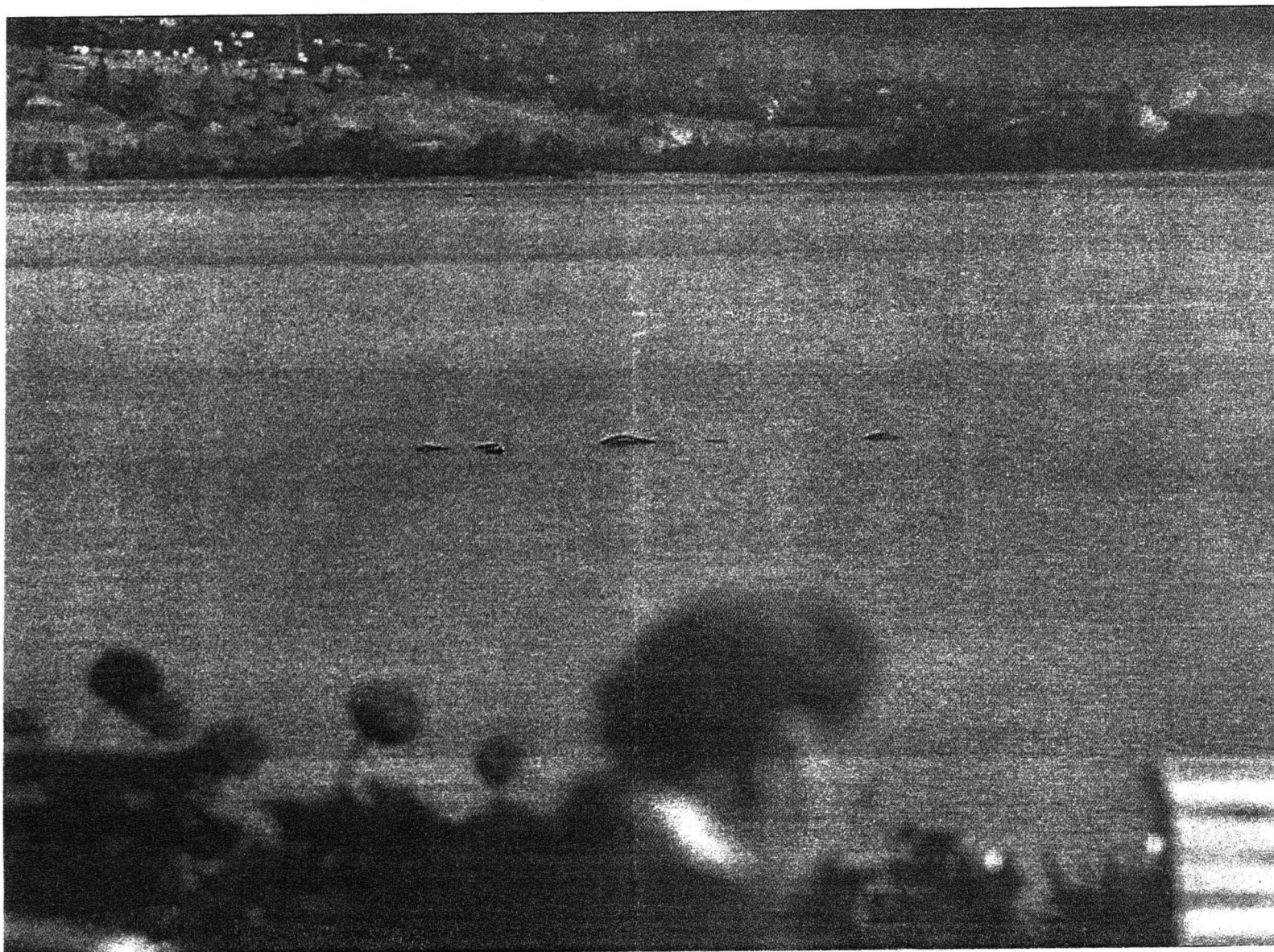
In Houston, coyotes have set up shop in lush Memorial Park. City officials in Galveston and Waco recently launched coyote-control campaigns.

No Chupacabra sightings yet in Fort Worth. But coyotes roam the remote part of Forest Park. Wildlife officials say the same advice applies everywhere: Don't set pet food or water outside. Don't leave cats outside. Lift bird feeders more than 6 feet off the ground. Don't use vegetable-based fertilizers or leave anything else outside.

Don't feed the Chupacabras.

Bud Kennedy's column appears Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

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This photograph, taken in July, 1985, from an undisclosed location overlooking Lake Okanagan, purports to show the very elusive Ogopogo on the surface.

EXOTIC CANADA

Here there be monsters

This summer's Exotic Canada series is devoted to all Canucks, great and small. And elusive. This issue: Ogopogo and his cousins.



CLEO PASKAL
at home

*I'm telling you because it's true,
believe if you can.
There's an Ogopogo swimming
in Ogopogo land.
— From one of the many
Ogopogo songs*

I know there are lake monsters because Malcolm Samuels told me so. I was about five — the age when any idea that comes near you immediately sinks into your brain and heads straight to your subconscious. Where it stays for a very, very long time.

When you are five, "adults" break down into five overlapping categories: family adult, generic adult, mean adult, cookie-giving adult and funny adult. Malcolm

was sort-of-family-but-mostly-funny adult. When he would see me, he would come over, crouch down and start singing.

Usually it was an allegro "I-am-the-very-model-of-a-modern-major-general/I've-information-vegetable-animal-and-mineral." Thanks to Malcolm, I knew the song phonetically long before I knew what the words meant. It is so permanently imbedded, it will likely be the last thing that runs through my mind as I make my final exit, stage left. Peter at the Pearly Gates (I am being optimistic) will ask: "And who are you?" and I will grin Malcolm's grin and reply: "I-am-the-very-model-of-a ..." You have to be careful with five-year-olds.

So I'm five and up in the country north of Montreal. I was wandering around near the river that had been dammed just enough to make a cold but effective swimming hole. There were no cookie-giving adults around. But I saw Malcolm and he saw me. We wandered toward each other and he greeted me with a bit of a cheerful mince and a few bars from *The Mikado*. Introductions over, he asked where I was heading.

I didn't really have a plan, but it didn't look like there were any

chocolate chips on the immediate horizon so I told Malcolm I was probably going to head up to the Back Lake.

Now, let me tell you about the Back Lake. It was deep in the woods, about a 15-minute walk (or eight-minute run if the bugs were bad) from the swimming hole. It was a good-sized lake, formed as the glaciers receded, and surrounded by huge boulders. There

colm pushed his advantage. "You know how there are cold and hot spots in the lake? The hot spots are monster pee."

That moment sank into my subconscious so fast and deep I still can't swim in the Back Lake without hyperventilating every time I pass through a warm patch. I had been well and truly folklored.

There are some fears that are so fundamentally human they tran-

'YOU KNOW HOW THERE ARE COLD AND HOT SPOTS IN THE LAKE? THE HOT SPOTS ARE MONSTER PEE'

was no shallow end — you had to dive in off the rocks. You could not see the bottom and, someone once told me, there *was* no bottom. It went straight down to the centre of the Earth. But the water was magic — when you came out, your skin felt as soft as if it had been sprinkled with baby powder.

It was definitely an Adult Lake. Sometimes, the adults didn't even wear any clothes when they swam, which was kinda gross. It was worth an expedition.

Malcolm nodded at my plan, then said, in the most casual manner, "You do know there's a monster in lake?"

No, actually, I did not know. Mal-

scend nationalities and permeate all four corners of the Earth. One of them is the fear of swimming over dark and unknown waters — a.k.a. the Here There Be Monsters syndrome. It's small wonder that we hightailed it onto land as soon as evolution permitted.

Canada, with its vast choice of mysterious, deep dark waters is lake monster central. There is Ogopogo in Lake Okanagan, B.C., Manipogo of Lake Manitoba, and Ponik from Quebec's Lake Pohenegamook. In fact, there are enough deep dark waters in Quebec alone to form the basis for the 320-page academic book *Lake Monster Traditions: A Cross-*

Cultural Analysis.

In it the authors, French folklorist Michel Meurger and Canadian philosopher Claude Gagnon, explain in their inimitable Gallic fashion that, from the beginning, Canada prompted liquid nightmares: "Indian America is the Eldorado of aquatic monsters. Nowhere else can you find the same variety, the same splendour of mythic shapes." Native Americans have stories about water people, water bison, water panther, water dogs, water grizzlies and just about any other nautical hybrid you can think of.

Meanwhile, the European settlers arrived with some of their own psychological baggage.

Meurger and Gagnon postulate that one of the things that creates lake monsters is the rationalization of supernatural folk beliefs. As a result, they argue, if you want to find them, "try to find countries during the Renaissance which had a progressive elite, ready to rationalize subjective beliefs and a very strong folk culture, replete with nature demons, including waterdragons. Accordingly, we have to expect a copious scholarly literature, naturalizing elemental demons and modifying supernatural encounters with them into profane sightings of undiscovered animals. Such countries exist: Switzerland and Scandinavia."

(continued on page 20)

And yes indeed, there is a long, odd history of pragmatic Nordics and Swiss trying to legislate decidedly outré events. In 1509, two Swiss went to court to fight over who got to keep a "drachenstein" — a stone dropped by a dragon during a fly-by.

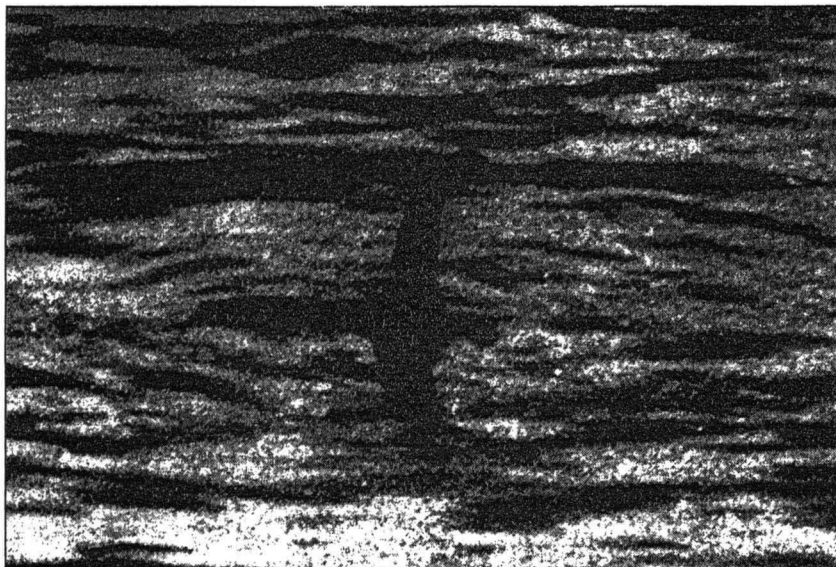
In the late 17th century, a Swedish farmhand was sentenced to death for "illicit intercourse with a wood or mountain spirit."

In 1723, a Danish royal commission set out to determine if mermaids existed. They concluded they did, after they saw a merman bobbing in the sea off the Faroe Islands.

Water-related dragons were such a part of Norse culture that a highly interesting study by British writer Claire Russell shows dragon sightings in England correlate almost exactly to sites of known Viking raids. Their dragon-headed boats became the real thing.

Norse culture seeped into all their territories, including England and France, but it was especially strong in Scotland — home of Nessie.

So, it was inevitable that, when Canada, land of lakes and myths, was settled by Scots, English,



Scotland's Loch Ness monster, "Nessie," shown in this 1934 photograph, is arguably the most famous lake monster of them all.

French and Scandinavians, the waters should suddenly writhe with monsters — though the European ones were markedly less creative than their aboriginal cousins.

Usually they were simply a serpent with a bit of a horsey face and maybe a mane for flair. Often they guarded fathomless depths

where someone had died and their body was never found — the old dragon-watching-over-the-burial mound motif, but a bit more liquid.

And, of course, the presence of a mysterious lake creature became the ultimate mothers' weapon: "Don't swim there or the mon-

ster's going to get you."

By 1883, the Swedes were ready to hunt down the last vestiges of their pre-Christian beliefs. An expedition set out to find a land dragon in Smaland. It lasted two years. And failed. There simply weren't enough forests left for the dragons to

hide in.

In the Faroe Islands, they say the trolls who used to live in the dark corners of houses disappeared when electricity was put in.

We are all rational people now. We know lake monsters are in reality oar fish, saltwater crocodiles, manatee, frilled sharks, sturgeon, basking sharks or giant squids. All of these are wonderful monsters in their own right, but each has a prosaic Latin name that strips it of its mystery and magic.

One by one, we are killing our monsters. Unplumbable depths are being plumbed. Scuba divers and sonar are exposing shy crevices and murky lakebeds. The glare of electric lights is withering our imagination.

Up in the country where I grew up, developers are greedily eyeing the Back Lake. They plan to standardize its erratic shores and gird it with houses.

They hope to make it more user-friendly, with beaches and a boat ramp. A monster doesn't suit their plans at all. But a monster is a rare and delicate thing — a whiff of the awed five-year-old in us all.

Malcolm Samuels gave me a monster. And I am grateful. Except when I pass through a patch of pee.

National Post
me@cleopaskal.com

WHERE TO SPOT CANUCK LAKE MONSTERS

Ogopogo

There are fabulous lake monsters all over Canada. The best known is Ogopogo from Lake Okanagan in British Columbia — arguably No. 2 in the world after Nessie. (But don't tell that to fans of "Champ," in Vermont's Lake Champlain. It has even starred on its own stamp.)

Ogopogo started life as a Salish beast called some variation of "Naitaka." It was decidedly evil and, if you canoed by it, you had better bring a small animal as a sacrifice. Today it is a big tourist draw, though the closest you are likely to get is the lakeside smiling Ogopogo sculpture.

For monster information, go to www.ogopogo.org.

For travel information, go to www.thompsonokanagan.com or call 1-800-567-2275.

Memphré

Lake Memphremagog in Quebec boasts Memphré (the original Abenaki name was said to have been the rather suggestive Anaconda).

Memphré's biggest champion is local diver Jacques Boisvert, founder of the International Dracontology Society of Lake Memphremagog. (Dracontology is a real word, at least according to the normally humourless l'Office de la langue française du Québec and the Scrabble-player's best friend, the American Heritage Dictionary.)

Mr. Boisvert has made thousands of dives in the lake, collecting everything from shoes to

dishes off the bottom. He claims to have seen a very big fish and a log that moved, but he is wary of saying any more than that. In 1996, Lake Memphremagog was twinned with Lake Ikeda of Japan. Ikeda has its own lake monster. Can love be far away? For more on Memphré, www.memphre.com. For more on the pretty area near the lake, go to www.tourismememphremagog.com or call 1-800-267-2744.

More monsters

There are a few standard sources for learning more about cryptozoology, including the books of Loren Coleman (www.lorencoleman.com). You can e-mail the British Columbia Scientific Cryptozoology Club (yes, they really do want to hear about your sightings) at bcsc@shaw.ca.

KING CO. JOURNAL, Kent, WA - Nov. 12, 2004

FAA rules out 'blue ice' as mysterious debris from sky

By Bruce Rommel
Journal Reporter

KENT — It wasn't "blue ice" — so what was it?

Officials are trying to identify the aircraft that was the source of the large chunks of ice that plummeted from the sky through the roof of a family's East Hill home last week, landing on the bed of a 8-year-old girl.

Officials at the Federal Aviation Administration suspect icing somehow formed on an aircraft and then broke free.

But it definitely wasn't so-called "blue ice," the stuff that comes from leaking airplane lavatories, experts have concluded.

Now they want to find out if there was a mechanical problem with that airplane that caused the ice buildup in flight, or if it possibly happened because of some design problem on all models of that air-



Gary Kissel/Journal file

Breez Halte, left, and her friends, Delaney Vesperman, center, and Kimberly Zielke, all 8-year-olds, took part of a larger piece of ice last week that fell through Breez's bedroom ceiling.

craft, said Mike Fergus, an FAA spokesman.

If any potential mechanical or design problems are detected, the manufacturer and all owners will be contacted and directed to investigate to determine if any corrective steps are needed, Fergus said.

"It's a safety issue," Fergus said. Troy and Rachel Halte would readily agree. They returned to their home on 120th Avenue Southeast near Millennium Elementary School the afternoon of Nov. 4 to find a

hole in the ceiling of the bedroom of their daughter, Breez.

They also found five chunks of ice on the bed, three of them "the size of grapefruit," Troy Halte said. Three more chunks were in the back yard.

The ice hit the home between 4 and 5:30 p.m. while family members were away.

The couple is grateful Breez wasn't in the bedroom at the time.

"It's just way too much of God's grace that it happened during that one-and-a-half-hour window when we were gone," Troy Halte said.

Fergus said FAA officials are reviewing "radar tapes" of images that air traffic controllers follow on their screens, which identify aircraft flight paths and altitudes. They'll look at aircraft passing over the Halte's neighborhood that afternoon and then look for those flying at higher altitudes where icing might have occurred.

FAA officials have concluded the white ice chunks aren't "blue ice." That's the stuff that occasionally falls from airplanes that have leaking lavatory systems, which are filled with fluid containing a bluish-green disinfectant. If the fluid leaks outside the aircraft skin, it freezes and creates a buildup of "blue ice," which eventually breaks free.

Boeing Co. officials say it's possible for ice to form on the leading edge of airplanes flying in the right weather conditions, although a company official said she had never heard of an incident like the ice hitting the Kent family's home.

Bruce Rommel can be reached at bruce.rommel@southcountyjournal.com or 253-872-6722

HERALD, Calgary, Alberta, Canada - Sept. 30, 200

Earth's vibration causes a hum

Sound annoys geologists

TOM SPEARS
CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

NEXT

TRENDS • DISCOVERIES
WHAT'S NEW

Earth actually hums. The planet vibrates at a very low frequency — too low for our ears to pick up, but enough that geologists get an annoying background noise on their sensitive instruments.

Two California scientists suggest a reason. They tracked down where and when the hum is loudest, and decided it's the result of storms whipping up the oceans and transferring that powerful energy to the Earth's crust.

And no, they can't turn down the volume.

The hum has been known for years. Like all sounds, it's caused by a vibration. But Earth's hum is a vibration with a frequency of less than once per minute, like a very slow pendulum. That makes the sound incredibly low.

Still, geophysicists who mea-

sure things like slow movements of the Earth's crust can pick up on sounds this low. So two of them went looking for the source of the hum, using seismic stations (which detect earthquakes) in California and Japan.

Junkee Rhie and Barbara Romanowicz of the University of California at Berkeley figured the hum had to involve a very large amount of energy. But strangely, the hum often reaches its loudest on days with no earthquakes. So it can't be produced by Earth's plates rubbing against each other.

The type of vibration meant the source had to be close to Earth's surface.

They discovered the main sources for humming are found in two times and places: The North Pacific in winter, and the South Atlantic during its winter (Canadian summertime).

CR: W. Benedict