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# UFO Journal

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*The 24 April 1964 UFO landing site near Socorro, New Mexico, as seen from the exact spot at which policeman Lonnie Zamora was standing after he exited his patrol car some 50 feet from the UFO in the arroyo. Photo by New Mexico SD Don Burleson.*

Photographic and physical evidence suggest unusually short radioactive half-life at Socorro, New Mexico site

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# Director's Message

By James Carrion

## "UFOs Over Earth" on Discovery Channel

Hopefully you caught MUFON's show "UFOs Over Earth" in October on the Discovery Channel. The MUFON team of Steve McGee, the case's original investigator; Norm Gagnon, STAR Team member; and Richard Lang, North Carolina Chief Investigator, are all to be congratulated both for their work on the case and the show.

Two additional episodes will be airing November 24 back to back at 9PM and 10PM EST. One of the episodes covers investigations in Mexico conducted by Ruben Uriarte and me with the expert help of MUFON members Tim McHugh and Mac D'antonio, and the second episode portrays the investigation of the 2008 Pennsylvania flap conducted by MUFON Pennsylvania under the leadership of State Director John Ventre. MUFON PA investigators Bob Gardner and Elisa Simon worked very

hard on the numerous cases and along with John and other Pennsylvania investigators have done an excellent job in representing MUFON in the episode.

Phyllis Budinger and Nic Reiter, as well as Dr. Frank Salisbury, also contributed their time and expertise to the Pennsylvania show and I thank them for their support and dedication.

Although the first show highlighted how MUFON conducts investigations, some MUFON members as well as members of the public may have drawn the wrong conclusions from the show's finale centering around the use of a



James Carrion

*Continued on page 22*

**MUFON'S MISSION IS THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF  
UFOs FOR THE BENEFIT OF HUMANITY THROUGH  
INVESTIGATION, RESEARCH, & EDUCATION.**

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# Some Thoughts on the Socorro Object

Calculations on radioactive half-life supports extraterrestrial hypothesis

By Donald R. Burluson, Ph.D.

At 5:50 p.m. on Friday, 24 April 1964, when a strange egg-shaped object landed in an arroyo just south of Socorro, New Mexico, policeman Lonnie Zamora was first on the scene. But others soon followed, and from the point of view of UFO research some interesting and useful things transpired.

This case has always impressed me as being one of the best-attested UFO events in history for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that the primary witnesses were solid, reliable, insightful people. Their accounts strongly tend to refute skeptical explanations of the landing event as, for example, a highly secret lunar landing module made on Planet Earth, misconstrued as something more bizarre. I propose to present here my own reasons, based on sound scientific considerations, for believing that the Socorro object was extraterrestrial.

## Officer Zamora's close encounter

At the time of this UFO landing event, Zamora was in his patrol car pursuing a speeder on the highway, but turned off onto a side road to investigate the cause of a bright blue flash and a roaring sound. Making his way westward on Raychester Road (a very narrow and rocky path difficult to drive on even today), he observed, in the distance, what he at first took to be possibly a car overturned in the gully near the path, with two diminutive figures in what looked like white coveralls standing nearby.

Officer Zamora drove closer, stopping only fifty feet away from the object, the two beings having apparently disappeared inside. After a few moments the craft lofted some twenty feet with a roaring sound and a blue flash underneath as before. Then the light and the noise ceased, and the object moved silently away to the southwest, finally angling sharply upward and disappearing in the distance. (The reader interested in a second-by-second account of this event may find the details in Ray Stanford's excellently researched book *Socorro Saucer in a Pentagon Pantry*.)

Zamora, though badly shaken by a fear that the object was going to explode before moving away, had put in some police radio calls, and State Police Sergeant Sam Chavez arrived only a minute or so after the object's departure, in time to see that the greasewood bushes at the landing site were still smoldering. A very few minutes later, State Police Senior Patrolman Ted Jordan arrived, and unlike Sergeant Chavez he had a camera in his patrol car, an Argus C-3 with a light meter and Kodak 35 mm color slide film. He proceeded to take photos of the landing gear imprints at the spot in the arroyo where the object had touched down only minutes before. Sam Chavez would take some Polaroid shots himself, but not till the following morning.



*Panel discussion participants at the 18 October 2008 state-wide New Mexico MUFON meeting included [left] Socorro City Councilman Gordy Hicks, who described seeing all four landing gear imprints at the Lonnie Zamora site when he was a child, and who reaffirmed that the city of Socorro is placing a historical marker to acknowledge the historical reality of the 1964 UFO landing. At right is artist and UFO investigator Patrick Richard, who has thoroughly mapped the Socorro landing site environs, and whose painting of Lonnie Zamora is being contributed to the Socorro Visitors Center. Photo by Mollie Burluson.*

## The Air Force confiscates the film

When the military authorities came to town to check all this out, they “borrowed” Ted Jordan’s undeveloped film, and when they still had not returned the photos or negatives to him four months later, Allen Hynek (then with Project Blue Book, and on the scene in Socorro a few days after the landing) told Lonnie Zamora that the reason the Air Force hadn’t returned Jordan’s pictures was that the film was fogged, evidently by radiation. Had the film been returned to Jordan, he would have known that the landing site had been irradiated. No doubt military authorities didn’t want people to know this, as it would have been awkward to account for. (This fogging phenomenon is commonly used in “film badge dosimetry,” where workers around irradiated materials use strips of film to measure exposure.)

When Sam Chavez took his own photos the morning (Saturday, 25 April) after the landing, his own pictures turned out fine; this time the film hadn’t been fogged.

My contention here is that this may well imply something exceedingly important about which little has been said heretofore.

*Continued on page 4*

# The Socorro Object

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## Calculation of half-life yields surprising results

If the blue flash that Zamora observed was due to some phenomenon involving radioactive emanations, producing a radiation field intense enough to fog Ted Jordan's film at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, 24 April, and if that radioactivity had sufficiently dissipated by early Saturday morning, 25 April to go "undetected" by Chavez's film, there are intriguing implications about the *half-life* of the radioactive materials involved.

Half-life is the standard measure of such materials' staying power. By ejecting particles of one kind or another, a radioactive substance decays into another substance, and the half-life is the amount of time required for half of the original substance to decay. Different isotopes have different half-lives. For example, the half-life of radium-226 is roughly 1,600 years. Thus after 1,600 years, half of the radium will remain; after 3,200 years one-fourth of the radium will remain; and so on. (Radium-226 by this process passes along a "decay chain" that ultimately, via a number of intermediate substances, produces lead.)

There is an exponential equation describing how such decay occurs, based on the idea that the rate of decay is proportional to the amount remaining undecayed at any particular time. If a time  $t$  has elapsed, and if we let  $p$  denote the *proportion* of original radioactive material remaining undecayed at time  $t$ , with  $Z$  denoting the original *amount* of such material at "time zero" so that at elapsed time  $t$  an amount  $pZ$  remains undecayed, then the remaining radioactive material at any given time is

$$pZ = Z \exp [-(\ln 2/H)t]$$

where "exp" is the natural (base  $e$ ) exponential function, "ln" is the natural logarithm function, and  $H$  is the material's half-life. We may divide out the  $Z$  (since the half-life is independent of what amount one starts with) and solve algebraically for the half-life as

$$H = -(t \ln 2)/\ln p.$$

Thus the half-life  $H$  can be computed if we know the time and the proportion.

Here I must do some estimation. I have not been able to discover exactly what time Sam Chavez (now deceased) took his "morning after" photos, but judging from the rather long shadows in the photo appearing in Ray Stanford's book, I would say that a fairly early hour like 8:00 a.m. is a reasonable supposition. (For present purposes, as we will see, a rough idea will do.) Since Ted Jordan took his "fogged" photos at around 6:00 p.m. the previous evening, this gives elapsed time  $t = 14$  hours as a feasible working value.

As for the proportion  $p$  (of original radiation remaining at the time when Chavez took his photos), this would depend on such unknown factors as the intensity of the original field

and the comparative distances of the two cameras from the irradiated materials. If, for a ballpark figure, we hypothesize that about 10% of the original radioactivity remained when Chavez took his (clear) photos, the half-life becomes

$$H = -(14 \ln 2) / \ln 0.1 = 4.2 \text{ hours.}$$

This result, for purposes of the argument I wish to make here, doesn't change much if one estimates  $t$  and  $p$  somewhat differently. For example, if we assume that Chavez didn't return to the arroyo till 10:00 a.m. and that the proportion of remaining radiation was 0.05, the half-life becomes 3.7 hours. By varying these parameters in other feasible ways, one obtains half-life estimates ranging from about two to about six hours.

The point here is that *all* these half-life estimates are *remarkably short*. If the Socorro object's "blue cone of flame" irradiated the site by the effects of a waste effluvium associated with some sort of nuclear propulsion process, it was a nuclear waste phenomenon of *much* shorter half-life than any terrestrial nuclear power generation scenario.

## Half-life at site not within terrestrial norms

Conventional nuclear power plants generate waste products with a mix of half-lives, some short and some long, but generally these include isotopes whose half-life characteristics are such that the materials remain dangerously irradiated for many centuries and have to be sealed and heavily shielded for disposal. Strontium 90, for example, has a half-life of about 29 years but is not generally considered "safe" until ten half-lives have elapsed, or about three centuries. It beta-decays to produce yttrium-90 with its own relatively short half-life of 64 hours. Even a half-life like 8 days for iodine-131 is considered very short as such things go.

But a half-life on the order of *four hours*, even for the slowest-decaying isotopes in the mix, is unlike anything seen in the way terrestrial systems generate nuclear power and its associated waste products. It seems unlikely, then, that the Socorro object used an earth-based propulsion system, if the observed effluvium effects were nuclear propulsion related. Humankind would be home free, with regard to energy, if we could generate atomic power by processes producing only nuclear waste that would decay to a harmless isotopic state in a day or two! Even if we hold the Socorro radiation to the "ten half-lives before safe" criterion, it would decay to safe levels in under two days. But apparently this had already occurred within about 14 hours, since there were no longer any ill effects on Chavez's film. (Isn't it conceivable that the craft had touched down momentarily to eject some short half-life nuclear waste?)

When one thinks of it, the Jordan-Chavez photo sessions function almost as a well-considered scientific experiment; all one could have wished is that intermediate radiation measurements had been made, perhaps at one-hour intervals all night. Since this was not the case, it remains possible, of course, that the initial Socorro radiation may have decayed to a safe

## MUFON investigations are subject of Discovery Channel Show

Watch your local Discovery Channel schedules for the *UFOs Over Earth* TV shows, starring MUFON and its investigators. Shows can often be seen in reruns.

Nov. 24 and 25

### UFOs Over Earth: Mass Sightings in Mexico

MUFON struggles to separate fact from fiction as they travel to three cities in Mexico. Analysis of UFO photos and videos brings them face-to-face with potential fraud, half-truths and cover-ups.

Nov. 24 and 25

### UFOs Over Earth: The Bucks County Flap

When the number of UFO sightings increases by 700%, MUFON investigators converge on the Philadelphia suburb of Bucks County. The team works their way through nearly 60 witnesses to focus on two, in hopes their stories can be verified by physical evidence.

## Letters to the Editor . . .

### Regarding Monitoring of Aliens

On the subject of physically monitoring abductees [July 2008 *MUFON Journal*], it seems to me with minimal cost we can do a better job with these experiments. Some thoughts on attempting to beat the “alien” system:

1. If the “aliens” supposedly know whatever their abductee knows—why not have the abductees simply sign a waiver allowing a third party to setup cameras in places unknown to the abductee?

2. Let’s have live streaming video from the abductee’s place of residence to a monitored website—webcams are cheap these days—and this prevents any deleting/erasing of the files/videotape, if it is recorded remotely, [deskshare.com](http://deskshare.com) has some good cheap products with built-in motion detection, etc.

3. How about some cameras across the street from the abductee’s house to monitor the situation from afar? Again streaming would be recommended—wirelessly if possible, so as to prevent someone getting a hold of the equipment and deleting/erasing the files/videotape.

I am sure we can come up with even more ideas, but hearing about these experiments that seem to be thwarted so easily, we should get a little more clever where we can and see what happens!

Andrew Becker  
Boston, MA

## The Socorro Object

*Continued from page 4*

level by (say) midnight, in which case the half-life would come out even shorter (about 1.8 hours). We do know that after 14 hours the radiational film-fogging effects had abated, so a rough half-life interval estimate of about two to six hours provides an upper bound.

### We took our own readings

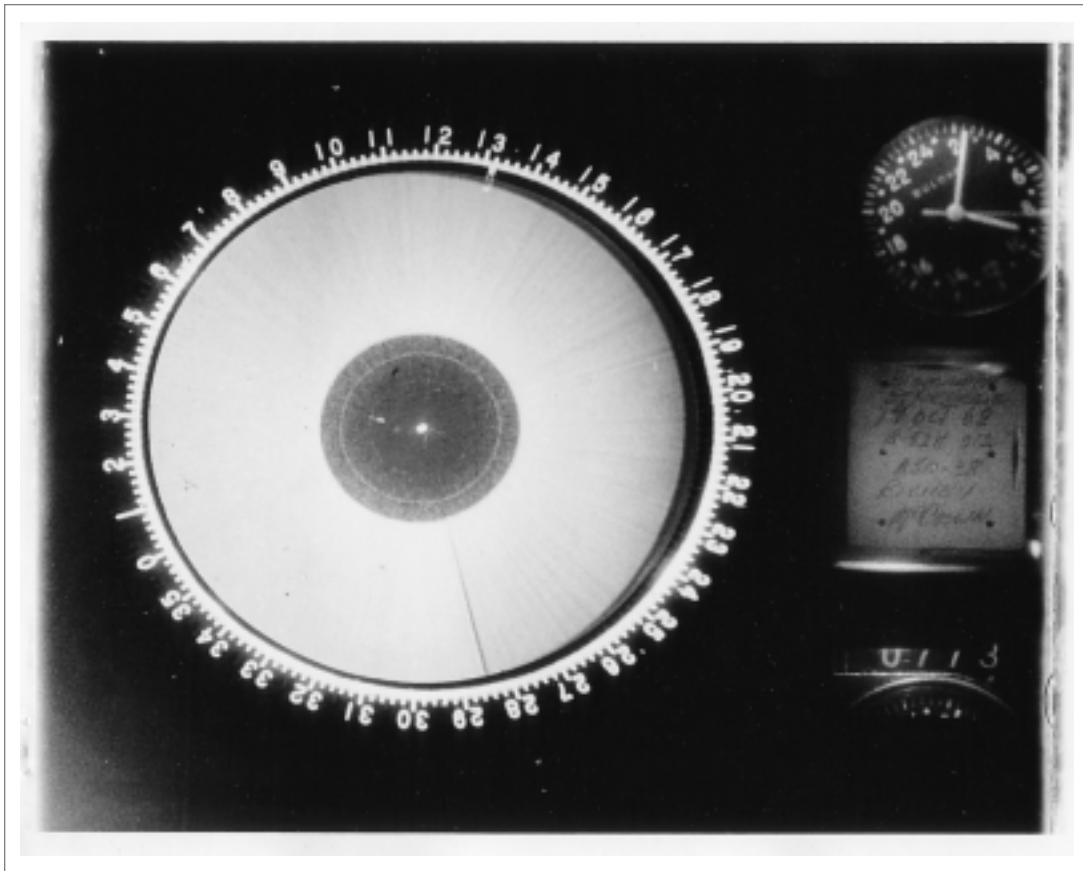
I should mention here that on 18 October 2008 on the way to a statewide MUFON meeting I had scheduled in Socorro, my wife Mollie and I stopped at the Zamora site with our artist and investigator friend Patrick Richard, and just for curiosity I took new radiation readings, which were somewhat above normal background levels; but local residents have given me to understand that the arroyo is dotted with trace pockets of uranium that would account for this, and indeed I have found similar readings elsewhere in the arroyo.

I will also mention that one participant in the panel discussion I moderated at the MUFON meeting that afternoon was Socorro city councilman Gordy Hicks, who as a child had actually seen the four landing gear imprints in the arroyo. His mother (now deceased), a professional photographer in 1964, had taken photos too (the day after, like Chavez) at the site, but these photos had vanished and may well have been appropriated by the military at some point.

In any case it is my contention that the short half-life considerations I have described will go a long way toward arguing that the Socorro craft was not of this world.

*Donald R. Burlison, PhD, is a mathematician and retired educator who lives in Roswell, New Mexico. He is the State Director of MUFON New Mexico. His email is [burlison@dfn.com](mailto:burlison@dfn.com).*

## Famous UFO Cases...



*Radar photo of unknown blip, taken by radar navigator Capt. Patrick McCaslin after B-52 copilot Capt. Bradford Runyan told him to switch on the radar scope camera. "The radar showed the object flying in formation with us," Runyan said.*

## UFO Incident at Minot, ND, October 24, 1968

*By William I. McNeff  
Assistant State Director, MUFON Minnesota*

### **National Archives yields 100 pages on Minot sighting**

In the 1960s, after some highly publicized sightings in Michigan, pressure began to build on the U.S. government to do something about UFOs. Congress held hearings on the subject, and the Air Force tasked the University of Colorado to carry out a comprehensive study of UFOs. Well-known physicist Edward U. Condon was placed in charge. Not surprisingly, controversy dogged the study early in the program.

When the study was concluded, the scientists who took part had been unable to identify about a third of the unknown objects studied. Nevertheless, Dr. Condon wrote in his conclusion that *further study of UFOs could not be expected to advance science*. The Air Force shut down its own program for investigating UFOs, known as Project Blue Book, in 1969 and sent microfilms of its files to the National Archives at Washington, DC, after expunging names of civilians to protect their privacy.

In the 1980s, I visited the National Archives twice and conducted research into the UFO subject. I was especially

interested in the Minot, North Dakota, case of which I had previous information, as will be explained later. There were about 100 pages of information on this case in the Blue Book files. Below is a small portion of it:

### **PROJECT BLUE BOOK FILES**

#### **MINOT, NORTH DAKOTA, OCTOBER 24, 1968**

#### **NATIONAL ARCHIVES ROLL #82 FILE 12546-12628 [10-26-68 to 2-10-69]**

MEMO FOR THE RECORD: At about 1730 hours [5:30 PM] the FTD Duty Officer called Lt. Marano [at Wright – Patterson AFB, Project Blue Book] and said they had a pretty important sighting from Minot AFB....[the] crew of a B-52 had sighted and photographed a UFO...I called Col. Quintanilla and told him of the sighting, then called Minot and talked to Lt. Col. Werlich, the UFO investigator....He gave details: "At about 0300 hours local time, a B-52 that was about 39 miles NW of Minot AFB ...making practice penetrations sighted an unidentified blip on their radar. Initially the target traveled 2-1/2 miles in 3 seconds or about 3000 mph. After passing from the right to the left of the plane it assumed a position off the

left wing. The blip stayed off the left wing for about 20 miles at which point it broke off. Scope photos were taken. When the target was close to the B-52 neither of the transmitters in the B-52 would operate properly, but when it broke off both returned to normal function. At 0308 hours the initial report was received from a Maintenance team between [missile sites] Nov 8 & 7. All observed the object. They stated it was reddish orange in color, a very large object with flashing green & white lights. After they entered Nov. 7 IF, the object came directly overhead with the sound of jet engines. Sgt. Bond stated the object looked to him as the sun and came near the Handred antenna at Nov. 1. It then moved to the right and he sent the SAT to check. The object then moved about 1 mi. away with the SAT following. They came within ½ mi. from where it appeared to be landing. When it reached [the] surface, the lights became dimmer and finally went out. S. Sgt. Smith at Oscar 1 saw the object separate in two parts and go in opposite directions and return and pass under each other. At this time Juliet team and Mike Flt. team observed the same things...Observation period 45 minutes." [End of Blue Book notes.]

#### **During event, missile alarms went off**

The above are notes I took during my research in the National Archives in Washington, DC. This case was originally called to my attention, I believe in 1969, by my brother-in-law, Richard Clark, who was a security officer at Minot AFB at the time of the incident. He knew that I was interested in UFOs and gave me a set of prints of the radar scope photos, which were not classified. He also told me that during this incident, two of the three alarms on one of the Minuteman missile silos went off: the external perimeter alarm (which was apparently triggered by interference with a gate in the chain link fence), and the inner alarm which is only supposed to go off if the concrete lid on top of the silo is disturbed.

Let's examine in more detail the events that started early on that October morning of 1968.

Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Mike O'Connor and another airman had been dispatched to make routine repairs to a missile silo in the area. O'Connor said, "We made our turn and approached the missile site. Out of the corner of my eye, I observed what I thought was a farmyard light, but it looked awfully bright. As we proceeded down the road, it sort of paralleled us to the missile site and seemed to lift off the ground and hover [some distance away]. At this point we got out of the truck and it just kind of hovered there."

UFO reports were received that morning by S. Sgt. Bill Smith, who was in charge of security for ten nuclear missiles. Said Smith, "These objects would rise, they would hover and dart quickly one way or another, speed up, slow down and hover...."

#### **Two airmen found unconscious**

Apparently part of this incident was suppressed, that is, not documented, in the Project Blue Book report. UFO historian Thomas Tulien in his research learned that after the UFO had landed near a missile silo, Air Force personnel later found two airmen unconscious near their vehicle. At first they thought the men were dead, but they revived and reported on their experience: "The UFO came down low, we thought it was going to hit the vehicle. We ran, it got hot, we fainted." The concrete lid for the silo was off to the side on the grass. This had triggered the alarm. Under normal operation of the missile silo, the concrete lid would only be pushed aside shortly before the missile was to be launched. This removal of the concrete lid was a highly unusual event. The Air Force investigated the disturbance of the silo and could not provide a good explanation.

Back on the B-52, Capt. Brad Runyon was the copilot: "The Air Traffic Controller asked us if we would mind going out to this one area and looking for something. I said, 'What do you want us to look for?' They said, 'You'll know it if you find it.'"

The navigator, Capt. Patrick McCaslin, suddenly identified an object on his radar screen. McCaslin stated, "I saw a [radar] return, faint one sweep, bright on the next. The object on radar was about 3 miles away." Capt. Runyon said, "I told the radar navigator to switch on the radar scope camera, which would take pictures of the radar screen. The radar showed the object flying in formation with us. This thing was climbing out with us and maintaining the same heading we were. That was unusual. But what really watered my eyes was when the object backed away and allowed us to turn inside of it!"

#### **Unknown object clearly seen on radar**

After the radar navigator discovered the unknown blip, which at times appeared larger than an Air Force tanker on his radar screen (see scope photo, page 5), he turned on the scope camera which automatically took a photo of the radar screen every three seconds. (A dozen of these photos were later made a part of the incident documentation in the Blue Book files.)

A few seconds later the UFO took up a position 1.4 miles off the right wing. (The object itself could not be seen from the B-52 at that time due to a thick cloud cover at its altitude.) Then three seconds later, the UFO had suddenly zipped over and taken a position 1.4 miles off the left wing. To do this, it had to move 2.8 miles in three seconds or less, which means it accelerated from the speed of the B-52 to at least 3000 mph, then again decelerated quickly to the B-52's speed. This was a maneuver that, to the best of my knowledge, no aircraft of earthly manufacture could carry out at that time or today. This implies that the UFO was an un-earthly craft.

*Continued on page 8*



# Minot Sighting

*continued from page 7*

After about 30 seconds, the unknown blip “broke off” (moved away) from the B-52. In the meantime, the control tower at Minot AFB had picked up the unknown on their radar. When the object suddenly disappeared from the radar screen, the B-52 was asked to go back and look for it. The B-52 made a left turn and headed back to the northwest. Capt. Runyon was the first to see the glowing craft hovering near the ground. “When things like that are happening it seems like time just stands still. My estimate was that it was at least 200 feet in diameter and it was hundreds of feet long.” The massive object had a metallic cylinder attached to one end, with a crescent moon-shaped section glowing yellow-green connected to the cylinder. (See illustration, page 6.) Runyon stated, “I was fairly sure I was looking at an alien spaceship...something that came here from another planet.”

Copilot Runyon and others of the crew reported on the object after they landed. As they came off the flight line, a security officer asked them if they had any UFOs to report. The crew responded emphatically in the positive. The officer interviewed each of the men separately and had them fill out reports, and he locked the undeveloped radar film from the B-52 in the security room.

The next morning, a team of investigators arrived, headed by a colonel (probably Col. Hector Quintanilla). Upon learning that the radar film was in the security room, he ordered that it be handed over to him. But his name was not on the access list posted on the security room door, and the officer in charge refused to hand it over. The colonel promptly “hit the ceiling,” but the officer was adamant. Only when the Base Commander arrived was the colonel given the film. He ordered the security officer to take it, get it developed and have prints made. The officer complied, and in a short time a set of prints were in the hands of the colonel. They confirmed what he had been told verbally, that the unknown craft had moved at a speed of at least 3000 mph. There had been a total of 18 Air Force personnel and some civilians who reported seeing a UFO or UFOs that October morning.

## “Plasma” explanation unlikely

In the Blue Book files, the Air Force issued the explanation that the UFO was possibly a “plasma”. But the apparently intelligent maneuvers of the object would rule out a plasma phenomenon, which would be similar to ball lightning. Furthermore, the “plasma” explanation violates the known laws of electricity, according to my electrical engineering education. A ball of plasma would either be charged positively or negatively, or else would have zero charge. The B-52 would probably have a static charge on it due to the friction of its passage through the atmosphere, and if the plasma had a charge, it would either be attracted or repelled to the B-52. If the plasma were neutrally charged, it would drift aimlessly with respect to the aircraft. Under no conditions would it

pace the aircraft. Finally, a plasma would be in the form of a round ball, not an oblong structured object as reported. So the plasma explanation simply does not hold water.

There is a possibility that the Air Force was, in a sense, partly right after all: plasma may be part of the propulsion or support systems of these unknown objects, according to scientists who have studied UFO reports. In any case, the October 24, 1968, event stands out as one of the most important UFO cases on record, with the testimony of highly reliable Air Force officers in charge of an aircraft capable of delivering nuclear weapons, and physical evidence in the form of radar scope photos and physical changes in a missile site and Air Force personnel.

A few years ago, I made historian Tulien aware of the radar scope prints that I had. After investigating, he advised me that they were better than the prints one could get from the National Archives. At the request of ABC-TV, I loaned the prints to Tulien, and he loaned them to ABC. ABC used them in their TV special, “UFOs: Seeing is Believing,” which aired February 24, 2005. ABC subsequently returned the prints to Tulien and he has loaned them to a couple of scientists for further study. Tulien has videotaped interviews with several of the officers who were involved in the incident.

Credits: Richard Clark, Thomas Tulien, and ABC-TV. Copyright © 2008 by William I. McNeff. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

*Bill McNeff, the Assistant State Director for MUFON Minnesota, is a 22-year member and leader in MUFON. He organized monthly meetings in Minnesota which have continued for 21 years. Bill is a retired electrical engineer.*

## HELP WANTED !

Need volunteers with the following skills willing to work on the CMS II Project. Database knowledge of MySQL. Solid Perl experience both for shell and CGI scripting, preferably on UNIX platform. Good skills in modern Web programming using javascript, HTML, and CSS. In addition, experience in using AJAX and JSON is desired.

Please contact Jan Harzan at [janharzan@hotmail.com](mailto:janharzan@hotmail.com) if you are both willing and able to work as part of the CMS II development team.

# More UFOs over Western Pennsylvania

## *Summer of many sightings in the state*

By John Ventre

State Director, MUFON Pennsylvania

“UFOs, Seeing is Believing”—that was the title of the ABC Primetime special earlier this year. Anyone who has conducted an investigation of a UFO sighting knows that when a witness has seen a UFO, they firmly believe that they have seen something that cannot be explained.

Judging by reports filed with MUFON, residents of the state of Pennsylvania have observed a large number of UFOs this past summer. MUFON investigators in Pennsylvania have conducted 136 investigations from June through Sept 2008. That represents 102 more cases than last year over the same time period. We have been getting clusters of UFO sightings in the same town a few days apart. Normally we get one report at a time. We’ve had 25 reports in the Pittsburgh area, 5 in Altoona, 4 in Shamokin, 5 in York, 8 in Harrisburg and over 50 in the Philly-Bucks County areas. We’ve received reports of bright shiny objects coming in from Lake Erie in Ohio and across Wheeling, West Virginia, into the Pittsburgh area. Over 90% of the reports have been across the southern part of the state.

In the September *MUFON Journal*, we reviewed the cases from the Five-County Philadelphia area in Eastern Pennsylvania. This month, we will review the Western Pennsylvania cases.

### **Case Report Summaries**

June 19, 2008. 3:30 AM. Export, PA

Alison’s 12-year-old daughter is on the phone with a friend when she sees from her bedroom window a red pulsing craft approaching. It had a row of white lights around the edge that “raced from one side to the other and back again.” It hovered silently above the tree tops and then moved off quickly to the East. The girl’s friend also saw the object from his bedroom window a few miles away. Alison has also twice observed a bright green neon object that lit up the sky in green light as it plunged towards the ground. Alison listened to the police scanner with no luck. She attached a similar-looking picture of the object (Photo 1).

CMS Report # 11235. Disposition of case: Unknown. (Field Investigator John Ventre)

June 23, 2008. 11 PM. Altoona, PA

Candi, 41, takes pictures of weird cloud formations formed from a craft in the sky. She sees and photographs vortexes and black helicopters. Field Investigator Bob Gardner visits Candi twice and sees a fast moving craft in the sky and numerous helicopters. The attached photo is featured in a Bucks County newspaper article and TV news program



*Photo 1. June 19 sighting at Export, PA. The witness took this photo of yardlights to compare to the photo of the unidentified object. The lights in this photo are multicolored in shades of red, blue, green and purple. Case # 11235*

encouraging numerous witnesses to feel comfortable enough to come forward and report their sighting. See Photo 2.

CMS Report # 11304. Case disposition: Unknown. (F.I. Bob Gardner)

July 18, 2008. 9:52 PM. Pittsburgh, PA

Jim and his wife live near the Pittsburgh International Airport. They both see a bright solid white-gold colored object heading east. It does not look like a jet. The object flew 2–3 times faster than a jet and was silent and did not have strobe lights. It was about twice the size and brightness of a star. Jim and his wife are both well versed in identifying planes, satellites and the IST. Jim, 47, is an engineer. His wife, also 47, is a Manager.

CMS Report # 11670. Case disposition: Unknown. (F.I. Fred Saluga)

July 18, 2008. 11 PM. Pittsburgh, PA

James and his wife observe a bright star-like object heading east in the sky. The object stops and then starts again. “It was moving at a good speed,” James said. James snapped three photos of the object with a 108mm lens. The photos show an object with structure. James, 63, is retired from a 26-year military career. He is a trained observer. James has a PhD in math. See Photo 4 on page 8.

CMS Report # 11628. Disposition of case: Unknown. (F.I. Fred Saluga)

*Continued on page 10*

# Western Pennsylvania Sightings

*continued from page 10*

July 18 and 23, 2008. 10 PM. Moundsville, WV

Christopher and his wife call me on two consecutive weekends to tell me they see a silent low flying bright object traveling east from Ohio over West Virginia and into Pennsylvania. The object flew much faster than a jet and the brightness grew dimmer as it passed overhead. Christopher and his neighbor Mary observed his second sighting. The object seemed to slow down and veer 35 degrees to the right. The object seemed to have trouble with its lights as they flickered on and off and then turned off. The object proceeded to head East over Wheeling, West Virginia, towards Pennsylvania. Christopher is a student of Ufologist William Lynne.

CMS Reports # 11637 and 11694. Disposition of cases: Unknown. (F.I. Judy McKnight)

July 25, 2008. 10 PM. York, PA

David, 48, an environmental geologist and amateur astronomer, notices four lights in a "V" formation. The lights alternate and turn on and off. When the object turned, it was saucer shaped with bumps or markings and lights on the sides. A smaller fast moving object emerged from the larger craft. David's wife and son also witness the object and David takes numerous pictures with his SONY Cyber Shot 10X zoom. They observe these objects until 1:00 AM. David tries to debunk the sighting but he can't. As an astronomer, David is familiar with the appearance of satellites and the International Space Station. His story appeared in the *Evening Sun* on Aug. 27, 2008. See Photo 3.

CMS Report # 11811. Disposition: Unknown. (F.I. Tracey Roy)



Photo 3. July 25 sighting. York, Pennsylvania. Case #11811

July 30, 2008. 10:20 PM. Pittsburgh, PA

Tammy takes three photos of a bright star-like object heading East. Photo included with report.

CMS Report # 11832. Case Disposition: Open. (F.I. Fred Saluga)

Sept 3-6, 2008. 10 PM. North Umlerland, PA

Jake reports that his friend Sam in Ohio has been seeing a UFO coming off Lake Erie headed East towards Pennsylvania. The object has red, blue and green lights. Jake also sees a bright star-like UFO. CMS Report # 12478 and 11826. We believe these two reports to be hoaxes. (F.I. Butch Wilkowski)

October, 2008. Uniontown, PA

This most recent report (in early October) was received from a 65-year-old, wheelchair-bound woman from Uniontown. Normally, I would write this report off as a hoax but she never changed her story and was completely convinced that she saw an extraterrestrial being. Barbara and her husband went to the Century 3 Mall around the end of June. Her husband sat on the bench while she went into the men's department at JC Penney. Upon entering the clothing area, she noticed a woman gathering her two children in a hurried manner. The son said, "I want to see," and the mother grabbed his arm and said, "we need to leave now!"

When Barbara rounded the corner, she saw a small male with a plaid shirt and blue pants standing near the clothes rack. He had gray skin, no hair, lumps all over his head, deep wrinkles and dark almond eyes. Barbara looked away and then back again. Now the man was facing her. He gave a reassuring smile and



Photo 2. June 23 sighting. Altoona, Pennsylvania. Case #11304

Barbara was not afraid. She turned away since it is not polite to stare. When she looked back, he was gone. She went to the cash register to ask if security could view its tapes but no one was there so she left. Her husband was in a hurry to get to the movies and told her to tell him about it later.

While in the theater, Barbara kept looking around for the stranger and started to become frightened. Barbara then completely forgot about the encounter and didn't tell her husband until three months later when she read the UFO article in the *Tribune Review*. She said she never forgets anything and believes that when this creature faced her, he must have repressed the memory. When it all came back to her, she told family members and called me. I questioned Barbara on details and she never hesitated or wavered. There was also a UFO sighting the same night near the Century 3 Mall. Barbara is absolutely convinced that she saw an ET and that "Seeing is Believing!" Case still open. (F.I. John Ventre)

### Local News Coverage

On Labor Day, Sept. 1, 2008, the *Pittsburgh Tribune Review* published an article regarding the surge of reports of UFO sightings in the area. The article went on to discuss the recent trends and statistics along with interviewing James and Alison whom I've mentioned in this article. The article quoted astronaut Edgar Mitchell and also discussed the 1965 Kecksburg coverup. The *Tribune Review* has always been a favorable supporter of ufology.

The following week, I was a guest on PCNC TV with Mike Pintac (who broke the 3 Mile Island story years ago). Again it was a very favorable interview. After the TV interview, Mike and I sat for 20 minutes and discussed the UFO phenomenon. I was especially impressed with Mike's knowledge. Mike said he had interviewed Edgar Mitchell years ago.

Overall, eleven of the fourteen news and TV stories on the Pennsylvania UFO Wave this summer were done in a favorable light. It is always encouraging when the mainstream media covers UFO stories in a fair and balanced manner.

I was also a guest on 105.9 DVE, the largest radio station in Pittsburgh. Val, one of the hosts, said that she



Photo 4. July 18 sighting. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The enlarged photo shows hundreds of stars in the background, not visible here. Case # 11628

recently had a sighting. Jim, the other host, tried to make light of UFOs and abductions but each time I turned the conversation around with the facts. Representatives from DVE and the EDGE radio shows will be at our UFO conference at the end of October.

While appearing on the "X" radio show in Kentucky, I was again surprised that the host never joked around and even claimed, on-air, to personally be a 100% believer.

*John Ventre is the Security Director for Pennsylvania and West Virginia for a large company. He sits on the Board of Directors for Juvenile Diabetes in Pittsburgh and the Economic Growth Connection of Westmoreland County. He is his company's liaison to Congressman Tim Murphy. A MUFON member since 1997, John has been the Pennsylvania and West Virginia State Director since April 2007. He is the author of the sc-fi book 12/21/2012 A Prophecy. John resides in Greensburg, Pennsylvania.*

## Leave a Legacy to MUFON

Allow your work to live on. . .

Please remember MUFON in your will. In addition to monetary bequests, you can also donate your UFO case files, books, periodicals, etc. Don't let your valuable research end up at a flea market or estate sale.

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# Regional F.I. Test Preparation Seminar

By David MacDonald

The Kentucky chapter of MUFON is offering their First Regional Test Prep Seminar designed to offer Field Investigator Candidates a platform to prepare for their FI exam.

The one and a half day seminar will be held at Flamingo Air Academy located at Cincinnati Lunken Airport on December 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> 2008.

According to David MacDonald, Assistant State Director, "This is not designed to be a training program, rather it is designed to help FI candidates understand the material in the new *FI Manual* and prepare them for the exam."

Of course, each candidate must be a MUFON member in good standing and have purchased the new *MUFON Field Investigators Manual*. There is also a plan for non-members,

which would include MUFON membership, the *Manual*, the seminar and test administration and submission.

Saturday will be spent reviewing and explaining the material in the manual. This should last from 10:00am until about 5:00pm.

Sunday we will answer questions and offer final clarification. The exam will then be administered while the material is fresh in their minds. Two hours will be allowed for taking the exam. The tests will be collected, graded and, assuming a passing grade is achieved, submitted to MUFON.

For further information, visit the Kentucky MUFON website [www.kymufon.anomalyresponse.org](http://www.kymufon.anomalyresponse.org) or email David MacDonald at [thecaptain@flamingoair.net](mailto:thecaptain@flamingoair.net) or Earle Benezet at [ebenezet@insightbb.com](mailto:ebenezet@insightbb.com)

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## Field Investigators: complete cases in timely manner

As you all know, or should know, the MUFON CMS program is the backbone of the investigative process and it is really important that we, as Certified Field Investigators, understand its impact on MUFON as well as our State Chapters. According to the newest version of the *MUFON Field Investigator's Manual*, CMS sighting reports are assigned to one of three categories, as follows.

### Category 1 (lowest priority) reports:

Contact the witness within **3 days** via telephone (preferred) or via email to ascertain the credibility of the report. An in-person interview is not necessary for a Category 1 report. Follow all remaining steps in the investigative process and **write and conclude your report**.

### Category 2 (medium priority) reports:

Contact the witness within **48 hours** via telephone (preferred) or via email to ascertain the credibility of the report. Since category 2 reports may involve physical evidence, an on-site visit is warranted. Arrange a time and place to meet with and interview the witness in person. Follow all remaining steps in the investigative process and **write and conclude your report**.

### Category 3 (highest priority) reports:

Contact the witness within 24 hours via telephone (preferred) or via email to ascertain the credibility of the report. Arrange a time and place to meet with and interview the witness in person. Follow all remaining steps in the investigative process and **write and conclude your report**.

Furthermore, the manual states: The final step in the investigative process is to **update the CMS** with all collected case data and **give the case a final disposition**. The case

can be reopened at a later time if relevant activity reoccurs or more information comes to light.

Please note the importance placed on contacting the witness in a timely manner, writing and **completing the report** and **updating the CMS**. That is because the entire credibility of the MUFON investigative process lies within the CMS.

If you need help navigating the CMS, just ask. Perhaps some FIs are unaware or just don't get around to it. I hear excuses like, "Oh, I like to keep working on it," or "It's important to stay in touch [with the witness]." Well, that is not the purpose of the CMS.

If you log into the CMS and search the database for any given state you will see that there are scores of cases assigned and never completed. Many cases go back months if not years. Some Field Investigators have never completed a single case.

These cases need to be completed. They will still be accessible. They can be reopened, edited, modified and updated as much as necessary. But please, wrap them up in a timely manner. The completion of these cases is extremely important to the organization, the Field Investigators and all serious UFO researchers.

So, what do you say, FIs? Get on your computers and check your cases. If you have any cases not completed, let's get them done. If you are not sure how to operate or navigate the CMS, just ask for some help. We are all in this together, and I have not yet met anyone in MUFON who is not sincere and has the best of intentions.

David MacDonald, MUFON Kentucky Assistant State Director & Certified Field Investigator

## The Other Roswell: UFO Crash on the Texas-Mexico Border

By Noe Torres & Ruben Uriarte, 2008, RoswellBooks.com.  
ISBN 978-0-9817597-0-8. In English. Paperback: 200 pages.  
\$15.95 on Amazon.com

Review by Joseph R. Calamia

*The Other Roswell; UFO Crash on the Texas-Mexico Border* by authors Noe Torres and Ruben Uriarte was an exciting story of a 1955 UFO crash that could have easily been published as a sequel to their prior publication, *Mexico's Roswell*.

Although similar in story line to the first book, this book tells of a UFO that was initially picked up by Air Force base radar systems while flying from the West Coast into the Central United States. The UFO was, however, also followed with radar by several bombers as they were being escorted over the Southwest by fighter escort. In the process, one of the fighter escorts (a F-86 Saber jet), flown by Colonel Robert Willingham, requests permission to pursue the object's flight path in an attempt to see what it is, and to report any findings back to the lead bomber and Air Force Headquarters.

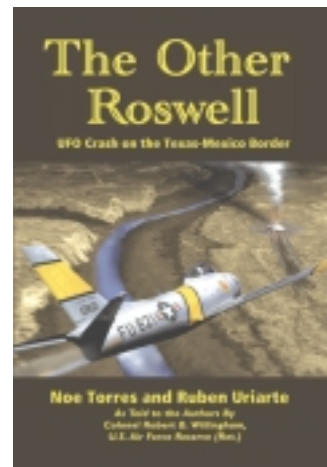
Colonel Robert Willingham peels out of the flying formation and begins a "hot pursuit" approach on radar contact. Colonel Willingham finally makes visual contact of the "bogie" just as it suddenly descends into a crash landing across the Texas border line and into the Republic of Mexico! Colonel Willingham makes several fly-overs and then returns to an airbase in Texas due to lack of fuel. He subsequently lands the F-86, changes clothes, and then goes out to a private airfield and rents a small plane in order to return to the crash-site! Upon arriving at the location, Colonel Willingham lands the plane in Mexico and surveys the wreckage, even though some Mexican military troops have already arrived at the downed disc. If, any of this scenario intrigues your imagination, then perhaps you should consider ordering this fascinating book for more details.

I was somewhat disappointed by some of the redundancy of the information that seemed to be woven in and out of the book. The authors also used an abundance of ancillary information or vignettes that seemed to have little to do with the actual story line. Perhaps some of this was done to help balance out the lack of corroborating witness testimony. Nonetheless, Noe Torres and Ruben Uriarte are (in my opinion) excellent investigators and have done a superb job in bringing out this very unusual story. I salute their hard work and passion for ferreting out the only evidence at hand.

Chapter 20 reflects the authors' deep respect and infatuation for Colonel Robert B. Willingham, a great American patriot, who obviously voiced his opinions regardless of the heavy penalties it cost him and his career.

Despite the fact that this tremendous case has had little or no prior publication it does coincide quite well with similar incidents that were portrayed in Frank Feschino's book entitled *Shoot Them Down: The Flying Saucer Wars of 1952*. Apparently, the Air Force and U.S. Government were willing to take great risks in attempting to gain as much information on UFOs as they possibly could regardless of who or what got in the way.

This book is definitely worth the price and a necessary companion to the authors' first publication, *Mexico's Roswell*.



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## Volunteer of the Month . . .

# Lorna Hunter, FI Assistant Director, MUFON Minnesota

About three years ago, **Lorna Hunter**, whose day job is with the US Postal Service, became active in MUFON in Minnesota. Really active, that is.

One of the first things she did was look into establishing our state organization as a non-profit corporation. We had looked at this possibility at least a couple of times before and had never gotten the deed accomplished. But Lorna determined that forming a non-profit corporation under the State of Minnesota was a good way to go, and she filled out the paperwork, got the required number of us to agree to be members of the Board of Directors and to sign the paperwork, and in good time we held an organizing meeting, agreed on a set of Bylaws, and we became "MUFON Minnesota," a non-profit under the state. This brings more order to our operation and gives us protection in case of certain legal issues.

Lorna took our training class, passed the test and became a MUFON Field Investigator. Then she volunteered to help with tracking UFO reports on the CMS system, MUFON's computerized recording system. She shortly discovered that she was limited in what she could do because she was neither a State Director nor an Assistant State Director. In the meantime, I (McNeff) had suggested to our State Director, Richard Moss, that he appoint her as an Assistant State Director, which he did.

Then, with full authority to manage CMS, at Dick Moss' request she began to keep careful tabs on new reports in CMS and facilitate their assignment to the Field Investigators.

She has continued this work and has been the prime moving force behind bringing MUFON Minnesota into the top ten of State organizations for completions of investigations and reports.

In order to bring more expertise into her own investigations, Lorna took a course on police investigative forensics. This course, which consisted of perhaps a dozen sessions, teaches how to stake out a crime scene, take photographs and gather evidence. During the course, Lorna's puckish sense of humor came to the fore. Part of the class training was in how to handle evidence pertaining to firearms. She had made it known that she was a postal worker, and she asked when were the class members going to get to "play with the guns?" Her fellow classmates, all law officers, looked askance to this question, but she defused their concerns by promising not to "go postal!" While she was learning about forensics, she educated her classmates about UFOs and left them with increased understanding of and respect for the subject.

This training really paid off when Lorna and Dick Moss were called to investigate several high strangeness cases. These included a report of a close encounter of the fourth kind in North Dakota, in which aliens were reportedly seen and two farm animals were found to be missing (refer to past

## Calendar . . .

**November 7–9.** 6th Annual Crash Retrieval Conference: The Truth. Las Vegas, NV. [www.ufoconference.com](http://www.ufoconference.com). (720) 887-8171.

**November 21–24.** Secrets 2008 Conference. Dr. Chet Snow, Linda Moulton Howe, Nancy Talbott, Michael Horn, and more. Phoenix, AZ. [www.chetsnow.com/signs.html](http://www.chetsnow.com/signs.html)

**February 22–28.** 2009 International UFO Congress. 7 days and 8 nights of events. Laughlin, NV. [www.ufocongress.com](http://www.ufocongress.com)

**April 17-19, 2009.** X-Conference 2009. Gaithersburg, MD. [www.paradigmresearchgroup.org/X-Conference2009/X-Conference2009.htm](http://www.paradigmresearchgroup.org/X-Conference2009/X-Conference2009.htm)

**August 6–9, 2009.** MUFON 2009 International Symposium. Denver, CO. MUFON's 40th Anniversary. Watch this space for more information as it becomes available.

## Donations Needed for Silent Auction for MUFON's 2009 Symposium!

August 6–9 in Denver, Colorado

Do you have any UFO memorabilia that you could donate for the Silent Auction fundraiser at the 2009 Symposium?

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Fort Collins, CO 80525

Thank you!

issues of the *Journal*). Another was a possible animal dissection case, which must be kept totally confidential at this time. For each of these cases, Ms. Hunter staked out a perimeter around the scene, took extensive photographs, and looked for and recorded physical evidence in accordance with police forensic protocol.

In addition to this, Hunter has been active in devising and implementing various means of boosting MUFON membership, including raffles as part of some of the state meetings, with the bigger prizes for MUFON members. (MUFON Minnesota holds monthly meetings at the New Brighton Family Service Center. At present, our meetings are open to the public as well as MUFON members. The confidential details of Field Investigations are discussed in separate closed meetings.). She has been active in assisting State Director Moss in holding meetings in other parts of the state, and monthly meetings are now also held in St. Cloud and Fergus Falls. Hunter has also helped with MUFON outreach by making herself available in informational booths at county fairs.

When Director of Investigations Chuck Reeve asked for someone to volunteer to be Director of Field Investigator Training, Lorna Hunter stepped forward and was duly appointed to that position. Her own excellent training and skills as a Field Investigator make her an ideal person for that position.



*Dick Moss, Lorna Hunter, and Bill McNeff, taken at Bill's 75th birthday party.*

Finally, after several cases in South Dakota needed investigation and there was no state organization there to handle them, Lorna Hunter volunteered to act as State Director for that state.

In short, we know of no one else in the history of MUFON in Minnesota who has been so active and given such a boost to our effectiveness as an organization as Lorna Hunter!

Richard Moss, SD and William McNeff, ASD  
MUFON Minnesota

JUM

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Email a sample of your writing along with a brief description of your pertinent credentials and experience to Editor@mufon.com. Use "Book Reviewer" in Subject line.

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MUFON is blessed with great volunteers—State Directors, Field Investigators and more. Do you know someone in the MUFON organization who deserves to be recognized as the Volunteer of the Month?

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# Perceptions

By Stanton T. Friedman

## SETI Surprise

As regular readers of this column and of my book *Flying Saucers and Science* (Ref. 1) are aware, I am definitely not a fan of the SETI movement. I honestly believe a more accurate meaning for SETI than Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence is Silly Effort to Investigate. I spell out the reasons in detail in the book chapter "The Cult of SETI."

But I must admit I was shocked to read in a blog "Estimate of the Situation" by Wisconsin attorney Adam Korbitz, that the subject of UFOs was presented in a sensible way as part of some lectures at the First International Academy of Astronautics Symposium on "Searching For Life Signatures" at the UNESCO Building in Paris during the week of September 22-26, 2008. A total of 60 papers were presented. I will not have copies of the Power Point presentations for a while.

### So where is everybody?

There were several indications of ufological respectability.

Adam dealt especially about the paper by Alain Labeque of France. Alain talked about the Fermi Paradox, which I discuss in the book and has been discussed in many other books. Enrico Fermi was one of the top nuclear physicists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was, amazingly, equally at home with theoretical and experimental work. He won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1938, directed the first operation of a chain reacting nuclear pile in 1942 at the University of Chicago, and did much more to help in the development of the first nuclear weapons among other things. Frankly, he was one of the reasons I had switched to the University in 1953, though sadly he died in 1954.

The well known paradox story is that after a 1950 luncheon discussion at

Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in New Mexico about the probability that a truly advanced society could colonize the entire Milky Way Galaxy in a few million years, Fermi suddenly asked "So where is everybody?" He did not say nobody was visiting, and was well known for using questions as a teaching tool. There have been loads of answers to the question. Normally all the usual SETI suspects agree there are no aliens here, though none review the overwhelming evidence that indeed earth is being visited by aliens. One group of answers comes under the general heading of the Zoo hypothesis. In other words: They are out there but are not openly visiting because they don't want to interfere, or they want to observe us untainted by their presence, or they think we are too savage, or...

For example, Stephen Webb, author of the book, *Where Is Everybody: 50 Solutions to the Fermi Paradox* (Ref. 2), does barely mention UFOs, but only notes the negative statements of debunker Robert Schaeffer. There is no mention of the large scale scientific studies, the multiple witness radar visual cases. He talks about lights in the sky as if that was all there was. There is no mention of Ted Phillips' 3000-plus physical trace cases. He dismisses abductions out of hand (for example ignoring the Betty and Barney Hill case) and is apparently equally ignorant of the Roswell Incident. He lists a total of 218 references. But none are to the scientific publications such as *Blue Book Special Report 14* (Ref. 3) or Dr. J. Allen Hynek's *The UFO Experience* (Ref. 4), or the Congressional Hearings of 1968 (Ref. 5).

My general impression is that those who are saying nobody is coming here naively assume aliens would be making themselves known, might have found us accidentally, would hold a press

conference, go out for a beer, etc. These guys are serious! I take an entirely different view, namely that advanced civilizations in the neighborhood would list Earth as a planet currently inhabited by a primitive society whose major activity is tribal warfare. I assume, of course, that every advanced civilization



Stanton Friedman

would be concerned about its own security and survival and would certainly have to keep track of other blossoming younger societies that within a hundred years or so would be capable of interstellar travel. Of special concern would be those (like Earthlings) which have clearly not developed their sociological skills to match their technological ones. So we would be checked out infrequently until new advanced technologies came into view. Visits in 1900 would show little evidence of advanced technology—no flying, almost no radio, no radar, no space travel, etc.

### From tribal warfare to technological

By 1917 there was some flight and major warfare in the trenches of Europe. By 1944 there were major air battles in the Pacific and in Europe. Millions were being killed; radar was being used. Massive bombing raids involving literally hundreds of bombers per raid were raining destruction on civilian and military targets in Germany and Japan. There were loads of airplanes by 1940. By the end of August, 1945, three incredibly destructive atom bombs had been exploded including two

on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, destroying huge numbers of civilians and military people. By the end of 1946, two more A bombs had been exploded in the Pacific.

The point of tapping the energy of the nucleus is that it should lead to interstellar travel. And the noisy negativists think aliens would just drop by for chats? The Cold War was in earnest; it was obvious that there were many different languages being spoken, many different and rapidly improving military flight systems being developed, and, very clearly, no one individual who speaks for the planet. High speed jets were being developed, and earthling governments were surely not sharing information, determined by examination of crashed alien vehicles. By 1949 the Russians had tested their first nuclear weapon and a few more within the next 3 years.

In October 1952, the USA had detonated the first nuclear fusion weapon (H-Bomb) finally tapping the same source of energy as produces the energy of the stars (and which could get us out in the local neighborhood). MIKE was quite a show releasing the energy of 10 million tons of TNT with a fireball 3 miles wide. Many more nuclear weapons were detonated not only by the Soviet Union and the USA, but by France and England and China. One Soviet fusion device had the energy release of 50 million tons of TNT. Surely these bomb blasts told a lot about what kind of beings Earthlings are.

By 1960 the first space systems had been launched. By 1970 Man had gone to the moon several times. Surely it would not be unreasonable to expect that soon interstellar missions would be planned, but by a primitive society whose major activity, as noted, is tribal warfare. Major wars had also taken place such as the "police action" in Korea and the Vietnamese war. The US alone lost 54,000 killed in action in Korea and 58,000 in Vietnam. Casualties from Korea and Vietnam were much greater.

The naysayers about alien visits essentially ignore the fact that governments would all have a great interest in the technology of the visitors for its possible use in military systems. Also they ignore the fact that governments have been very successful at keeping secrets including the existence of multibillion dollar research and development programs. Obviously the military in various countries control the best sky-visitor monitoring systems from the ground and from space.

### **Listening for signals in return**

Dr. Labeque in his paper, "Active SETI and the Zoo Hypothesis," talks of the Zoo Hypothesis, but strongly suggests that the UFO evidence should also be reviewed. He also noted the catalog of more than 1400 pilot sightings compiled by Dominique Weinstein (Ref. 6). Active SETI involves our sending signals out and seeing if there is a response. In particular he focuses on one of the most important cases (ignored by debunkers, of course), namely the RB-47 case of July 1957. This event lasted for over one hour, and involved two different ground-based radar systems plus the sophisticated electronic detection systems on board the reconnaissance airplane with its highly trained crew of six. The RB-47 flew from Mississippi, through Louisiana and Texas, and on in to Oklahoma. Of great significance is the fact that the crew noted that not only had they watched the nearby UFO with its sometimes strange maneuvers, but they had monitored a 3 Megahertz electromagnetic signal from it. Was it the equivalent of alien radar? Were they communicating with another alien space craft or a mother ship?

Labeque recommended that we send out a 3MH signal in all directions for a finite period of time and then stop transmitting and see if we get an answer on the same frequency. Others talked about Active SETI at the conference especially Alexander Zaitsev of the Soviet Union, and some believe there should be a prohibition of such signals

because it would inform aliens that we are here. (This assumes, of course, that they don't already know we are.) Most of these same people would argue that nobody is coming here because one can't get here from there. Seth Shostak of the SETI Institute, to his credit, did not wish there to be any such prohibition.

Another French scientist, Jean-Pierre Rospars, in his paper "SETI in the Light of Terrestrial Biological Evolution" stated that "ET presence in our neighborhood should not be neglected. It may be partly accessible to our limited means of investigation." That, too, is a big step forward.

There was also another paper listed on the program: "When SETI meets an Alien Form of Intelligence: understanding the troubled relationships between SETI and ufology" by Pierre Lagrange. As of yet I do not have any information about the contents of this provocatively sounding presentation. Finally, and quite extraordinarily, there was the paper by Bjorn Gitle Hauge of Norway: "Investigation and Analysis of Transient Luminous Phenomena in the low atmosphere of Hessdalen Valley, Norway." A great many scientific measurements have been made by a Hesdalen study group. These were presented (not really in a UFO context) with a request for evaluation by the attending scientists.

I am hoping to see Korbitz at a conference in Burlington, Wisconsin, to get as much more information as possible. He did note that the US SETI contingent didn't react to these UFO provocations. I am certain from my contacts with them and their negative ignorant approaches to ufology on such programs as the Peter Jennings mockumentaries (Volumes 1 and 2) that they were not happy about UFOs being brought up at a SETI conference.

Obviously if aliens are visiting, who needs to listen for signals??

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[www.stantonfriedman.com](http://www.stantonfriedman.com)

*References Continued on page 20*



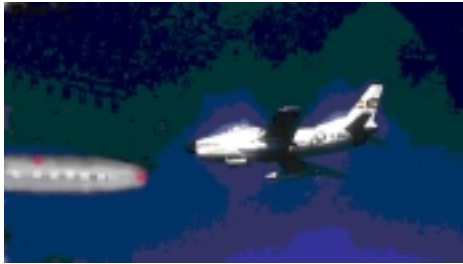
# Filer's Files

By George Filer  
Director, MUFON Eastern Region



## U.S. Pilot Ordered to Shoot Down UFO Over England

A former US fighter pilot was ordered to shoot down a massive UFO over Norwich, England, 50 years ago. RAF controllers told U.S. pilot Milton Torres to “lock on” and launch all 24 of his rockets over the city. But as he came



within seconds of firing at the alien intruder—“the size of an aircraft carrier” on his radar—it vanished at 10,000 mph.

The amazing close encounter is revealed in secret Ministry of Defense X-Files which were declassified Monday (October 20): “It was some kind of alien snooping over England. I guess we’ll never know what it was.” The incident happened in 1957 when Milton was a 26-year-old U.S. Air Force lieutenant based at RAF Manston in Kent, England.

At 11 PM one night he was ordered to scramble in his F-86D Sabre fighter to attack a “bogey” hovering above Norfolk. Speaking about it publicly for the first time, he said: “I was told I would be firing a complete salvo, all 24 rockets. I was pumped up—this was the sort of thing that happened before a war.” He got the UFO on his radar and, ordered to fly at full throttle in cloudy weather, closed for the attack at the Sabre’s top speed of almost 700 mph—then it disappeared off his screen in a flash. This was a flying object with very unusual flight patterns,” the pilot said. “In the initial briefing it was suggested to us that the bogey actually was motionless for long intervals.” The

pilot said he was given the order to fire a volley of 24 rockets at the mysterious object. “To be quite candid I almost (expletive) my pants!” the pilot said, saying he asked for confirmation—which he received.

Retired U.S. Lieutenant Milton Torres told Britain’s Sky News on Monday that he was the pilot and has spent 50 frustrating years attempting to uncover the truth of his mid-air encounter. Milton, now 77, said: “I was smoking, as fast as I could go. This thing had a different propulsion system. It was not an airplane.” The flyer said he was visited afterwards by a sinister security official and warned not to tell anyone—so he kept silent until now. The close encounter is in 19 files made available online yesterday by the National Archives. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Editor’s Note [Filer]: I was asked by London Control to intercept a UFO over England, but we were unarmed. My story is very similar to the F-86 intercept but we had no missiles, but it was a huge UFO that showed up on radar as large as the Firth of Forth Bridge in Scotland.

## California – Sightings

CLEMENTE – On October 12, 2008? My brother first saw the round “bright” glowing shape at 1:10 PM. My mother and I looked in the direction and followed it for 5 minutes. We were golfing at Shorecliff’s Golf Course in San Clemente when the sighting happened. It took off to the left in a quick dash (to the north). My mom and brother did not see that, I was the only one that saw it at that time. But, as I was hoping to see it again, about two holes later, there it was crossing the sky from North to South. That is when ALL of us saw it fly very fast across the sky to the south. So yes, all three of us saw it in motion. Did anyone else see it?

Thanks to Brian Vike Director of HBCC UFO Research <http://www.hbccUFO.org>

## Florida - Airborne Metallic Object Drifting

MELBOURNE BEACH – On October

17, 2008, we had just finished walking our dog on the beach at 5:50 PM, when I saw a glint of metal and in that instant I thought it was a star. It was a bright day with no clouds and as I watched it I pointed it out



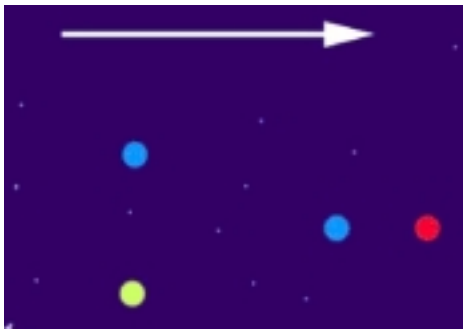
George Filer

to my husband. My second thought was that it was a skydiver, but knew it was too high for that. It was almost straight up. It appeared to be coming down and drifting west. I always have my Sony camera, but when I zoomed in I couldn’t catch it in the lens. We watched it until it went behind or west of a huge 3 story home. My husband said it looked like it was drifting slowly and surmised it was lightweight, but far heavier than a balloon. It must’ve been metal because my first sight of it seemed to be that a star had just popped out of the sky so that must have been the sun’s reflection on it. It was not a skydiver, but was about 1/2 that size. It never got low enough to really see it in detail, but it drifted west. It headed west to the Indian River Lagoon.

Comments: This is the fifth report that I have received from the Georgia/Florida area in the past two days. This sighting was not a weather balloon nor a celestial object. The sighting could have possibly been another type of balloon, but that is speculation. Thanks to William Puckett UFOS Northwest <http://ufosnw.com>

## Georgia - Lights in Triangular Formation Trail Leading Red

WARNER ROBINS – On October 16, 2008, at 11 PM, the witness and his girl friend were star gazing and saw a red light followed by a formation of 3 lights in a triangular formation for almost thirty minutes. A loud rumbling sound was heard and the object slowly moved over the



witness's house. The object executed a turn and returned three more times flying in a circle. Stars were visible in the middle of the light formation, but the witness thought that the lights belonged to one object. The witness lost sight of the object in the trees after the fourth pass.

Comments: I really don't have an explanation for this sighting. Given the late hour (11 PM) on a weekday additional witnesses to the sighting are more unlikely. The area is home to Robins Air Force Base. Anyone seeing these lights is urged to file a report. Thanks to William Puckett UFOS Northwest <http://ufosnw.com>

## Illinois Man Sees Bright Strange Shaped Light

CHICAGO RIDGE – A few minutes after 9 PM on October 9, 2008, I was playing with my dog in my yard. The dog suddenly looked up in as if following something moving quickly. I was already facing southwest and I saw this light (completely white) as bright as a star rapidly and silently traveling northwest to southeast. The forward part was shaped like a half sphere and the trailing end almost cone shaped. It was not like a meteor where the trailing end is like a tail. This seemed like a complete shape. I live by Midway Airport and any aircraft landing is so close you can read the markings on it. This was not an aircraft

in any sense, it made no sound and was traveling more at the speed of a missile. It was not in any flight pattern aircraft in the region would make. It disappeared into a cloud which was actually far below a commercial plane traveling east to west. It never emerged from the other side of the cloud.

Comments: The light was not the International Space Station (ISS) according to satellite position charts. (The ISS had been visible earlier.) Perhaps the object could have been another satellite, but the shape description sounds unusual and doesn't fit the description of a satellite. Thanks to William Puckett UFOS Northwest <http://ufosnw.com>

## Maryland - Burst Into Orange Fire

OCEAN CITY – On October 14, 2008, my husband and I were walking on the Boardwalk near 10th Street, and looking out over the Atlantic Ocean at the bright full moon. We saw what looked to be a plane burst into orange fire around 7 PM. It only illuminated for a few seconds in slow motion and faded back into the night sky. Then, a few minutes later in another area I saw it happen again, only further away. I kept pointing to the sky and saying to my husband, "did you just see that?" and he did. And a couple that passed by came up to us and said, "I saw you pointing to the sky, tell me you just saw that and we aren't crazy. I thought it was a plane on fire." And we both told them that we had seen it.

We all watched the strange orange glowing light pop up a half-dozen more times within ten minutes. The other couple called the Ocean City Police right away, but said it was probably Navy Maneuvers. Then, that faint orange burning glowing light shined again, but this time it was accompanied by four additional lights in a row. It really kind of looked like the Phoenix lights, like the five orange lights were part of the outside ring of a disk and it didn't last long nor move too much, rotated and then faded away. We were scared. We would have been able to track headlights from a plane or helicopter. These just faded away. Thanks to MUFON CMS

## North Dakota -Triangle

Mid. ND – My father, 5-year-old niece, two golden-retriever dogs and I had just made ourselves comfortable in our tent to sleep on July 29, 2008, at our family farm-site near the middle of North Dakota. My Dad had glanced up and said, "Oh, look, the North Star!" I realized that what he thought was the North Star was actually much larger, brighter and coming quickly towards us. I said, "Dad, it's coming AT us!" and was very alarmed. Dad then grabbed his glasses and sat up to look. When he said "Oh, wow!" My niece looked too. Dad and I sat quietly watching the object contemplating WHAT it could possibly be. I ruled out any aircraft.



I decided it must be a large meteor, and became very afraid because it seemed on its trajectory it would hit nearby thinking, "Great—I'm gonna die in a tent." Then I realized it was actually slowing down and wasn't a meteor. My Dad asked if I had my camera. I lamented it was in the truck so I decided to get the camera fifty feet away and kept sight of the UFO.

I could see the object was an enormous size like a football stadium, round, bright white glowing "ball" with a silver/grey metallic-looking ring around. It was between 10–15,000 feet in altitude, and between 5–20 miles to the northeast with no sound. It nearly stopped, and then started going straight east away from us. It sped up making it difficult to find in the viewfinder, but I was able to take two photos. The entire sky was dark-black, though there was a hint of dusk when we first noticed the object. This event is one of the few times in my life where I felt certain that my life was in danger. Thanks to MUFON CMS

*Continued on page 20*

## Filer's Files

*Continued from page 19*

### South Carolina - Football Field Sized UFO

COLUMBIA – I was driving home from work on October 15, 2008, at 6:31 PM, when I started to drive across the Lake Murray Dam, I saw a really bright light in the sky. Then I realized that no aircrafts have been allowed to fly over the dam since 9/11. Anyway, it wasn't moving and it was very low and had five very bright lights with a red light in the middle of the craft. As I was looking at it, I noticed the moon was shining on it and it did not have any wings. It was very big, about the size of a football field or so. I have never seen any type of aircraft that big flying that low. I got to the other side of the dam about a mile away and turned around, as I started driving back towards it, it suddenly just jolted forward and disappeared behind a tree-line. Thanks to Brian Vike Director of HBCC UFO Research <http://www.hbccUFO.org>

### Texas - Silver Metallic Cigar Shaped

MCKINNEY – My spouse was driving taking the kids to soccer on October 18, 2008, at 11:45 AM, while I was looking at the sky and saw a silver metallic cigar shaped object. I continued to watch it for awhile, but it didn't move and it was hovering high in the sky. It was not an airplane or a helicopter or a balloon. We are on the flight path into Dallas airport, and I am very familiar with airplanes and the shining or glinting they can get from the Texas sun. It seemed to go high up and we lost sight of it. One minute it was there and the next it was gone. Thanks to Brian Vike Director of HBCC UFO Research <http://www.hbccUFO.org>

### Virginia - Red Objects over Quantico

QUANTICO MARINE BASE – On Tuesday, October 14, 2008, I was celebrating the soldiers who just arrived back from Iraq and photographed these two objects while taking a random shot walking back to the car. Neither red object was spotted by my eyes. Later, I had a visible sighting when I arrived home with two other witnesses. I saw the white

sphere shaped object slowly start to move, and alerted my friends. Sure enough, about a minute later two more white spheres appeared that slowly flew in a line formation, then switched to a delta formation. They then flew back in line and disappeared one by one. My friends felt weird as we watched for about four minutes. Thanks to Brandon McCain

### Turkey - UFO Video

ISTANBUL – A 42-year-old and a number of residents claim UFOs were spotted over a four month period between May and September. He said: "I don't know what these things are; we filmed them several times and they are totally



unknown to us. I was very excited when I saw them and I want the world to know that UFOs do exist." Almost two-and-a-half hours of footage was filmed featuring a variety of objects ranging from incredible flying saucer-type 'craft' on June 8, 2008, to clustering orb-like lights hovering in the night sky.

The clips were handed to the Sirius UFO Space Science Research Centre in Turkey who interviewed witnesses and painstakingly combed through the footage frame by frame. International UFO researcher Haktan Akdogan said: "In this amazing video footage, physical forms of UFOs and their metallic structures are clearly noticeable.

"What is more important is that in the close-up of some footage of the objects, entities in them can be distinctly made out. We have spoken with all of the witnesses and had detailed analysis conducted on all two-and-a-half hours of footage. The objects filmed are structured objects and are not the result of misidentification or natural phenomena, aircraft or astronomical objects. After conducting all of the analysis we came to the conclusion that this video footage is 100 per cent genuine." Thanks to the *UK Sun News*. <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/article1836459.ece?slideshowPopUp=true&articleId=1836459&nSlide=3>

*Note: These Filer's Files reports are presented in order to keep readers informed of some of the vast number of sightings being reported. However, these cases have not been officially investigated, unless noted.*

*This month's Filer's Files include excerpts from File #43, October 22, 2008.*

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## Friedman: SETI Surprise

*Continued from page 17*

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\* Item available for purchase from UFORI, POB 958, Houlton, ME 04730-0958. <http://www.v-jh-enterprises.com/sforder.html>

# Field Investigator's Corner: CMS Rankings

By Chuck Reever

MUFON Director of Investigations

Here is October's CMS Ranking Report for all State Directors. Congratulations to **John Ventre** (West Virginia), **Lorna Hunter** (South Dakota), and **Tracey C. Smith** (Kansas) for being at 100%! The top ten State Directors are highlighted.

The report is based on our two measures of UFO Investigation effectiveness: assigning reports within 72 hours of receipt, and completing all investigations within 90 days of being assigned.

The "Assigned" column is a six-month running average of the number of cases assigned within 72 hours divided by the total number of cases received in that six month period. The "Completed" column is the number of cases completed beginning sixty-two (62) days back and going back six months from there (for a total of eight months back) divided by the total number of cases reported in the same period. The "Weighted Rank" is just the average of the two columns expressed as a percent.

State Directors can improve their scores by being sure to assign all cases within 72 hours, and to follow up with their Field Investigators to ensure all reports are completed within 90 days. To be considered complete, a report must have been investigated and placed in one of the three completed status codes (Unknown, Hoax or IFO) by the State Director.

If you have any questions or need help with your investigations please contact me, Chuck Reever, at 530-414-4341 or 530-582-8339 or via e-mail at [wizard@telis.org](mailto:wizard@telis.org).

| Rank | State          | Director              | Weighted Rank (50/50) | Assigned | Completed |
|------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|
| 1    | West Virginia  | John Ventre           | 100 %                 | 15/15    | 22/22     |
| 2    | South Dakota   | Lorna Hunter          | 100 %                 | 2/2      | 3/3       |
| 3    | Kansas         | Tracey C. Smith       | 100 %                 | 16/16    | 21/21     |
| 4    | California     | Ruben J. Uriarte      | 99 %                  | 94/95    | 118/118   |
| 5    | Pennsylvania   | John Ventre           | 98 %                  | 161/161  | 132/137   |
| 6    | South Carolina | Cheryl Ann Gilmore    | 98 %                  | 30/30    | 29/30     |
| 7    | Florida        | Bland Pugh            | 98 %                  | 113/116  | 163/163   |
| 8    | New Mexico     | Donald R. Burleson    | 98 %                  | 33/34    | 47/47     |
| 9    | Texas          | Kenneth E. Cherry     | 97 %                  | 212/219  | 396/403   |
| 10   | Minnesota      | Richard D. Moss       | 96 %                  | 30/30    | 31/33     |
| 11   | Georgia        | Walter Sheets         | 94 %                  | 33/34    | 38/41     |
| 12   | Iowa           | Jim King              | 92 %                  | 12/14    | 25/25     |
| 13   | Colorado       | Leslie H. Varnicle    | 91 %                  | 97/98    | 86/103    |
| 14   | California     | Georgeanne Cifarelli  | 91 %                  | 151/158  | 199/230   |
| 15   | Indiana        | Jerry L. Sievers      | 90 %                  | 127/129  | 109/132   |
| 16   | Kentucky       | Earle T. Benezet      | 84 %                  | 35/37    | 23/31     |
| 17   | Michigan       | William J. Konkolesky | 80 %                  | 66/92    | 82/92     |
| 18   | Utah           | Elaine Douglass       | 80 %                  | 14/15    | 13/19     |
| 19   | Illinois       | Samuel Maranto        | 78 %                  | 81/104   | 68/86     |
| 20   | Washington     | Marilyn Childs        | 78 %                  | 36/54    | 61/67     |
| 21   | Massachusetts  | Greg S. Berghorn      | 73 %                  | 29/53    | 55/60     |
| 22   | Louisiana      | Michael D. Sandras    | 72 %                  | 22/25    | 12/21     |
| 23   | New Jersey     | George A. Filer, III  | 71 %                  | 19/32    | 37/44     |
| 24   | Ohio           | William Jones         | 69 %                  | 51/66    | 45/73     |
| 25   | Arizona        | George C. Parks       | 68 %                  | 53/92    | 65/82     |
| 26   | Idaho          | Janet L. Bunke        | 66 %                  | 7/13     | 11/14     |
| 27   | Nebraska       | John C. Kasher        | 59 %                  | 8/16     | 9/13      |
| 28   | Tennessee      | Eddie Middleton       | 56 %                  | 11/32    | 30/38     |
| 29   | Oklahoma       | Charles L. Pine       | 55 %                  | 6/22     | 25/30     |
| 30   | New York       | James G. Bouck, Jr.   | 50 %                  | 76/90    | 16/95     |
| 31   | Oregon         | Thomas Bowden         | 47 %                  | 31/61    | 32/71     |
| 32   | Wisconsin      | Timothy G. Whiteagle  | 46 %                  | 21/31    | 9/36      |
| 33   | Wyoming        | Richard Beckwith      | 46 %                  | 4/6      | 3/11      |
| 34   | North Carolina | George E. Lund, III   | 45 %                  | 11/29    | 28/53     |
| 35   | Alabama        | Roy E. Patterson, Jr. | 38 %                  | 0/15     | 14/18     |
| 36   | New Hampshire  | Peter R. Geremia      | 35 %                  | 3/11     | 4/9       |
| 37   | Arkansas       | Norman D. Walker      | 26 %                  | 6/14     | 2/18      |
| 38   | Maryland       | Sheila Smith          | 26 %                  | 3/34     | 16/37     |
| 39   | Nevada         | Mark Easter           | 25 %                  | 3/52     | 23/51     |
| 40   | Connecticut    | Erik Kubik            | 23 %                  | 10/21    | 0/24      |
| 41   | Missouri       | Bruce A. Widaman      | 19 %                  | 11/38    | 5/47      |
| 42   | Maine          | John Selman           | 11 %                  | 1/15     | 3/19      |
| 43   | Hawaii         | Puuloa M. Teves       | 10 %                  | 1/5      | 0/9       |
| 44   | Virginia       | Susan L. Swiatek      | 1 %                   | 0/28     | 1/38      |
| 45   | Rhode Island   | Richard Lynch         | 0 %                   | 0/8      | 0/7       |
| 46   | North Dakota   | Kurt Pfleger          | 0 %                   | 0/5      | 0/5       |
| 47   | Delaware       | Ralph P. Flegal       | 0 %                   | 0/1      | 0/1       |

## MUFON Field Investigators Manual

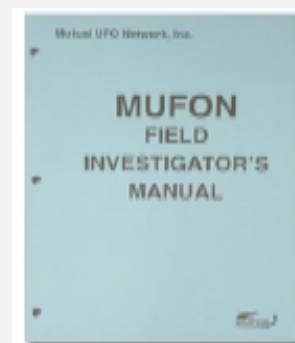
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## Director's Message

*continued from page 2*

polygraph exam. Unfortunately, only so much of an investigation can fit into one hour of TV, and the show could not possibly portray all the intricacies of the case. We received a number of emails from concerned members who wondered why we used a polygraph in the investigation. The polygraph is just one tool that investigators can use in an investigation, but will never stand alone as the deciding factor for drawing a conclusion on a case. The polygraph is used to draw attention to certain aspects of a case that require much more in-depth examination using standard investigative techniques. Unfortunately it was used for dramatic effect in the first episode instead of being portrayed as a red flag raising tool for concentrating our investigative efforts.

Despite these misperceptions, the show accurately reflects the hard work that MUFON puts into case investigation and I hope you enjoy the next two episodes about cases from Mexico and Pennsylvania.

### Position Announcements

**Gene "Doc" Lipson**, Maryland, has been promoted to the position of MUFON Medical Administrator of Investigations. **Barbara Delozier** from Wewahatchka, Florida, has been promoted to the position of State Section Director for Fort Walton, Florida.

### Field Investigators

**Charles Fetterman** of Brentwood, California; **Paula Schurle** of Garberville, California; **James Schurle**

of Garberville, California; **Katherine Sterling** of Laytonville, California; **Pattie Wolff** of Windsor, Colorado; **Sandialo Gonzalez** of Doral, Florida; **Mike Tambini** of Horseshoe Bend, Idaho; **Leonard Lasko** of Galena, Illinois; **Rick Bonner** of Marion, Indiana; **Paul Hicks** of Spirit Lake, Iowa; **Diane Arnold** of Columbia, Maryland; **Angela Felland** of Brainerd, Minnesota; **Lillian Waters** of New York, New York; **Sharon McGee** of Cincinnati, Ohio; **Mark Zmigrodski** of Long Pond, Pennsylvania; **Rosario Rositini** of Saint Albans, Vermont.

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## December Night Sky

*Continued from page 24*

the eastern horizon about 5 hours before the Sun and will be standing high above the north-northeast horizon as the Sun rises.

### Other Celestial Phenomena

December 21<sup>st</sup>: Winter Solstice. This marks the first day of winter for earth's northern hemisphere and the first day of summer for the Southern hemisphere.

### Meteor Showers

**Geminids:** The annual Geminid meteor shower will peak on the night of December 13th/14th. This shower is one of the better showers since as many as 100 meteors per hour may be seen. While this certainly doesn't rival the Leonids in recent years, this is still a very high rate for a regular meteor shower. This is an unusual shower in that the source of the shower is not believed to be a comet, but rather from an object known as 3200 Phaethon. This object is currently classified as an asteroid, but some scientists

believe that it might be an extinct comet with a thick crust of interplanetary dust.

Another thing that makes the Geminids unusual is that one doesn't have to wait until after midnight to catch this shower. The radiant rises early and meteors can be seen around 10:00 PM local time, but the best view will still be after midnight local time. This shower also boasts a broad maximum, lasting nearly one whole day, so no matter where you live, you stand a decent chance of catching sight of some Geminids. The actual peak will occur around 04:00 UTC on the 14th (6:40 PM EST, 5:40 CST, 4:40 MST, and 3:40 PM PST on the 13th). Unfortunately the Full Moon will be shining brightly during the peak times of the shower.

**Ursids:** The Ursids peak on December 22/23 and have a peak hourly rate of 10 or so, but in some years the hourly peak has risen as high as 50. The Moon will not diminish the enjoyment of this year's display.

### Bright Stars and Planets

A Close Conjunction of the Moon Jupiter and Venus, after Sunset on December 1st, 2008.

### Conjunctions and Occultations

December 1<sup>st</sup>: Venus 2 degrees south of Jupiter.

December 1<sup>st</sup>: Jupiter 1.3 degrees north of the Moon.

December 1<sup>st</sup>: Venus 0.8 degrees south of the Moon.

December 19<sup>th</sup>: Saturn 6 degrees north of the Moon.

December 25<sup>th</sup>: Antares 0.1 degrees south of the Moon.

December 29<sup>th</sup>: Mercury 0.7 degrees south of the Moon.

December 29<sup>th</sup>: Jupiter 0.6 degrees north of the Moon.

December 31<sup>st</sup>: Mercury 1.3 degrees south of Jupiter.

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# The Night Sky

By Gavin A. J. McLeod

## December 2008 Sky

### Moon Phases

First Quarter December 5<sup>th</sup>

Full Moon December 14<sup>th</sup>

Last Quarter December 19<sup>th</sup>

New Moon December 27<sup>th</sup>

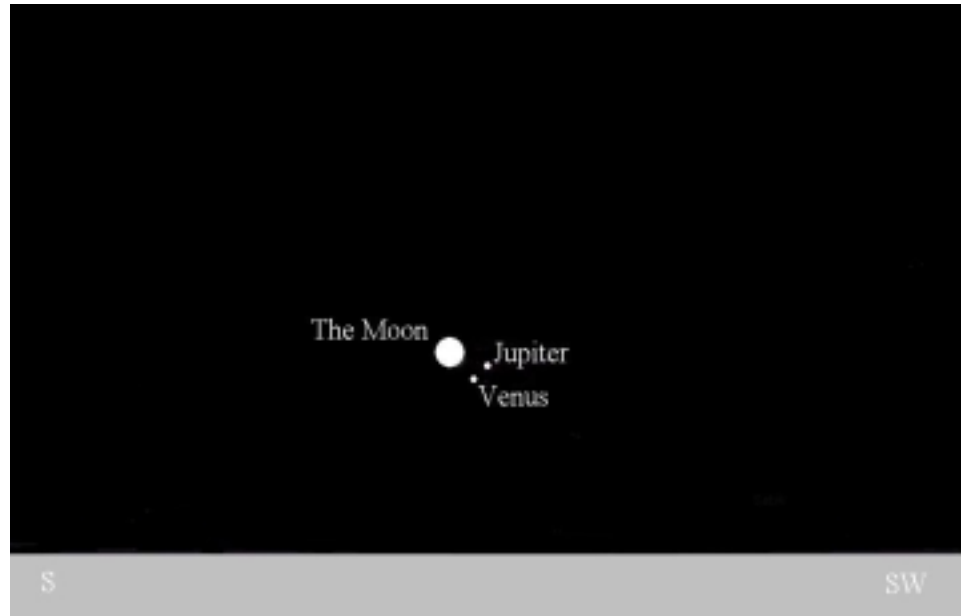
### Bright Planets (Evening Sky)

**Mercury** (magnitude -1.1 to -0.7): Moving from Ophiuchus into Sagittarius. For northern and southern hemisphere observers, Mercury will be barely visible above the west-southwest horizon after sunset but will ascend higher in the sky as the month passes. By the end of the month Mercury will be standing above the southwest horizon at sunset and will set more than one hour later.

**Venus** (magnitude -4.0 to -4.1): Moving from Aquarius into Pisces. For northern hemisphere observers, Venus will begin the month standing high over the south-southwest horizon and will set below the southwest horizon about 3 hours later. Venus will climb higher in the sky as the month passes until it sets almost 4 hours after the Sun. For southern hemisphere observers, Venus will begin the month standing high over the western horizon and will set below the southwest horizon about 3 1/2 hours later. Venus will descend slowly towards the horizon as the month passes until it sets almost 2 1/2 hours after the Sun.

**Jupiter** (magnitude -2.0 to -1.9): In Sagittarius. For northern hemisphere observers, Jupiter will begin the month high above the south-southwest horizon at sunset where it will be in close proximity to the Moon and Venus and will follow the Sun below the southwest horizon about 3 hours later. As the month passes Jupiter will slowly slide towards the southwest horizon until it sets about 1 1/2 hours after the Sun.

For southern hemisphere observers, Jupiter will begin the month high above the western horizon at sunset where it will be in close proximity to the Moon



*A close conjunction of the Moon Jupiter and Venus, after Sunset on Dec.1, 2008.*

and Venus and will follow the Sun below the southwest horizon about 3 hours later. As the month passes Jupiter will slowly slide towards the southwest horizon until it sets about 1 hour after the Sun.

### Bright Planets (Morning Sky)

**Mars** (magnitude 1.3): Moving from Ophiuchus into Sagittarius. For northern hemisphere observers, Mars will begin the month lost in the glare of the Sun, will slowly rise above the southeast horizon but will remain low over the morning horizon for the entire month. For southern hemisphere observers, Mars will be difficult to observe all month due to its close proximity to the Sun.

**Saturn** (magnitude 1.0): In Leo. For northern hemisphere observers, Saturn will begin the month rising above the eastern horizon about 6 1/2 hours before the Sun and will be found very high above the southern horizon at sunrise. By the end of the month Saturn will be rising above the eastern horizon about 9 hours before the Sun and will be standing high above the southwestern horizon as the Sun rises.

For southern hemisphere observers, Saturn will begin the month rising above the eastern horizon about 3 hours before the Sun and will be found high above the northeast horizon at sunrise. By the end of the month, Saturn will be rising above

*Continued on page 22*

