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FEATURE 15¢

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HUNDREDS SEE FLYING SAUCERS

SAUCERS OVER MIAMI

***Air Force Whitewash
Angers Community***

Several weeks ago, dozens of normal, intelligent adult residents living in the Greater Miami area saw Unidentified Flying Objects — Flying Saucers. Sightings were also made by at least 100 elementary school children. The "Saucers" or UFOs were seen periodically over a period of approximately four weeks. Most of the sightings took place during good weather, in broad daylight, at distances ranging from an estimated 250 yards up to about two miles. Some people watched the mysterious objects through binoculars.

This was one of the largest sightings ever experienced by a sizeable group of adults and children. But the Miami newspapers gave it only limited coverage, and until now the national press has disregarded it. The Air Force provided an explanation that satisfied only the Air Force.

What happened? In an attempt to find out, an ENQUIRER reporter spent a week interviewing residents in the area. What he discovered may defy explanation, but it provides an amazing picture of a real experience that was shared by many people in the area.

The Crestview community (see aerial view on this page) of Greater Miami lies in the northern part of Dade County near the southern end of the Sunshine State Parkway.

The cities of Miami and Miami Beach are some 20 miles to the south and southeast.

Opa Locka Airport, a Coast Guard base, is about four miles to the south. North Perry Airport, which is mainly for small planes, is three miles north. Because of the proximity of these airports, Crestview residents are thoroughly familiar with airplanes and helicopters.

The residents of Crestview are primarily professional people or skilled artisans who have moved into the new, well-kept houses to avoid Miami's population explosion.

The percentage of college-educated persons in Crestview and the adjacent areas is high. The neighborhood has many children, pets, carefully groomed lawns and houses where any peeling paint is promptly repaired. Most families have two cars; some have swimming pools.

The young children attend Crestview Elementary School, a typical Florida-style school building, one-story high, with several classroom wings.

To the north is an athletic field beyond which open fields extend almost as far as the eye can see. This undeveloped expanse, perhaps a mile wide, is bordered by other developments and dotted with occasional rows of trees.

Hunters sometimes invade the fields in search of game, and a few junked cars are abandoned in the area — to the distress of Crestview's tidy residents.

At about 12:45 p.m. on Thursday, April 6, teacher Robert Apfel, 33, walked across the yard of the Crestview Elementary School to join his fourth-grade class.

Apfel, formerly of New York City, is a calm, thoughtful man who attended New York University and the University of Miami in Florida.

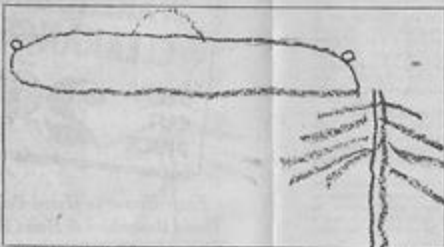
He has a masters degree in education. A bachelor, he's greatly respected by Crestview parents.

Apfel told this ENQUIRER reporter: "I was in back of a line of boys and girls lining up to enter. About half a dozen of the children were still in the yard when one of them pointed in a northeast direction and shouted, 'There's a Flying Saucer!' I just looked up casually and was startled to

Hundreds See Flying Saucers Over Miami



TEACHER Robert Apfel saw UFOs with six of his fourth-grade pupils.



KID'S DRAWING: This redrawing of an original shows what a child saw hovering over the field in back of the school. The Air Force took off the nose of the drawing to hide its identity.

TEACHER Robert Apfel saw UFOs with six of his fourth-grade pupils.

At about 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, April 6, teacher Robert Apfel, 33, walked across the yard of the Crestview Elementary School to join his fourth-grade class.

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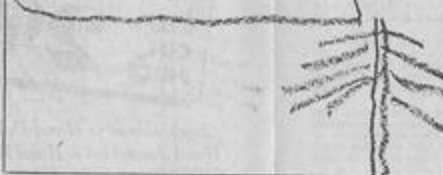
Apfel told this ENQUIRER reporter: "I was in back of a line of boys and girls filing into the room. About half a dozen of the children were still in the yard when one of them pointed in a northeast direction and shouted, 'There's a Flying Saucer!' I just looked up casually and was startled to see an object that did look like a Flying Saucer. I had the impression that it was circular. It was about a mile and a half away, hovering, and it seemed to be about 60 feet off the ground.

"It had a metallic or silvery appearance and it was huge, although I couldn't accurately estimate the size at that range.

"I watched with the six children for about a minute. Suddenly the object disappeared. I thought I might have somehow missed it moving off, but the children agreed that it had simply disappeared. There was no sound, no smoke, nothing like that."

The children were puzzled, but not particularly excited. Apfel, only mildly curious, mentioned the incident to another teacher in the teachers' lounge after class.

Then, on the advice of his colleague, Apfel called the



KID'S DRAWING: This redrawing of an original shows what a child saw hovering over the field in back of the school. The Air Force took all the original drawings made by Apfel's students.

Coast Guard at Opa Locka. The Coast Guard told him to refer the matter to Homestead Air Force Base, the major South Florida Air Force installation. Apfel decided not to bother, but he did phone a Miami newspaper to report the incident.

The weather that day had been clear and sunny. The sky was also clear and almost cloudless the following morning, April 7.

Apfel reached his classroom at 8:30 a.m. — like every good schoolteacher, he's acutely aware of time. Here he found, in his words, that "the kids were excited and upset." They had seen the "thing" again a few minutes before, this time much closer.

"I got the kids seated," Apfel told me. "Then I got them to take out paper and pencils. I said, 'What you are going to



MAP SHOWS AREA involved in the spotting of Flying Saucers by residents of Crestview (star). The Opa Locka Airport is four miles south of Crestview and North Perry Airport is three miles north of the community.

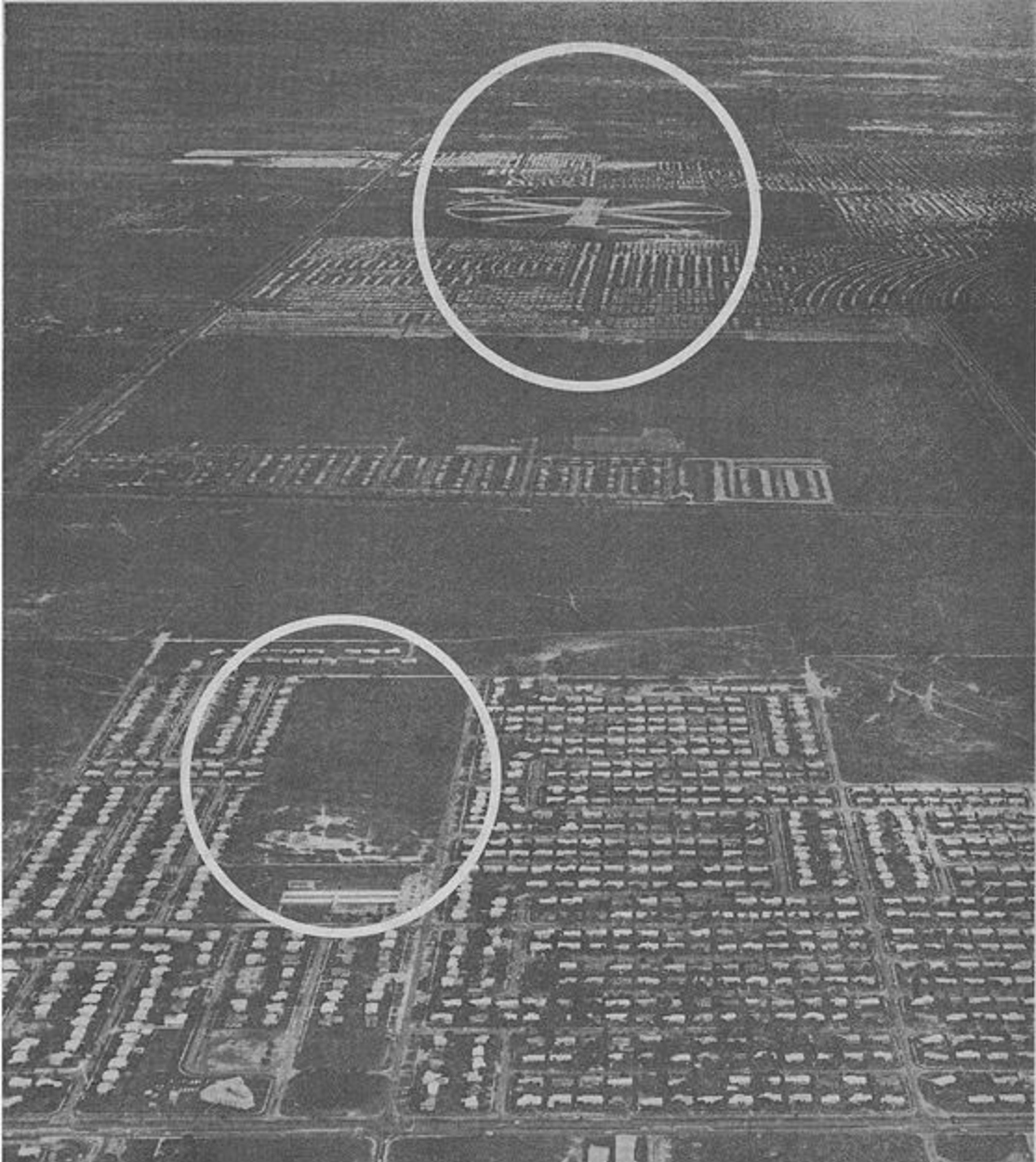


CHILDREN PLAY in the school yard of Crestview Elementary School from which the Flying Saucers were spotted.

AERIAL VIEW
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AERIAL VIEW: Lower circle shows the Crestview Elementary School at bottom and the fields behind it where the Flying Saucers were seen. The circle at the top shows North Perry Airport which is three miles from the school. The Air Force claims that helicopter and small plane activity from the airport was mistaken for Flying Saucers.

to now might be important. Don't talk to each other. But I want you to draw what you've seen. Or if you didn't see anything, don't draw anything. Or don't draw if you don't want to. You may also describe in your own words what you saw."

The children drew what they remembered, and Apfel collected the papers. To his astonishment, he found that the students' representations of what they had seen were almost similar except in minor aspects.

The object or objects, seen beyond some trees at an estimated distance of 200 to 400 yards north of the school, were cigar-shaped and, in many pictures, had a small dome, tower or bubble on top. Some children drew antennas. Others did not. Some mentioned that red, blue and white lights were going on and off.

While Apfel's class was drawing their pictures, two physical education classes were moving to and from the athletic field.

At about 9:45 a.m., screaming from the pupils on the athletic field attracted other children in the classrooms. Students looking out from the classrooms, facing to the north, began rushing out of the school building, pointing and shrieking.

The best account of what happened came from 12-year-old Andy Cohen, a handsome, highly intelligent youngster.

Andy, a sixth-grader, was in arithmetic class when two girls began screaming. Another girl rushed into the class and grabbed her brother protectively. Then

Andy and most of his classmates ran out to see what was happening. Some of the children dashed to the school fence at the northern end of the athletic field to get a closer view.

"Someone pointed them out to me," Andy said later. "They were cigar-shaped and had a plain light on each end. Each was a different color. One was red, one white, one silver, one black. I only saw one at a time."

The objects kept rising and falling behind some trees about 200 yards from the school, sometimes moving in clear view above the trees.

Andy said he saw no rotors and heard no sound of helicopters or airplane engines. He described the wobbly movement of the objects by saying, "They acted like a leaf."

In size, the objects looked as large to Andy as a "jet or a house." It is important to note that Andy and the other children also saw planes in the sky at the same time that the Unidentified Flying Objects were maneuvering. Andy even thought one of the objects "took off" after a plane.

What Andy saw was essentially what 100 or more other children saw. Moreover, at least two teachers witnessed the phenomena. They were Mrs. Virginia Martin and Miss Marian Waters, sixth-grade instructors.

Plagued in recent weeks by questioners, Mrs. Martin and Miss Waters have grown silent about discussing their experience. But Mrs. Martin was quoted a day later by the Miami Herald as saying that the excited children had told her, "You've got to look, you've got to look!" She did.

Miss Waters was more explicit. In the same account, she stated, "It was oval shaped. (The object she saw.) It seemed to hover. I realized that an airplane doesn't do that. I thought, my gosh, this couldn't be happening. It seemed to move in

(Continued on next page)

Flying Saucers

(Continued from preceding page)

toward the school, then went straight back and dropped behind a pine tree. It came up again and went westward. I don't know what it was."

Another woman, Mrs. Mary Troesser, phoned the Miami Herald to report a strange sighting in the vicinity of the Crestview Elementary School.

Bob Apfel, who didn't see the objects on Friday, was (and is) certain from his children's drawings and his own experience on Thursday that Unidentified Flying Objects were clearly seen near Crestview.

Apfel later received a letter from a parent who praised him for the courage of his convictions and said, "I saw that object and it was no helicopter."

A number of area residents, hesitant to identify individuals by name, say that their neighbors saw the objects.

When the Crestview Elementary School excitement of Friday was moving toward a peak, Mrs. Priscilla Pierson, the principal, found that teachers were directing excited children to her. Mrs. Pierson is a calm, able administrator. The north field can't be seen from her office.

Mrs. Pierson attempted to quiet the hysterical children who were sent to her, then had the athletic field cleared and all children herded into their classrooms.

Andy Cohen called the Miami Herald. Someone — perhaps several persons — contacted the Air Force Base at Homestead, Fla. Homestead is at least 60 miles south of the Crestview section, so it was afternoon before three Air Force investigators arrived to interview Apfel, Mrs. Marlin and Miss Waters. They also took the pictures drawn by Apfel's class.

On Friday evening, a crowd of several hundred people gathered north of the school in the hope that the flying saucers would appear again.

Police cars had been crossing the area during the afternoon and military jets had been flying over. But although some people were still watching long after midnight, nothing unusual was seen.



SCHOOLBOY WHO SAW UFOs, Andy Cohen, 12, a sixth-grader in Crestview Elementary School, points to spot over field where he saw flying objects hover above trees.



COAST GUARD AIR STATION at Opa Locka Airport, four miles south of Crestview, is the home base for the helicopter which Air Force officials claim was mistaken for a Flying Saucer.

appeared to have a dome on top "like the one on a coffeepot." The color was chalk white, although at one time Wolf thought he saw a pale red light.

As he watched through binoculars, Wolf also spotted airplanes and could make out their details. But except for the cigar shape, the white color and the possible dome, details of the unknown objects could not be seen.

"At any one time," Wolf stated, "I observed up to four. But in almost an hour and a half, I observed many of them. Often there were two going up together, moving away from each other, and coming down again. They seemed to be operating mostly in pairs.

"Their motion was not that of an airplane. They seemed to rise and fall like elevators, straight up and down. They'd get up there and disappear, as if someone had turned a light off. Then they'd come back into view and follow almost the same pattern.

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Saturday, April 3, was another clear, bright day. At about 11:30 a.m., John Wolf arrived at his home just south of Crestview Elementary School to pick up equipment for a Boy Scout Camporee. His daughter, Judy, and his next-to-youngest son told him, "Those things are up there again. Let's go look."

In many respects, Wolf, 42, is an unusual man. A former New York City resident who has been living in the Miami area for 14 years, he spent eight years in the Navy. For 18 months, he was in the Naval Air Force as head of a ground crew.

He says mildly, "We got to know what a plane looked like." Wolf works as a printer, and is also taking pre-education courses at Miami-Dade Junior College with the aim of eventually becoming a teacher. Despite his strenuous schedule, he en-



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gaged actively in Boy Scout work and is deeply admired by Crestview residents. Wolf, who has four children, is the sort of man to whom you would confidently give your last dollar.

"We piled into my truck and went down," Wolf told this reporter. "I had my binoculars. I watched from 11:30 until 12:45, with the exception of about 10 minutes when we went back to get my wife, Saran."

"She thought it was pretty funny, but she changed her mind when we got to within two blocks of the end of the road and saw the things rising behind the tree line."

Wolf estimated that the objects were about two miles away. Their size was "as if I were looking at the houses across the street. That's how large they were lengthwise."

The objects were cigar- or oval-shaped, and

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Sometimes they'd be on the same level with each other. Other times, one would be higher or lower. They seemed to move out quite a ways from each other before rising to another level.

"Two might come up out of the ground, and then suddenly two more would be in the sky. They seemed to go down and come up from one place on the ground."

"There was no tremendous speed of any kind — they just floated up and down. And when a plane came near, they'd disappear."

"There were almost no clouds in the sky, and you have to discount the possibility of some sort of gas, because gas can't move against the wind. These things did, back and forth."

"There was no peeling off, or any typical behavior of a plane."

"The only thing that could operate that way would be a helicopter, but no helicopters were around. There was no sound and no exhaust smoke. It was the most fascinating thing you ever saw in your life."

About 30 or 40 people watched with Wolf, some also with binoculars. All saw essentially the same.

One viewer was Mrs. Mildred Gammon, the wife of a professional photographer, who first saw four of the objects at about 11 a.m. They appeared oblong and greyish in color, to her, with a dome on top. Later in the afternoon, at about 2:30, Mrs. Gammon again saw one of the objects, this time with her husband. When a plane seemed to approach, the object disappeared.

Wolf had to return to his Scout Camporee. At 3:00 p.m. he studied the sky again but saw nothing. The objects were also missing on Sunday.

Puzzled and somewhat annoyed, Wolf watched

(Continued on next page)



SAW SAUCERS
JOHN WOLF



AIR FORCE EXPLANATION: The Air Force says that the people who claim they saw Flying Saucers really saw this type of helicopter maneuvering three miles north of Crestview.

(Continued from preceding page) again on the following Saturday, April 15, with the idea that North Perry Airport might be sending some unusual objects up every Saturday at the same time. Again nothing could be seen.

In the meantime, on Monday, April 10, the Air Force released its official report regarding the Crestview Elementary School sighting on Friday morning — the day before Wolf and some 40 others had seen the strange objects. It is repeated here in its entirety:

"HOMESTEAD AFB, Fla (Apr. 10) — The Air Force has completed an investigation of the UFO sighting by the students and teachers of Crestview Elementary of 2201 NW 167th St., at 9:45, April 7th.

The majority of the witnesses described the object as white with a red light that flashed once. The object was sighted along a line north-northwest of the school. Witnesses differed as to the size and distance of the object.

The investigation revealed that a Coast Guard helicopter, white with red trim, was maneuvering in the area of North Perry Airport between 9:31 a.m. and 11:07 a.m. the morning of the report. The helicopter was practicing landings and takeoffs in a (sic) east-west direction between ground level and 1000 feet altitude. North Perry Airport is almost due north of the elementary school and approximately three miles in distance.

"The Air Force concludes that given the time of the day with the angle of the Sun (sic) and the unfamiliar maneuvering of the white and red helicopter the witnesses could not identify it as such.

"As to the number of objects sighted, the white and red object was the only consistent description given. The Air Force attributes the other objects to the high number of small aircraft activity in the vicinity of North Perry Airport."

When the Air Force report was published in the Miami Herald on April 11, residents of the Crestview area were shocked and infuriated. Many felt that the report reflected unfavorably on their veracity and that of their children.

The reaction of the community could be summed up in the words, "That was no helicopter!"



STUDENTS SEARCH open field behind Crestview Elementary School for clues of the Flying Saucers.

blocks northeast of Crestview Elementary School. Skilled in the production and use of visual media, Alexander is a highly competent, objective observer.

At about 8:15 on the evening of April 27, Professor Alexander saw some strange lights as he was driving home. It was already dark, since daylight saving time had not yet started, but the weather was excellent. When Alexander got home, he took out his binoculars and began to watch.

"They looked at first like aircraft lights," he told this reporter. "They were flying in a clockwise circle several miles wide. They seemed to be flying at the same altitude and were evenly

spaced. I saw as few as six and as many as 10 at a given time. There was no sound.

"When the objects were heading west, coming from south toward my right, the lights were white, green and red. If they were planes, the green light would have been on the starboard (right) side.

"Heading in the other direction, they showed two red lights and one white light directly behind the second red light — all in a line. With aircraft, one light should have been directly on top of the fuselage.

"When they made the southbound turn, the configuration of lights didn't change. When an aircraft banks into a turn, one wing tip light should go up and the other down. That didn't happen. It was as if the lights were all on a string.

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Andy Cohen told a Miami newspaper reporter that if his "cigars" were helicopters, "you would have been able to see something that looked like overhead rotors." Only one of the four objects he had seen was white — the color of the Coast Guard plane.

Apfel firmly disagreed with the Air Force.

Wolf later told this reporter: "They certainly won't sell me a bill of goods that I was watching airplanes or helicopters."

School principal Mrs. Pierson observed, "I don't believe in calling white or black something else. I didn't see the objects, but I certainly believe my children and teachers."

The pilot of the Coast Guard helicopter was identified as Captain Donald Reed, who had been flying a white rescue helicopter, No. 1375, at the time of the Crestview Elementary School sighting on Friday morning. The copter was red-trimmed and had a red beacon rotating on top. After leaving the Opa Locka Airport base, his landings and takeoff practice had been at Perry Airport during the period designated by the Air Force report — after 9:30 a.m.

John Grammlack, a University of Miami senior and a member of the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena — a group which investigates Saucer sightings across the nation — interviewed area residents carefully and later told this reporter: "I can't see how anyone could think it was a helicopter."

Other interviewers, including a University of Miami professor, also made objective investigations.

And Crestview settled down somewhat grumpily to its daily business.

But on April 27, three weeks to the day after Apfel first saw the strange objects, another curious incident took place.

Dmitry Alexander is an assistant professor in the audiovisual department at Miami-Dade Junior College. A native of New York and a graduate of the University of Miami, Professor Alexander and his pretty wife, Kathleen, live approximately six

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At about 8:15 on the evening of April 27, Professor Alexander saw some strange lights as he was driving home. It was already dark, since daylight saving time had not yet started, but the weather was excellent. When Alexander got home, he took out his binoculars and began to watch.

"They looked at first like aircraft lights," he told this reporter. "They were flying in a clockwise circle several miles wide. They seemed to be flying at the same altitude and were evenly

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"When the objects came toward us, there were two red lights to the outside and two white lights inside, looking something like landing lights except that they were on all the time and no beam came from them."

While Mrs. Alexander watched (she later said, "I saw an airplane and I know the shape was different. I could make it out easily with binoculars and I also heard the sound"), Professor Alexander phoned the Highway Patrol.

They referred him to the Coast Guard base at Opa Locka. The Coast Guard told him to call the Air Force at Homestead.

"Some bored sergeant answered," Professor Alexander recalls. "He gave me the phone number of a lieutenant. When I reached him, he said he'd have someone call me back in five minutes. After about 40 minutes passed, I phoned the Miami Herald. Nobody was interested."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Alexander called to her husband from outdoors that two of the objects had gone straight down. When Professor Alexander went out to watch again, another dropped from sight in the same rapid manner.

Alexander was now deep-
(Continued on next page)



OPA LOCKA AIRPORT is four miles south of where Saucers were spotted by residents of Crestview.



NORTH PERRY AIRPORT is three miles north of where the Flying Saucers were spotted.

Flying Saucers

(Continued from preceding page)

ly troubled. As he told this reporter later, "I didn't expect little green men to come to the door and ask for a glass of ammonia, but I wanted to know what was going on. I could very well have been reporting an aircraft in trouble and I thought somebody should investigate."

The professor again patiently called the lieutenant at Homestead Air Force Base. The latter expressed astonishment that no one had phoned, and said someone would "get right on the matter."

About 20 minutes later, a sergeant called from the base and began asking a number of form questions. On the following day, a helicopter flew low over the area, but no one talked to Professor Alexander or his wife.

Alexander mentioned the matter to a friend at Miami-Dade Junior College. This individual contacted the Miami News, and Alexander was interviewed regarding his experience.

That seemed to close the matter, although one of Alexander's neighbors had also watched the lights; and Wolf, attending a night baseball game with his children, had also seen the objects circling. He thought at the time that he had never seen a "whole bunch" of planes circling at that time of night.

There's a curious sequel to Professor Alexander's story. On May 8, 10 days after he had tried to arouse the interest of the Air Force, a Homestead Air Force officer phoned Mrs. Alexander and asked to speak to her husband. She said that he was at the college.

As the professor relates the story, the officer said that Alexander's report on the lights had been marked "Urgent!" but someone had lost it. Since the incident had to be investigated, when could the officer meet with the professor? An appointment was eventually made for 10 a.m. on May 9.

At that time, according to the professor, he again answered form questions, and discussed his experience on the evening of April 27. The officer noted that some sightings defied explanation.

Since Greater Miami is within easy flight range of Cuba, Professor Alexander had been concerned about the possibility of unfriendly foreign intruders.

Noting that Crestview is not far from the ocean, he asked if strange planes could come in beneath the radar screen. The official stated that it was possible.

While investigating the Crestview phenomena, this reporter discovered that sightings had taken place at least two months earlier.

Mrs. Dorothy Givens, an area resident, had



FOCAL POINT of the UFO sightings is this quiet suburban elementary school in Crestview.

she noticed half a dozen lights bobbing up and down. There was no sound.

She watched for about 10 minutes, then forgot the matter until the events in early April. Her sighting was very much like that of Professor Alexander and his wife.

What happened in the Crestview area during April? Probably no one will ever know. If the Air Force knows, it isn't saying.

Regulations state: "In response to local inquiries resulting from any UFO reported in the vicinity of an Air Force base, information regarding a sighting may be released to the press or the general public by the commander of the Air Force base concerned only if it has been positively identified as a familiar or known object."

Thereafter, any questions must be referred to the Secretary of the Air Force in Washington, D.C.

In other words, once a local Air Force Base has made its statement of positive identification, the issue of a specific sighting may only be reviewed at the command level.



OBSERVER: Mrs. Kathleen Alexander, who, with her husband, saw UFOs.

April 8 appeared in the Miami News. He states emphatically that he saw no helicopters through his binoculars at the time he and several dozen other persons were viewing the mysterious objects.

But he saw airplanes flying around Perry at the same time he was watching the UFOs.

The school sighting on April 7 was viewed not only from Crestview Elementary's athletic field, but also from a number of angles. This would seem to rule out unusual reflections on a helicopter or its rotors — the rotors that no one saw.

Moreover, Capt. Reed's helicopter was white; but Andy Cohen and others saw red and black solid colors as well.

There is no satisfactory explanation for the experience of Professor and Mrs. Alexander — actually one of the most interesting, although it took place at night.

No official appeared to be immediately concerned.

Professor Alexander says somewhat wryly, "When I called the Coast Guard, anyone at the Opa Locka tower could have looked out the window and seen the things."

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Mrs. Dorothy Givens, an area resident, had been in her kitchen at about 9 o'clock evening when



WITNESS: Professor Dmitry Alexander points upward outside his house to indicate where he saw UFOs at night.

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This is probably more reasonable than it appears at first, for repeated investigations and questioning would clog the work of any military installation.

But there are curious oversights and discrepancies in the Air Force account of what happened at Crestview Elementary School. If the helicopter flown by Capt. Reed was maneuvering between 9:31 and 11:07 on the morning of April 7, why did Apfel's students see their "cigars" before 8:30? What did Apfel and six children see the day before?

This reporter talked to Capt. Reed, a pleasant Coast Guard officer who seemed somewhat bewildered by his inadvertent part in the episode. He stated that all of his takeoffs and landings during his practice maneuvers had been performed at North Perry Airport.

Perry is three miles north of the school. At that distance, helicopter No. 1375 would have looked like a dot — not a large object or objects described by the children and other observers as operating near the Crestview school.

Capt. Reed stated that he was not interviewed by Air Force investigators.

Nor was John Wolf interviewed by officials after the story of his experience on

OBSERVER: Mrs. Kathleen Alexander, who, with her husband, saw UFOs.

on a helicopter or its rotors — the rotors that no one saw. Moreover, Capt. Reed's helicopter was white; but Andy Cohen and others saw red and black solid colors as well.

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Mass hysteria?

Crestview residents note that too many adults saw the phenomena at too many different times and hysteria could not be sustained over a long period.

All told this reporter that they were skeptical about flying saucers.

As for the school children, only a limited num-

Air Force Report Had Oversights And Discrepancies

ber became hysterical. And Apfel, interviewed in depth and tape-recorded, stated that there had been no program or reading at school that might have conditioned students to search the sky for Flying Saucers.

Moreover, Apfel, Wolf and others agree that Crestview children are far too sophisticated to confuse planes or helicopters with other objects. They see or hear aircraft almost every hour during the day.

A hoax?

The Crestview people agree that a prankster might attempt a stunt once, or even twice, but he wouldn't keep trying after attention had been drawn to his efforts.

Not with the police and hordes of people, some allegedly armed, in the vicinity of his prank.

No sound at any time. Almost perfect agreement on what was seen by many people.

And unfortunately, no wholly acceptable explanation.

— WILLIAM ALLEN