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AN UNUSUAL CE-III UFO REPORT FROM THE BANGOR NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE, BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

by
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DATE:	August 31, 1987
TIME:	11:00 p.m. (PDT)
TYPE OF SIGHTING:	CE-III
WITNESSES:	Dennis Mauer, age 10 Randy Springsteen, age 8 Charlene Springsteen, age 26
LOCATION:	U.S. Navy Trident Submarine Base Bangor, Washington

I received a phone call from Bob Gribble of the UFO Reporting Center on September 1st, 1987, saying that he had received a report of a UFO sighting by two boys, ages 8 and 10, who live in base housing with their families at the Bangor Naval Submarine Base. I called the mother of one of the boys, Charlene Springsteen, and she related the following account.

Her son Randy, age 8, and her neighbor's son Dennis Mauer, age 10, were spending the night together and she allowed them to go outside for a few minutes to play on the playground equipment. This was at approximately 10:55 p.m. on Monday evening, August 31st. The two boys were outdoors for about 10 minutes and came running back in, "as white as ghosts". The boys reported that they had seen a big circular-shaped object

hovering 20-40 feet over her house, shine a beam of light down on the house, then come directly over the boys on the playground equipment, stop, and shine a larger beam of light down on them. After a few minutes, during which they reported seeing two cat-like humanoid figures aboard the craft, the object moved away and the kids ran home. After hearing from the boys, the mother went outside and saw an "aircraft" with many--"10 to 20"--red and blue lights arranged in a row in the Northwestern sky. She knew that airplanes had red and green running lights so concluded that the lighting arrangement was not that of an airplane. She then saw the object make a quick turn and zip away. She looked around the immediate neighborhood to see if any of her neighbors also witnessed the event, but none of her neighbors were out.

The boys reported that they saw an occupant--"some sort of creature"-- through a door or opening in the bottom-middle of the craft with big long, "cat-like" ears. It was standing up, and they saw it bend over something that looked like a searchlight and shine the light down on them by pulling a lever. They saw a second occupant similar in appearance to the first in a second doorway, in the bottom-lower left of the craft.

Mrs. Springsteen had the boys draw sketches of what they had seen the following morning. Her husband is an enlisted man in the Navy with the rank of E-6, and works with the base security forces. She told me he was skeptical of the boys' account and reluctant to have them report the sighting to any officials.

Mrs. Springsteen called the Bremerton police to report the sighting, and had a friend call the private security force, Pam Am, that provides security for the base housing, on her behalf. The Bremerton police, who incidentally would have been out of their jurisdiction and so can't legally investigate in response to a call from the Bangor base, suggested she call 911 if she felt the incident warranted the attention, and the Pan Am base security guard did not regard the UFO report as a serious matter.

I suggested that she probably should report the sighting to the base commander, because the UFO was an unauthorized aerial object in a restricted, Federal area. However, I emphasized that it wasn't my intention to pressure her to do so, and I left the decision up to her. She told me she would think about it and meanwhile she would talk to Dennis's mother and have her call me.

About half an hour later I received a phone call from Linda Mauer, Dennis's mother. At first, Dennis did not tell his mother about his encounter the night before because he wasn't sure she would believe him. When she did learn about their encounter from Charlene Springsteen, she had Dennis draw sketches of what he had seen and the sketches were identical to those drawn earlier. This convinced her that the boys were reporting a real event and not making something up.

Mrs. Mauer also reported that she had had a previous UFO sighting in New Mexico and was more willing to accept the boys' account of the events because of it. Her previous sighting

occurred at her home at a time when they were living in the desert, "30 miles from anything", and as she was hanging a bedspread on the clothes line she noticed three bright, red columns of light move through the sky.

I called Jim Clarkson in Aberdeen, a police officer and MUFON field investigator, and asked him to check with police and sheriff departments in the Bangor area to see if they had logged any other UFO reports. He reported back that he had talked to the Kitsap County Sheriff's Department and they had received no reports.

I interviewed Mrs. Springsteen, Randy, Dennis Mauer, and Linda Mauer in person on Sunday, September 6th. The base is a high security restricted area not open to the public and a visitor requires special permission from someone living on the base to visit base housing (see the enclosed copy of my visitor's pass). Base housing is south and about a quarter of a mile away from the top security military installation where the nuclear submarines are docked and nuclear missiles stockpiled. I arrived at their home on F Court of Albacore Circle in the early afternoon.

The immediate neighborhood consists of approximately 25 housing units, grouped into four or five-unit townhouses that are approximately 25 feet apart (see sketch prepared by Linda Mauer). The playground is shared by 50-60 families and the swingset on which the boys were playing at the time of the UFO encounter was estimated by Mrs. Springsteen to be 75 feet from

the Springsteen house. I later measured the distance and found it to be 82 feet.

On the night of the encounter Dennis Mauer was staying overnight at his friend Randy's house. This was the last week of summer before school started and the boys were up late. In a private conversation with one of the neighbors, I learned that it is not uncommon for the children in the neighborhood to be out playing very late at night. According to Dennis:

> "I asked Sherri if we could go out in the backyard and swing on the swings and she said "no" and we begged her and begged her and she said yes. And we went out there, and it just flew over this (the Springsteen) house and then it went over the park."

The boys were sitting on the swings and trying to spook each other by talking about Freddy, the demon-monster from the movie "Nightmare on Elm Street". Neither one of the boys had ever seen the movie, but it was common for the neighborhood children to tell stories that "Freddy is going to get you". It was at this point that they first noticed the "spaceship, with red and blue lights going around it", coming in from due East at a height of two stories above the rooftops. The object stopped and hovered over the F-court townhouse, shown a beam of light down on the house, then moved directly over the boys and shone another, brighter beam down on them. When the object moved towards them it moved oddly, with a jerking motion: move and then stop, move and then stop.

When the boys first sighted the object, a few meters over the house, Randy's mother was inside sewing at her sewing machine, and she had the drapes in the dining room and kitchen closed, with only one drape partially opened through which she could keep an eye on the boys. The sewing machine was around a bend in the wall that separates the dining room from the kitchen and partially blocked her view of the window that looks out on the playground, so this is why she believes she did not see the light beam. Mrs. Springsteen reported that the boys described the light as "telescoping". The light beamed on, beamed off, and then a wider or brighter beam was shown on the boys. The beam of light came from the bottom-center of the UFO. The bright beam apparently had a levitating effect on the swings the boys were sitting on, lifting them up towards the craft.

Although the object was reported to be quite low to the ground--40 or so feet when it passed over the roof of the house--it made no noise and there was no sand or wind blown up as would occur from the downdraft of a helicopter. The boys estimated the height of the object as two building heights above them, which would be approximately 80 feet. They estimated the object's diameter to be as wide as the sand filled area of the playground, which I later measured to be 52 feet wide.

The object was described as having a round bottom with many blue and red lights on the outside edge in alternating colors. The lights were rotating or sequencing around the object, possibly in a counter-clockwise direction. The boys only saw the bottom of the object, and some type of peak or antenna

projecting from the top. The rest of the object was obscured from their view by the angle at which the object presented itself. Dennis's first sketch shows eight lighted, square-shaped windows across the upper third of the bottom of the object. However, Randy's sketch and Dennis's subsequent sketches show five square-shaped windows. There were two "doors" or openings, one in the center of the craft and one in the lower left. In each doorway stood an occupant. The creature standing at the center doorway was observed operating the searchlight, which was directed on the two boys.

Dennis and Randy described the two entities as over six feet tall ("taller than Randy's dad"), with over-sized heads and thin, spindly bodies. They were covered with greenish fur and wore no clothing that was visible. They were humanoid, appearing to be bipedal. The creatures had unusually long spindly arms, and bodies and legs that seem biologically improbable, i.e. unable to support such large heads. Dennis' described the size of the principal creature's torso as no greater around in circumference than his thigh, which I judged to be less than 6 inches in diameter.

Both creatures had large pointed, cat-like ears on an oval-shaped head. The eyes were described as blueish-green and round, with unusually long eyelashes. The mouth was wrinkled, "like an old grandma's". The fingers and toes of the creature in the central doorway were described by Dennis as unusually long and had suction-cups on the tips. Dennis didn't recall the word for suction-cups, and described them as "like the things on the front of darts". Randy's drawing didn't have suction cups

but he went along with Dennis's assertion about them. Dennis, whose description is more elaborate than Randy's, described the feet as "frog feet" and felt that both the hands and feet were webbed. Both boys drew sketches which showed a creature with very big, pointed ears (estimated to be 12-14" long), eyes with unusually long eye brows, a wrinkled mouth, and a skinny body.

Mrs. Springsteen reported that when she returned to the house after going out and seeing the UFO depart, she noticed the sliding glass door in her dining room was open and the wind was blowing the curtains out through the door. She was certain she didn't go out that way and doesn't recall anyone else opening the door. She regarded it as somewhat odd and possibly connected to the incident. In fact, the more she thought about it the more she became frightened that someone or something might be in the house, and got down her husband's rifle for protection and sat with it until he came home from work.

The next door neighbor, residing at F-17 Albacore Circle, saw a bright white, stationary light in the eastern sky at sometime after 10:30 p.m. that same night from her bedroom window, and she thought she may have seen the UFO before it approached the boys on the playground. However, a check of star and planet guides revealed that the woman most probably had watched the planet Jupiter, which was in the Eastern sky in approximately the right place to be mistaken for an unusual light.

Both boys related their stories with some excitement in

their voices but in an otherwise matter-of-fact manner. They tended to lose interest towards the end of my interview with their mothers, and asked to be excused so that they could go out and play. It is my belief that they were not lying or concocting the story, but were trying to relate as best they could some unusual event which they believed had happened to them.

While reasonably certain that the boys were not making up the story, I am not certain to what degree the facts of the case are exagerated or distorted. We need to keep in mind that the boys were in a receptive state of mind to have a spooky or bizarre event occur, because they had just been trying to "psych each other out" with tales of "Freddy". It's undeniable that the creatures they described were unbelievably strange, even goblin-like in their appearance, like storybook characters. The link between saying "Freddy is going to get you" and seeing these frightening creatures has to be listed as more than a coincidence.

Furthermore, it is difficult though not impossible to believe that a UFO could penetrate an extremely sensitive military installation and not be detected. If the incident had gone on for much longer it would certainly have stretched the bounds of believability to have it go unnoticed and not be responded to by security personnel. The fact that the encounter was relatively brief in duration tends to lend some credence to the possibility that some type of physical object could manuever in at tree-top level and then depart so quickly that it could

evade detection.

The lack of any noise or downdraft makes a military helicopter explanation unlikely. The multiple red and blue lights that Mrs. Springsteen observed would also make a helicopter or conventional aircraft explanation unlikely. An advertising plane might seem at first to be a good candidate for the boys' sighting, but there are no ad plane companies still in business in the area, and besides, they have no business flying around in military restricted airspace. The biggest argument against an aircraft misidentification is that no civilian aircraft are allowed anywhere near the area. The Trident submarine base had been the site of numerous anti-nuclear demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience in the early 1980's, and the Navy security forces get very touchy if anyone flies anywhere close to the base, let alone buzzes it at an altitude less than 100 feet.

The fathers of the two boys, both Navy security personnel, joked about how seriously their wives were taking the boys' accounts, but didn't dispute their stories or offer any explanations, other than suggesting somewhat facetiously that it may have been the Russians. That seems an extremely unlikely explanation, given the severe diplomatic repercussions that would result should they get caught. The families decided not to report the sighting to anyone in authority at the base, and to this day I don't believe the Base Commander knows anything about it. It remains a perplexing story, open to either an unusual psychological explanation, or interpretation as a truely anomalistic aerial phenomenon.