**Close Encounter: Joplin, Missouri**

By Missouri MUFON Assistant State Director Margie Kay

*This case was #1 in July, and in the top ten MUFON cases in 2014*

John Cruzan has spent most of his life like most of us with his family, work, and hobbies keeping him busy. John served as a police officer for the Joplin Police Department from 1986 to 1996. He worked on the Jasper County Drug Task Force and the Newton County Major Crimes Task Force. From 2009 to 2104 he worked as a private investigator for civil and criminal cases. Prior to his law enforcement career John worked as an EMT-Paramedic from 1983 to 1986 for Joplin Emergency Medical Services, and as director of the Southwest Missouri Search and Rescue Team. He instructed members in Wilderness Search and Rescue, High Angle and Rappelling Rescue, and is Certified Rescue Scuba Diver. John is currently the Technical Operations Manager for the Joplin Globe Newspaper. Among his hobbies is flying small engine airplanes.

John Cruzan’s life was going along at a normal pace—until July 8, 2014 when his world changed forever.

John and his wife, Traci, a health care professional, were driving home at approximately 9:15 pm when a neighbor frantically flagged them down. Their neighbor, a commercial airline pilot and golf pro instructor who wishes to remain anonymous, urged the Cruzan’s to get out of their vehicle and look up.
 The couple did so and were alarmed to see a gigantic acre-wide (200 feet) low-flying craft over their heads. The craft was completely silent and appeared to have no visible propulsion system, exhaust, or means to fly. And there was absolutely no ground vibration as would be expected if a normal aircraft were that close to the observers.

 The three witnesses observed the craft moving very slowly and later the two pilots calculated the rate of speed to be approximately 60 MPH.

The neighbor’s dog was barking wildly at the object and as the object moved through the neighborhood all of the resident dogs began barking. The neighbor, however, said that it felt as if he were in a vacuum and he heard no noises whatsoever—not even his own dog barking– as the object flew overhead. The witnesses thought they knew where the UFO had possibly landed so all three got in the Cruzan’s new Jeep and drove quickly to a cow pasture approximately one mile south from their houses in order to see if they could find it.

*Note: The potential landing spot is near a place Joplin residents call the UFO Landing Dock, which is a strange structure in the middle of a large field.*

As they drove near the possible landing area the vehicle suddenly stopped running and simply coasted. At that point it was no longer dusk and was almost completely dark. At the same time the vehicle warning beep started to go off, indicating a door was open, but no doors were open. They attempted to shine a high-powered flashlight out the window and into the nearby cow pasture but the beam on the light would not shine, however, they could see that the flashlight was on but very dim. Mr. Cruzan then attempted to get the vehicle into gear, but had a difficult time of it. He was able to finally get it in gear and move on down the road after approximately five minutes, and when they got away from the area the flashlight functioned normally and the beeping stopped.

They then turned the vehicle around and went back to the original spot when the car again stopped running, the alarm started beeping again and the flashlight would not function. After approximately five minutes Jon was able to get the car running moved on. He then went back to the same spot again but nothing anomalous happened. The Jeep is a new vehicle and had no issues prior to or after the UFO sighting event.

The story does not stop there - it gets even stranger.

When I interviewed the three witnesses four days after the event along with investigator Larry Jordan, I inquired about any physical effects that John or his wife may have experienced. John had been ill with severe nausea and vomiting, fever, and headaches since immediately after the sighting. He also showed me a severe burn with blisters on his right arm just under his shirt sleeve, which covered the front of the arm width and was about 3” high. John’s illness continued for three weeks, and his doctor could not explain it. John showed his burn to a friend who is a physician. The friend said that the burn was consistent with a laser injury which he has seen before.

 One theory that has been pondered by me, Larry Jordan, and investigator Stan Seba is that the UFO was likely in close proximity to the three witnesses, perhaps even right above their vehicle. A beam of some sort (laser, microwave, etc.), perhaps from the propulsion system, may have been purposely or accidentally shot from the craft, hit the passenger side mirror, and was reflected onto John’s right arm. This is pure speculation of course, but something to consider. It may account for not only the burn but also the high EMF readings on top of the vehicle.

Traci Cruzan also received a burn on the back of her neck which she thought was a sunburn at first, but when it returned and blistered several weeks later she believed it might be related to this incident.

The first thing I thought regarding the burns and illness was radiation poisoning, however, the Cruzan’s are now in good health, so if they were exposed it must have been a low dose. The neighbor suffered no ill effects. The three were in close proximity to each other so if there was any exposure to radiation it would be likely that they were all exposed.

I examined the Jeep, which had not been washed since the sighting. I took a K-II meter out to measure Electromagnetic Field (EMF) and went over the entire vehicle, windows and tires included while Larry wrote down the readings. All readings were low, under 1 to 1.8, but when I checked the canvas top the readings jumped to 25. I could not find a reason for the higher reading on the canvas top as the vehicle was not on and there were no electronics in the area.

We then went to the possible landing spot and I observed that this was a large cow pasture with cows at the far end of it. I wondered if the UFO occupants were perhaps interested in the cows on the property since cow mutilations sometimes occur at the same time UFOs are observed.

I took ground readings with the K-II meter and got high readings (up to 8.9) in the area where the vehicle had been stopped the night in question but low readings (under 1) in other areas of the ground. We did not enter the field since it is private property.

The witnesses were all in agreement as to the shape of the object being teardrop as they viewed it from the bottom with one end being pointed, and multiple large orange and red lights around the exterior rim of the bottom which were darker in the center. They also observed small blue lights all over the bottom, with a large red light in the center, and two yellow lights on either side lengthwise.

**More Witnesses Come Forward**

Since this event five more reports have been made of huge UFOs and strange events all within 1 ½ miles of the possible landing location.

 Three reported their sightings to mufon.com, and two called me directly and refused to file an official report. The descriptions are similar to the craft reported in this case and four were close encounters.

 In one case, a woman was driving on Range Line Road (49 Hwy) on July 27 with her 12-year-old son and his friend after soccer practice when their vehicle was hit by something large. They thought they had been hit by a car since they heard a loud bang and felt a big thump. At the same time, the car dash lights went off and a strange very loud noise came through the radio speakers. The driver could not see another vehicle around and was disoriented.

 Confused, the driver continued on to drop off her son’s friend nearby, then got back onto Range Line road where she and her son saw a very strange, unrealistic large owl on a power line. They could find no damages to the vehicle after they arrived home, however, both have experienced loud ringing in their ears and headaches since the event.

 It is important to note that in other Missouri cases witnesses have seen UFO’s hit their vehicles. And owls have long been associated with close encounters with extraterrestrials. Most investigators believe that the owl is a screen memory and it not really what the observer is seeing.

The remaining four reports are from persons (one is a deputy sheriff) who were traveling alone at dusk or early morning hours either on or near Range Line road and close to the original UFO encounter. These events all occurred between July 13 and August 27. In each, the witnesses observed a low-flying very large craft that was completely silent. None had seen a UFO prior and were completely shaken by the experience. Unfortunately, none were able to obtain photos.

Additionally, John Cruzan was contacted by a man who read my initial press release. The following is an e-mail from John:

“I thought you may be interested to know that a man contacted me yesterday who had heard about my sighting. He said that he had seen the same thing a couple of years ago. He described the exact same object we had seen.
 He was in Seneca Missouri (about 15 miles south east of Joplin) he was riding his motorcycle with his son on the back, suddenly their bike stalled and would not restart, they then looked up and about 100 feet above their heads they saw the object float over with no sound. They watched it disappear over the horizon, then their motorcycle would start. They tried to follow it but could not catch up and did not see it again.
He said a few other people in the area had told him they had seen it before, with one man telling him he saw it back in 1994.”

**The UFO Observation Deck**

To make matters even more bizarre, the Cruzan’s pointed out that the so-called” Joplin UFO Landing Dock” is very close to the July 8 sighting location. This is a large structure built into the side of a hill and was obviously engineered and well planned out. It even has electrical power lines running to it. This structure was built sometime in 2005 by unknown persons on land possibly owned by the City. It goes to nothing, yet appears to be ready for a craft of some type to land next to it to be observed by unknown persons. There may be a perfectly mundane explanation for this structure, but so far we have been unable to find out what it is and what it is used for.

**Dreams**

John has been having recurring dreams since the event which may be related to the sighting. This is common among people who have had UFO encounters and is a way for the mind to process an extraordinary event and remember what happened. That is why I recommend to witnesses to is important to keep a journal after such an encounter. In one dream John hears a voice say that there are five known worlds that are habitable by species such as ours. One is for shopping and trade, one is used for war, another for a peaceful and romantic society.

John said “I have been wondering why this object that flew over would have so many bright lights displayed on it. Especially if they don't want to be seen. But maybe that is wrong, maybe they DO want to be seen, and heard. The lights could be a way to get our attention and It could be possible that when alien ships fly over planets they broadcast a mental type of message or advertisement about their journey in a form that can be read by their minds and probably many others species minds. They may assume our species can read the message too, we may be the only ones they encounter who are not mentally developed enough to read thoughts.
 Maybe somehow I recorded this message in my mind as it flew over and I am playing it back in my dreams. It cuts off at the same spot each time, possibly because I only heard part of the message before it went away.  I have read that we may be more open to mental messages while we are sleeping.
Now I know this next part is a long shot. I also have read that people with higher IQs have a tendency to experience some types of spontaneous mental communications, I have an IQ of 155 and my oldest son has an IQ of 159. We often seem to know when the other is about to call or stop by, I have even called him because I felt he was sad and found that he had just broken up with his girlfriend. Or I may just be going nuts, who knows.”

What John and Traci Cruzan and their neighbor experienced is something that they will never forget. All three said that they now believe that Earth is being visited by highly intelligent extraterrestrials, which is something they didn’t take seriously or even consider before this encounter. The other five witnesses who experienced close encounters near this area intimated the same sentiment.

With the testimony of three credible witnesses and physical evidence of the burns John and Traci received, along with the high electromagnetic readings on the vehicle and ground, there is no doubt in my mind that something happened in Joplin on the night of July 8.
 What was it that these eight witnesses saw or experienced? Does our military have the anti-gravity technology and huge craft of this type—or was it something not of this Earth? We may never know the answer to that question but John Cruzan is not giving up easily and will continue to search for answers.

*Note: John Cruzan has since joined MUFON and became a Field Investigator.*