

#321303 UFO Zaps Cop
Pratt/staff reporter
For Cathcart
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A veteran Wisconsin police officer who dived into a ditch in 1975 when a monstrously large UFO passed overhead has had his second UFO experience--and this time it put him in the hospital for 14 days.

"I feel pretty good now although I spent 14 days in the hospital," George W. Wheeler, ^{there} former police chief in Elmwood, Wis., and now a relief officer, told The ENQUIRER a week after being released from the hospital.

"I've gone through all sorts of tests but I seem to be 100 percent OK right now."

Wheeler, 71, a 30-year police veteran in New York state and Wisconsin, ~~saw~~ ^{and former combat fighter pilot in World War II} reported seeing a UFO up close on the night of April 22--and while he was describing it on his radio ^{Squad} he was struck by a bluish ray of light that knocked out the car radio and lights and knocked him unconscious.

At about the same time two people living in the area saw a brightly glowing object and several families reported their television sets went dead for a few minutes.

Wheeler's first UFO experience was described in the Jan. 13, 1976, issue of The ENQUIRER. In it, Wheeler told of seeing a flaming red UFO as large as a football field zoom overhead. He thought it was a plane in distress and was going to crash into Elmwood, wiping out the town. Instead, it passed on over and Wheeler later saw it hovering over a valley 5 miles to the south.

His second UFO experience was much more painful.

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"At 11:10 p.m. on the night of April 22 I was on police duty in Elmwood when I noticed an orange glow at the top of Tuttle Hill on the southeast side of town," Wheeler told The ENQUIRER.

"I thought it was a large fire, reported it on the radio and drove out there. When I arrived at the summit, I saw this huge object which appeared to be as high as a two-story house and about 250 feet across.

"It was about 500 feet from me and about 100 feet above the ground. It was between a limestone quarry and a farmhouse. It had an extremely bright orange light at the top, so bright I couldn't look at it. It was like looking into the sun.

"There were also six bluish-white windows or portholes on the sides and I could see shadows as if somebody was moving inside. In the middle there appeared to be a panel that was open and I could see something that appeared to be revolving slowly and had fin-like parts similar to a turbine.

"What appeared to be legs on the craft were partially extended from the body and there was a long, black hose-like appendage hanging down. I couldn't tell if it reached the ground because ~~at~~ some trees were in the way.

The main body of the craft was silvery colored.

"Suddenly, the craft rose up at an extremely fast speed--and at this time there was a bluish flash of light like lightning. At this time the squad car's lights and radio went dead--and I don't remember any more until somebody asked me if I needed any help."

(Wheeler explained that the reason he recalls so much detail is that after his first experience, Dr. Jack Bostrak, a biology professor and UFO investigator, told him that if he ever had another experience to get all the details he could.)

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Several minutes later, dairy farmer David Moots, 36, drove up behind Wheeler's squad car and found it stopped partially on the highway with its lights out.

"I had taken a babysitter home and was coming back up the hill and his car was right in the lane of traffic," Moots told The ENQUIRER.

"He was trying to get out of the car and I could tell something was wrong with him. He was kind of dazed, and although I don't know him really well I am familiar with him and his behavior was unusual.

"I thought he was having a heart attack^K. I asked him what was wrong and he told me he'd been hit. I responded by saying, 'Hit by a car?' and he said, 'No, by one of these UFOs.'

"I didn't believe him, to be honest, but a lot of people around here have been seeing them and I know a lot of them personally and they aren't pulling my leg or anything. So, they are seeing something, that's for sure."

Meanwhile, Police Dispatcher Gail Miley had heard Wheeler's radio report and had phoned Paul Fredrickson, a nursing home administrator who lives ~~5~~ 3/4ths of a mile east of Tuttle Hill, and asked him to look out his window.

"I looked and there was a bright orange glow," Fredrickson told The ENQUIRER.

"I saw what appeared to be a bright orange half-moon, like a moon cut in half. I knew it wasn't a house on fire because there were no flames leaping up and it was just orange.

"I went back to the phone and by the time I got back to the window the object was gone."

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Fredrickson not only supported Wheeler's sighting but soon after revealed that he and his son, Mark, 15, had had a very vivid close up sighting of ~~their~~ a large orange UFO last October--in the same location. It went from east to west and passed about 1,000 feet over them as they parked atop Tuttle Hill, Fredrickson said, but he told no one at the time because of his position as administrator of the Heritage of Elmwood Nursing Home.

"The reason I came out and told about it now is that some people were lambasting George Wheeler and he seems like a pretty nice guy, a reputable citizen, and I thought it was time to stand up for him a little bit," Fredrickson said.

"I feel he really saw something and went through something."

At about the same time Fredrickson saw the half-moon shaped object from his home, Mrs. Miles Wergland also saw a bright orange object over Tuttle Hill from her home less than a mile south of the hill.

"It was around 11 o'clock," she told The ENQUIRER. "I usually get up about that time--we have a coo-coo clock and it usually wakes me up--to take some medicine.

"I just happened to look out the picture window in our ~~kitchen~~ kitchen toward Tuttle Hill and there was a real bright orange object shaped like the moon, but it was a lot different colored than the moon is.

"It was much brighter than the moon and was just sitting still."

She said she watched it for several minutes and then went back to bed. (MORE)

While Wheeler was describing^g the UFO on his squad car radio, Elmwood P^Ulice Chief Gene Helmer was listening to him on his monitor at his home.

"He said, 'It's another one of those UFOs' and he started to explain what he was looking at--and everything went blank on the radio," Helmer told The ENQUIRER.

"The Ellsworth Sheriff's Office tried to get him on the radio a couple of times and I tried to get him on the radio here a couple of times. Then I decided I'd better go up there and investigate.

"Just as I started to leave, George came back on the radio and said, 'Get somebody up here--I've been hit.'

"I live just a quarter of a mile away and when I arrived there George was sitting in the squad^d car with his feet on the pavement.

"He was scared. He just wanted out, to get away from the place. I've seen him under many different conditions and I've never seen a man so scared as he was that night.

"He's worked with me off and on in police work for 7 years now. We've worked fights and high^h-speed chases together and various other things. I've taken him to the hospital three or four times--and I've never seen him as scared as he was that night.

"When he was describing the UFO on the radio, he wasn't shook up, so upon seeing it he wasn't ~~ex~~ excited. But after whatever happened to him, after his radio went dead, he was really shook up."

Wheeler's wife Doris had also been listening to a police scanner in their home and also rushed up to Tuttle Hall, arriving almost at the same time Chief Helmer did. Seeing Wheeler's condition, she put him in her car and took him to their family doctor.

"The doctor checked him for a few minutes afterwards and said he was one scared man," Helmer said. "His pulse rate was higher than it had ever been."

The doctor gave Wheeler some medication and sent him home. Meanwhile, Helmer and several Ellsworth County deputies searched the area where the incident occurred and checked it over with a radiation detector, but found nothing unusual.

Helmer then went to Wheeler's house where, he said, he spent 1½ hours interrogating Wheeler.

"We went over everything detail by detail--and he doesn't remember talking to me," Helmer said.

"His wife was sitting there and I had another guy there, and we went through everything, from the very first communication when he thought he saw a fire right through it all."

Wheeler wasn't feeling well and Mrs. Wheeler checked again with the doctor, who said to take him to Memorial Hospital in Menominee. Wheeler spent three days there and went home--only to go back a couple of days later after suffering from nightmares. ~~This time he was transferred to Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire, where more tests were taken.~~

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It
was 11 days before he finally went home again.

"Both times he's been in the hospital they've done various tests on him, including a brain scan, and all the word I've gotten back is that they really haven't found anything wrong with him," Helmer said.

Helmer later checked with people in the neighborhood of Tuttle Hill and found ~~no~~ one other than Fredrickson and Mrs. Wergland who saw anything unusual that night. However, he said, two families reported their television sets went dead shortly after 11 p.m. and several reported that their dogs barked and acted strangely.

Helmer also said that the squad car Wheeler was using needed new spark plugs, ~~points~~ points and a condenser after the incident.

"I checked back and it hadn't been too long ago that we had had it tuned up, and it really shouldn't have been due for another checkup-- but the plugs and points were burned right out.

"The starter has also gone bad, although we haven't replaced it yet-- and we just had a new one put in a little earlier."

Police Dispatcher Gail M¹ley told The ENQUIRER that at about 12:30 a.m. while the deputies and others were still searching the area where Wheeler had his experience, she saw an unusually bright star just over the trees slightly to the south of Tuttle H₁ll.

"Then a little while later just after the police left, I went and looked out the window again--and the star was gone," she told The

ENQUIRER.

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Mrs. Wheeler took her husband to their family physician, Dr. Frank Springer.

"He was deeply disturbed, very anxious and highly nerved up," Dr. Springer told The ENQUIRER. "That's the only thing I could find wrong with him."

"I gave him a shot and sent him home, but the shot didn't relieve the anxiety so I sent him to the hospital."

After three days Wheeler went home but soon returned to the hospital.

"He had this severe headache and I guess he'd had some kind of nightmare, some kind of frightening feeling, so we put him back in the hospital," said Dr. Springer.

"The second time was when he was really having headaches and they probably lasted 8 or 9 days. The headaches were very unusual for him and I have no recollection of his having headaches before.

"He told me he doesn't remember anything that happened the first two or three days after this happened, but I have no way of verifying this.

"He was rational and everything. It wasn't a matter of his being irrational or disoriented or anything, other than the fact that he was having headaches. Otherwise, he was acting normally."

During the 14 days Wheeler was in the hospital he was given a number of tests to try to determine what was wrong with him, Dr. Springer said.

"I couldn't find anything wrong with him and he seems to be all right now," said Dr. Springer. "I have treated him for 25 years or so and there was nothing I could see medically that could have caused this."

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