

Bigfoot, demons, walking raccoons, sure... but in Nebraska?

By Chris McCubbin
Staff Reporter

Phenomena" said that Nebraskans are good sources of reports on the unexplained.

"These people (most Nebraskan sources) are not publicity seekers. . . They've had an experience that's very strange . . . and they're trying to get on with their lives as best they can," said Colborn.

The following reports are taken from the Journal of the Fortean Research Center:

For years westerners have been fooling "dudes" with tall tales about jackalopes — jackrabbits with horns on their heads. Gifted taxidermists have been selling these non-existent critters for years. But some reports indicate

that Nebraska is the home to creatures infinitely stranger than the jackalope.

On Halloween of 1968 a small animal walking on its hind feet was struck by a pickup, then shot by one of the truck's occupants. The creature, which in coat and coloring bore a superficial resemblance to a raccoon, could not be identified by either the truck's occupants, one of whom was a trapper, or by the State Game and Parks Commission. Photos of the mystery creature still exist.

Since before the turn-of-the-century reports of a bigfoot-like monster have come from the area of Minersville, a small town near Nebraska City which no longer exists. In November of 1968

the Minersville creature was reported to have grabbed an 11-year-old boy and thrown him into a ditch.

On July 5, 1980, a motorcycle driver had to "dump" his bike to avoid hitting a bigfoot-like creature at 26th and Fairfield streets in Lincoln. The man said the creature was 7-foot tall, over 300 pounds, covered with long, dark hair, looked like an ape and smelled like a creek.

In the Autumn of 1956 Mr. Hanks (not his real name), a Falls City man, had just returned home from a family outing when he noticed what he first thought was a loose kite.

As the object drew closer Hanks saw that it was actually a man-like figure

with wings. Hanks said the creature's face was "very frightening, almost demonic."

"Its eyes were very large, blue in color, and watery," Hanks said. "The skin on his face was like tan leather. It was very wrinkled and seemed to overlap in folds . . . he was between eight and nine feet tall." The wings appeared to be artificial.

As the creature approached, Hanks found himself unable to move. The paralysis disappeared after the creature passed.

If you know of any unreported phenomena you can contact the Fortean Research Center at P.O. Box 94627, Lincoln, NE 68509.

When people think of appropriate settings for unexplained phenomena — UFOs, bigfoot, apparitions, psychic phenomena, etc. — a certain sort of place comes to mind; a mist-enshrouded New England churchyard, or an ancient, crumbling British castle. Perhaps a dense Amazon rain forest or a remote Himalayan monastery. Certainly few would think of the milo fields and feed lots of Nebraska as obvious settings for weird happenings.

But according to some reports, Nebraska is a much stranger place than it appears.

Lincoln's Fortean Research Center is a non-profit organization devoted to collecting and investigating reports on all sorts of unexplained phenomena. The center is named after Charles Fort, an important pioneer in the investigation of the unexplained.

Scott Colborn, associate director of the center and the host of the KZUM radio show "Exploring Unexplained

4th celebrations

From staff and wire reports

The Lincoln Jaycees will again be sponsoring a Fourth of July celebration at Holmes Lake, said Connie Knapp, chairperson.

Events will start at 11 a.m. with children's games. Mime performances and puppet shows will take place at 12:30 and 2:30 p.m., she said.

Four bands will play beginning at 3 p.m. The bands from country to rock 'n' roll, sponsored by KZKX-96 radio station will play until the 9:45 fireworks display.

Seward, "the Fourth of July capital" is planning at least one hundred events for Saturday including a pancake feed, teen dance, concerts, art displays and a parade that begins at 4 p.m. They will also have a fireworks display at 10 p.m.

Many events are planned in the Omaha area. A fireworks display by the famous Grucci family from New York will explode over Rosenblatt Stadium after the Royals' game. The \$50,000 display is expected to draw a crowd of 100,000.

A "Shakespeare on the Green" festival will be presented in Elmwood Park by the UNO and Creighton University theater departments. The play is free and begins at 8:30 p.m.

ANSWER TO PUZZLE

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EVITA FORM ENYO
SODOM TOGA LORN
WIMBLEDON LAET
      ION ALOSS
SARONG SETA
AGING SHREDDERS
MALE FIEND ERIE
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