

2 stories net Deseret News writer a \$1,000 award

Published: May 29, 1997, 12:00 a.m. MDT

By [Deseret News](#)

Deseret News staff writer Zack Van Eyck is the winner of a national award and a \$1,000 check for two articles about UFOs.

The articles, which were published in the newspaper last summer and fall, won the annual Donald E. Keyhoe Journalism Award.

"We are particularly appreciative of the investigative journalism embodied in your writings, as well as your fair and balanced reporting. These are the qualities we look for, since public education is a major part of our mission," said Richard Hall, chairman of the Fund for UFO Research Inc. in notifying Van Eyck of the award.

The award is named after the late retired Marine Corps major and former director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), whose early investigative reporting demonstrated the serious nature of the UFO mystery in the 1940s and 1950s.

Van Eyck's June 30 article told the strange tale of Terry and Gwen Sherman, who reported multiple UFO sightings, cattle mutilations and other bizarre occurrences on their 480-acre Uintah County ranch.

The reporter detailed the Shermans' experiences, which included seeing airborne objects the size of several football fields and strange, auburn-colored openings in the sky through which lights seemed to appear and disappear. He tied the Shermans' accounts to historical observations of UFOs in the Uintah Basin and elsewhere in Utah.

The story soon received national attention. Van Eyck's article was picked up by the Associated Press news service at the same time the movie "Independence Day" was opening in theaters throughout the country.

The second article told of Las Vegas millionaire Robert Bigelow's decision to buy the ranch for scientific purposes. A team of researchers, funded by Bigelow's National Institute for Discovery Science, is still on the ranch today, although little is being said about results of the study.