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Transcript of Episode from Thursday, May 10, 2018

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Jason: Hello and Welcome to The Social Psychic Radio Show. This is Jason Zuk. I am pleased to have Special Guest Dinah Lechner who is the State Director of MUFON for Florida and Louisiana. Dinah is a native of Florida-- she contributes a great deal of her personal time into investigating UFO sightings and reports around Florida on the behalf of MUFON. She has personally investigated over 1000 active MUFON cases. Dinah's personal experience contributes greatly to her success at investigating UFO reports. She has been a very visible public figure sharing her personal background and experience by appearing on such shows as *The Donahue Show*, *The Canadian*, *Shirley Show*, NBC California's, *The Other Side* and over 400 other radio and TV show appearances. MUFON is one of the oldest and largest volunteer civilian UFO investigator organizations in the United States. It consists of over 4000 members worldwide with chapters in every state. MUFON has assumed a significant role with investigating UFO sighting since its inception in 1969 as a non-profit organization. The group relies upon its trained field investigators and specialized teams to assist with UFO sighting and with the recovery of any physical evidence left behind during the sighting. MUFON volunteers carry out investigations; they interview witnesses, performed research and arrive at conclusions from any evidence presented. With great pleasure, I am pleased to introduce Dinah Lechner. Dinah welcome to the show.

Dinah: Thank you, Jason, that was good, thank you.

Jason: Thank you so much. I'm very excited to have you on our show. This is our first episode working on the topic of UFO sightings, and I really am honoured to have MUFON appear and to have you as its representative-- State Director for Florida and Louisiana. Thank you for coming on today.

Dinah: Well you know we've had an interesting day already, I don't know if you know that witnesses that see things can go right to the website --our MUFON website www.MUFON.com and fill in the report and we instantly get a generated report and today we had someone over near your area say that a cow fell out the sky, which I'm afraid we're not going to take that very serious, but we had another one over in Melbourne where someone discovered an interesting piece of artefact that we're going to do more exploration on, but we have all kind of reports that come in every day in particular here in Florida we have nearly 50 a month, so you know it was exciting.

Jason: In terms of the--that's sounds phenomenal. I know Florida itself --we are both situated in Florida, from your personal experience with all the cases you've been involved with, how do you see Florida fitting into the entire picture from MUFON and its investigation of UFO sightings?

Dinah: Yeah, we're lucky to be here in Florida because we have one of the largest reporting states in all the 50 states. Why? Let's just face it, we're circled but on 3 sides we have a tremendous amount of military bases. Air force bases all the way from Homestead, Key West all the way up to the Panhandle and we're surrounded with water which brings in other types of UFO reports what we call UFOs, a lot of tourists, a lot of clear skies, a lot of time and people outside, Jason and a lot of people will be outside and because of that we get more reports because people are looking in the sky. Now I was going to say so Florida plays a big part in all the reports like I said, all the report from MUFON, we had 500 last month of which 50 came from this state alone.

Jason: What other states other than Florida because I know pop culture wise there's a lot that's been covered about area 51 Roswell in New Mexico and that you know that's one of the things that I feel most people who've watched shows like the *X-Files* and other movies and entertainment programs, that's been you know historically where a lot of that focus has been, but compared to that, what other states have you found also have record sighting than of Florida as a hot spot?

Dinah: California is the second hot spot. And then, of course, our third hot spot is Arizona, but we have one state that you probably wouldn't have thought was a big hot spot and that's up in Chicago in Illinois, we get a lot of reports up around Lake Erie and Michigan like up there in Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin. Sometimes you're really surprised where the reports come from.

Jason: That's really interesting you, yeah and I know like from watching shows over the years growing up on TV, there's always been some type of episode that covers this topic and I just think it in terms of the reality of it and the seriousness of it, you know seeing things in the sky you can't explain that must scare a lot of people who witness the UFO and then don't know what to do about it. Have you found that from experience?

Dinah: Yes. You know what I found Jason, that people just don't know what it is sometimes, but they're still curious enough about the mysterious, it's mysterious to them and so by filing a report we do make it easy. Many years ago before the internet people had to find someone and call in and all the reports had to be taken by hand, they were done in handwriting and we're talking about written documents as opposed to a written reports as opposed to the quickness of the internet now, but with the internet they can go ahead and put that report and within 3 days one of our field investigators and we have over 500 field investigators throughout the United States and internationally will contact that witness and they'll do a more thorough reports of that witness-- and we are I don't know if we've mentioned this already

but MUFON is the only organization that does investigate its report and they do talk to witnesses whether they talked to him personally or through an email, because a lot of people do still prefer emails and text, we do ask questions, we do find out more about what that witness saw and I think it gives some comfort when they can move it from their shoulders to our shoulders and I think what's more important than anything if they find someone that's willing to listen, someone that believes that they saw something. Now whether we can explain it or not we will find that out as we follow the data, but it makes a witness feel good that they're not alone. And you know from what your TV shows of someone they are afraid to make these reports, they're afraid that their neighbours or their church or their family or businesses will consider them, oh were wacky, but by coming to us we listen and I think that's what's important.

Jason: And can you just tell our listeners the website that they would go to in the event they want to check out MUFON? I think I bring that up now since you brought up the website.

Dinah: www dot MUFON dot com and what so easy about the website is it helps you formulate your thoughts as you're making your report there is a situation where you'll put in a quick two or three words what did you see and then it helps you pinpoint the location, the time, the date, did you see in the east, did it move to the west or how big, how little ,what color, what shape, what size and it moves you in this direction so that by the time your thoughts are formulated and then it gives you a chance to sit down and spend more time developing what happened in a much longer-- where there's a text box where you can put a longer record and if you took a picture, there's a place for you to upload that photo and someone will look at that photo and I guarantee you someone will get back to you about that report that you place.

Jason: With reference to your website, I'm actually on it right now while we're talking it looks like you could become a member of MUFON is that correct?

Dinah: Yes, you can become a member and let's just say that you like for instance I became not only a member but I moved to the next level where I became a field investigator because you know what I wanted to see what the research was all about. I didn't want to just take someone's word for it, I wanted to be hands-on and I think a lot of people like that hands-on possibility of being able to investigate cases and get an idea of what really is going on. It helps you support your thought process, are they here? Are they real? But by working with the cases you start thinking well, the possibilities are unbelievable because we do believe that the ET hypothesis is supported by facts and we get those facts through the cases.

Jason: Things I think are pretty interesting from my own perspective. In the last 30 years our understanding of other planets that they call as being within the Goldilocks Zone the planet they're just right for life, now they are estimating it to be, I don't know the exact number but billions and billions of planets that might be similar to

ours where life could be sustained. To me that support even strengthens the potential for the UFO phenomenon that we've been dealing with all these years. Do you have anything to say to that?

Dinah: Well I believe as you just said there is life on other planets. Am I able to prove it? Not from sitting here in this chair, I have to go and listen to what the scientists have to say and follow that data. What I'm probably more interested--well not probably I know definitely I'm more interested in what's happening on this planet, what's happening in my own backyard and by being aware of what's happening in the bigger picture of the universe it helps me understand what's happening here in this planet, because let's face it, from our point of view this is an awfully big place too, the Earth, the whole Earth and not telling what is going on and all the different places so I want to make sure that I understand it correctly and help--it working with these reports helps me put it in more perspective because every time we get a report we learn something new that we may not have known before because we have to do research to come to some type of conclusion for that witness.

Jason: In terms of your actual cases that you've been involved in, in about 1000 is what I said in your intro, how many estimated cases have there been that MUFON itself has been involved with since its founding?

Dinah: We have investigated I'm talking about all 500 investigators internationally and all through the 50 states over 83,000 cases. Now that's a lot of cases that's just not inputting data that's actually going out and there's a lot of times there's field work involved of talking to the witness because the witnesses---if it wasn't for witnesses there would be no MUFON, that is the basis of what we do the witnesses are where we get our cases. And the witness what's important is that by asking the right questions, the witness can give us information they may not have thought that they had and we learn a lot that way too and every day as we---I'm not saying we talk to witnesses every single time sometimes they send us a photo we're able to glean enough information from that photo to come to some type of conclusion, but like I said it starts with the witness and it ends usually with the witness.

Jason: You're driven strongly by witnesses and volunteers I know you are a non-profit organization. How do you function as a non-profit when everything is volunteer-based and witness-based?

Dinah: I think what's interesting about our volunteers is that they're very serious, because it is a volunteer organization and there's a lot of good training and a lot of good information. I can just tell you the volunteers really take their time to understand the case, talk to the witnesses. They realize this is not there's no compensation that MUFON itself is non-profit and the type of volunteers that we have in this organization they give 150 percent of their time and their effort because they're getting something of benefit too. They're getting more information about this ET hypothesis each case they work, brings them closer to understanding this a little bit better and like you were saying with the volunteers we're very serious about this,

this is not something that we do frivolously, we are like I said we put a lot of time, the folks here in Florida put a lot of time, I do because we enjoy it, it is very rewarding this type of work.

Jason: When you refer to ET hypothesis, what exactly is that?

Dinah: Well, you know we have this hypothesis, are UFO's are they real? That ET hypothesis can be supported by facts are we not alone? Is it possible that the universe is actually teeming with life, which is something that you mentioned about all the other planets. So this is what we work with in these cases we try to bring more science to it, and by collecting this data from our cases we actually help researchers. Now we may not be able to go deeply into a case other than to come to some type of conclusion, but we have-- I don't know if you know this, worldwide we have researchers that become part of the organization that uses our MUFON database to work deeper into something. And because of this we also learn from their efforts and their efforts also help us promote the research on UFOs they help us discover the true nature of this phenomenon. And one day I can't tell you if we've had caused any scientific breakthroughs but would like to hope that our research has, and you know one of the most important things is by helping people-- I think we also improve life on our planet because this mystery or this phenomenon has been going on for all my life all your life Jason, so you know.

Dinah: Today I was reading the paper and I was reading this these folks are in their 90's have passed away and they definitely were in service, military service and I guarantee you they probably saw something, but when they pass away, the information they have passes away with them and that's why we try encourage witnesses go to our website whether you're young or you're old or you have information. We can't research without that data, so this is why we do a lot of radio shows and things of this nature is to try to get--if I have one case about a sighting, that's not as good as having two or three witnesses they have seen it from two or three different locations that help give us that credibility that we need within our database.

Jason: I guess that would be the corroboration the corroborating evidence where you have multiple sightings of a similar event.....

Dinah: That's right.

Jason:from different people reporting it independent of each other can add to the legitimacy of an actual UFO event and phenomenon, is that correct?

Dinah: That's correct and that's important. Like for instance in 1985 Gulf Breeze, we just didn't have one report, oh Jason we had hundreds of reports and that's---now for that's where the researchers that they can go into one case and spend a large amount of time, there was something to work with. Can we ever saw what happened in Gulf Breeze? No. Can we come close? Yes. But every time we get close and

something else comes up, but that was a big case right here in Florida, the 30th anniversary was last November 19 of 2017, very important case for this state. We have another important case coming up on May 14th, 1978, right here in Marion County where I live Pine Castle bombing range, which is the only live bombing range still in existence. There was a sighting of lights over the forest and we had so many of the big UFO researchers come into the area to check on that. We never have it was--we don't have a conclusion on it I'm reworking the case the best with the information that I have, but that was very interesting, very interesting right here in the zone county.

Jason: Is that where you had eight people who were camping and they saw at the same time--you can't deny one person saying they may have seen something in someone else try to discredit, when you have eight people that can't be discredited very easily.

Dinah: Not only the eight people that saw what but then they're also where the people that were on base, from the watchtower down to the radar man. There was something, we don't know they'll try to blame it on stereo, they try to blame it off on planets or stars but something happened that goes back to having more people report. As a matter of fact we just had someone in 2005 who wasn't in the original investigation make a report and that's why we do these shows is for people to come forward even the other--I was looking up something for the Bermuda Triangle and we found four cases and Jason, get this, the report range from 31 years to 50 years after the event. Can you imagine holding that in for 31 to 50 years and finally saying, hey I've got to get this story out.

Jason: Absolutely. That's amazing.

Dinah: I know can you just imagine and that's what I think about the people who are leaving up passing away, do they have something they would like to tell us and not know where to go and that's why we try to educate the public, we try to get out there and say yes there is a place to go now not every older person likes to mess with the internet but, you know they make a phone call we help them out but, we need those reports you know. I'd like 83,000 be 183,000 you know the more the better.

Jason: Has that increased since cell phones have become commonplace?

Dinah: Yes, yes. We even have I think there's an app but I know a lot of people do follow them with their phone and they'll use CM the vocal where they can vocalize it because we'll see the report how they'll be of a misspelled word based on their accent, but we'll take them any way we can get on because we can always clarify the data by just calling the witness.

Jason: And that I guess would have a lot to do with following the data as you said

Dinah: Following the data. You know what we don't fill in the blanks. If the data moves us in one direction that's the direction we go. We don't start off with--when I read a report I don't have any idea where it's going to lead me, it could lead me, you know sometimes I'm so very surprised thinking it might be this and turned out to be totally wrong so I've learned to quit, you know making a conclusion before I get to the conclusions and that's the last thing we do. And we have to support our conclusion, we can't say oh I just think it's this, no that doesn't work we have to support why we think is this.

Jason: What's the percent of sightings that are explainable for UFO's that you've come across from MUFON?

Dinah: I would say I know this is a high number from 90 to 95 percent, and then 5 percent we just you know 10 to---5 to 10 percent we just can't-- even in that 90 percent that there is a possibility of an explanation that also helps our witnesses because I had a gentleman who was just hysterical because he saw 32 un-explainable light overs his home in Jacksonville and it took a while to get to it, but what we found that someone there on the Saint Johns River had launched a wedding there was a wedding had launch 32 Chinese lanterns, but the look at his video and look at all that it was very, very interesting. I went and did a site visit because I thought, wow! I like to know this is it, and we get mobile you know if we have a case, what they do is they rate them before we get them. We call them either cat 1, a cat 2 or 3, and that cat 3 case is what we call an instant, we got to get on it in 24 hours and we have what we call a star team here in Florida and star team stands for Strike, Team for Area Research. That means we mobilized in less than 24 hours and head out to that site and we have what we call a go back in and in our go bags we'll have Geiger counters we'll have infrared cameras and goggles and things that we need to do our research because, once again this may be the one that we pick up sufficient evidence or artefacts that will lead us to more information, so we don't take a chance, we are always mobile this whole state. We have a system in place where we can you know mobilize it anytime anywhere and we have a big state believe me from the Panhandle down to Key West. Florida covers a lot of territories.

Jason: How many volunteers you have actually have for Florida itself within MUFON?

Dinah: We have over 35 field investigators which is a very large amount of field investigators for one area, but we are very organized we have what we call a chief investigator and in this state the chief investigator is also the assistant state director and his name is John Gagman, he's over in Melbourne and you talk about organized person he is a firm believer in what we do and he is very secure in working reports and we do a lot of one on one training. So once someone does become a field investigator in the state of Florida we do work with them one on one week we give them information we just don't say, okay go to it, no, we don't work that way we want them to understand the process and feel comfortable and what they're doing. So this is a darn good state to become field investigator, because we do take such a personal interest in the training of each one of our F.I's and because people

have questions you think that sounds easy to you really put your hands on it, it's not that way, it could go in so many different directions based on the data.

Jason: What is the S A A T?

Dinah: S A A T, SAT it is called SAT. It's a specialized assignment team. Let's say for instance, let's use Gulf Breeze, let say Gulf Breeze just happened this week. We would need and we knew it's going to be a very large case a lot larger than what the state could handle. We're talking about boots on the ground, we're talking about long-term commitment and that's when the SAAT team would come and they would come in and they could do a longer-term investigation than we could as just here in the state. And then usually what will happen those types of cases after they're thoroughly investigated and it may take up to a year, that's what that team does that day we will only have maybe one or two cases and its long term.

Jason: I'm looking at another acronym F. L. A. P, P as in Paul, What is it?

Dinah: Flap F L A P

Jason: Yeah.

Dinah: A FLAP is exactly what we had about 18 months ago. A FLAP is when the phones start--first the cases start coming in instantly there hitting headquarters and we're talking every 15 minutes and headquarters also goes to what we call our director of field investigators and the director of field investigators then starts coming to the state director at that time it was another state director and the state director starts alerting the strike team or the star team because what has happened is let's say in Tampa someone saw something they couldn't explain but then all the sudden within 15 minutes of the case in Saint Pete, 15 minutes later Clear Water, 15 minutes later Brooksville, 15 minutes later the interior of the state all the way up to Jacksonville. This is very unusual when we have a FLAP because--it's good we got the system so that everyone--we call everyone up people are out, they're out watching the sky, were alerting the whole state all at one time, all our F.I's, everyone's boots on the ground because something is going on, and that's a FLAP.

Jason: I see. Let me ask you this, since you're a volunteer organization now but you do a lot with your volunteers in your investigations and your staff, how do you guys fund everything, to operate?

Dinah: Well we have to do like everyone else we go out there and use what's available in the marketplace and thank goodness in our case we start out with Kick-starter. We had a Kick-starter project that was a license plate and we picked Gulf Breeze as the graphic that we use our license plate and that got us-- and we were very fortunate that Florida was very generous and we were able to create our license plate, sell it at an affordable price and be able to start putting money into our bank account. We also were very fortunate that 2 years ago we helped host one of our yearly

symposiums and this year's symposium was in Orlando 2 years ago we were able to receive some of the benefits of that financially, the next symposium it will be up in Pennsylvania in July and so we also collect funds from selling Tee Shirts, you know the same things that most non-profits to do, you know and we'll have some type of product that will-- and we also ask for donations on our website. So we're into social media just like everyone else but we do have nice-- people that believe in what we do and they help us out.

Jason: That's great. In reference to your equipment, the type of stuff that you do for the star team when you're out in the field, what type of things do you utilize during your typical investigation for a sighting?

Dinah: Well you know it's kind of like when you watch CSI and they have the cameras and they have the things they measure with and the flag they put down, these kind of things collection bag, gloves you know bio-hazard suits, Geiger counters you know we kind of looked just like a little mini CSI when it goes out there and because you never know, especially when it comes to an area the Geiger counter comes into big plays to make sure that it is safe, safety first now that's always what's important. Now we had a case--oh I think about 2 years ago and we thought we might possibly when we didn't know for sure that we had a cattle mutilations and of course then we had the Geiger counter to make sure everything was safe before we moved into the area because we want to make sure that not only there's no harm that we're putting any of our volunteers into harm's way. And not everyone is on star team it's only the folks that have been here longer, more training that we had put on the star team, we don't ever want like I said safety first. This would not be something that someone who just came in to as a field investigator would be exposed to; officially they would work up to that process.

Jason: How does a volunteer become a field investigator with MUFON?

Dinah: Well as we said earlier, they would go first to the website and become a member and then the website will also have an area where you want to become a field investigator you want to do a little bit more, then you would take an online test you can either buy the manual and a hard copy. I know it sounds terrible 265 pages, but it's easy to read, and once they go through the manual then they take an online test. It is an open book exam, you would probably say why open book, well you know I think open book tests are just as hard as closed book test. Makes you go back and read that material again and again so that you've got it lets you see what's important and then we also asked for a background check and I think this is very important because you will be in witnesses' homes and we want to make sure not only you are protected but the witness as well. And then we train like I say we do have training here in the state of Florida and we work you know one on one with those witnesses, I mean other witnesses with the field investigators.

Jason: And in reference to the field investigator approximately how long it takes for someone to apply to become a field investigator and actually getting approved and becoming one.

Dinah: Well it depends on the person if the person is a quick study and likes to plough through the material they could actually over the weekend, one day. But some people sometimes don't have as much time and they need to kind of absorb the book so they'll go back to the manual go back and forth a few times. Now what's nice is if the test is not passed on the first go around you do have 3 opportunities within 6 months to retake the test. We had a gentleman this weekend say I'm going to do it and within the week he was a field investigator and will begin his training this next week and there's others that will take the whole 6 months. So it's just a matter how much time you have or and like I said there's no rush you go at your own pace, and that's what's important. Especially when we work cases we don't rush our cases we give ample time to making sure that all the data is collected and the witnesses been contacted and the field investigator is comfortable with their investigation.

Jason: Tell me a little about the people you interact with who have had a sighting, how did they usually feel when they're interviewed? And let's say that one of the 5 percent of cases that you can't explain. What usually do you do with reassuring that person or trying to work with that person moving forward?

Dinah: A lot of times that person may be someone that's had an experience that feel they've had contact and MUFON has developed what we call the ERT, Experience our Research Team and that director of that team is right here in the state of Florida, Kathleen Martin and Kathleen and her crew or her teammates will work with that witness because a lot of times that witness who had a close encounter is very traumatized and they need to feel comfortable as they're telling their story and half of what helps the witness whether it's a witness who's had a close encounter or witness that seen maybe just a light in the sky, sharing that case with someone who believes you that you had an experience that's half the battle, and I think that helps the witness. I have seen witnesses that were so traumatized that I still think about it. Just to think about how they get stuck in a moment revisiting that mentally what happened, but talking to someone helps shift some of the burden from their shoulders to someone whose experience and listening and we are all experienced listeners. That's the most important thing we try to teach our FI's, listen to what the witness is saying let them tell their story. That's usually how we start the interview, tell us what happened, yes we've already read it, but that's different tell us in your own words what happened.

Jason: With reference to close encounters, can you give us some examples of what would constitute a close encounter versus just a sighting?

Dinah: A close encounter would be someone who feels like they've seen something in their surrounding area, may be at home. They've seen unusual light come into their

bedroom, they've heard noises they couldn't explain, things had been moved, they feel they're being watched and they may actually have some type of proof. They may wake up with unexplained bruises scratches, busy dreams or their clothes may not be the same clothes they went to bed in and these kinds of things. Now we in Florida don't always investigate close encounter cases because they're handed off to the ERT team, but we will be able to read the original report before we hand them off and sometimes most of them are just handed up directly. Jason on the MUFON website there is a 20 question survey, that even if a witness doesn't file a report they can go file that survey and other questions that will help the ERT team determined has something happened or not happened and then the witness will give their you know name and phone number and then someone from that team will also contact them and talk to the witness.

Jason: Now your ERT is that separate organization or is that still part of MUFON directly?

Dinah: Is still part of MUFON directly and if you'll go--like I said if you're on the website right now on the very front page there on the right hand side you will see the ERT teammates showing their qualifications. It is headed by a doctor and what's interesting Captain Martin who is the niece of Betty and Barney Hill, one of the most famous abductees early research case up in New Hampshire will be speaking at Cassadaga at 3 O'clock this coming Saturday, and she is someone that is so interesting, a strong researcher in this field and you really feel good when these people have put in as much time researching this part of the phenomena as we do in researching are what we call the lights in the sky or things that happen on the ground, and their volunteers. Once again Jason their volunteers, but they do a great job there you know we don't have to be paid to do good work I think we do it because we're serious and we want to help others.

Jason: Tell me little about your conferences I know you've mentioned that you have the symposium that occurred last year. How often do you have symposium?

Dinah: We have them every year. Two years ago we were in Florida, last year we were in Las Vegas and I never miss a Las Vegas because we always have a tour out to Area 51 and you know even though we get to go just to the back gate, I'm telling you Jason, if you ever have a chance to go on a tour to area 51, I mean it makes--it sound like I went in there but I didn't is just the build-up of knowing that you're way out in the middle of nowhere and nowhere is--I can't begin to explain that, and when you drive up to that gate and you see the security and you know you're being watched and you know that those people in there watching you have guns, it makes you really stand up and realize that, well this is serious. It just gives you a new respect of the phenomenon and especially in that area. Now this year we'll be up in Pennsylvania and once again it gives people a chance--we have about 1000 people come, not only do we have interesting speakers inside the auditorium but we also have a lot of interaction that goes on into hallway where people are able to tell what brought them to MUFON, it's a wonderful event. I mean I never miss them because I enjoyed just being around the people, because we're a unique group of people and it's nice to be around people who think the same way we do.

Jason: It's great that when you can have like minds congregate and share ideas I think that's very important for everything that you're doing right now, with this situation.

Dinah: And I think you find it the same with you in the work that you do, it's nice to be able to know that there are people who feel like they may not be able to talk to their family but, hey we go to this conference and we can talk to these people because they understand where we're coming from.

Jason: Definitely. I want to ask you because we haven't gotten into this yet, what brought you to MUFON? How did you get involved?

Dinah: Well, the first time I joined MUFON was in 1985, and I was living in Tampa, but I found that I didn't--because I owned a business there I didn't have time to dedicate as I do now, but I also lost my husband in 1978. He was in an accident there in Tampa and I started having after he died I started having a tremendous amount of paranormal activity in my world, and I couldn't explain it and the activity of so many strange things happening that I actually wrote a book and I actually caught the eye of Phil Donahue, was on his TV show, did a show in Canada, did a show out on the other coast, but after a few years I realized that I needed to learn how to be a good researcher, because at this point it was just my story. Now could I find other people with similar stories or similar information and by coming to MUFON it was able to help me work with what I call the scientific process where we remove all the emotion. We just look at the facts, I feel like I'm a Jack Webb you know just the facts lady, just the facts. And that's what we work with and that's--if we should process all the data, if we use the fact that are given to us and not try to make it any more than it is you know and that's what I did with my information. I started looking and I will tell you, I think most people who become field investigators have had some type of experience whether it's paranormal or whether that they've seen something they can't quite explain, and they're going to start down this road of researching it themselves. So a lot of us will keep an eye out on a case that might come in, in the area that we had an event or a similar event, it is human nature that we come for a reason and that's what makes us good researchers.

Jason: Plus if you have your passion behind it....

Dinah: That's right.

Jason: and have such a strong interest in topic, I can imagine that, I definitely do see that. What's the name of your book if you don't mind me asking?

Dinah: Called *Never Alone* and it's a kindle version you can get it off of Amazon,

Jason: [42:26](#) [crosstalk] by the way

Dinah: Thank you. I think what's interesting is after I found out so many things that happened that I thought possibly it had to do paranormal. I think after a while, Jason, I found that maybe there was other things at play and that's what I was trying to get research and that's why MUFON was a perfect vehicle for me, and like you said I brought my passion, because if I could help someone and I can still the relief that when they gave their report if we were able to explain it, or even if we're not able to explain it, we just don't say, hey I don't know what you saw, we have a better way of doing it we'll say, you know what one day maybe something will come in another case and it will help us explain what you saw, but right now we just don't have the answer. So we're very sympathetic to the witness and the agony that some of them go through when they put something up that you can just practically feel it in their words on the paper like that they feel like they shouldn't have done it, but then I think there's also relief when they have gotten the words out and someone reads it, and someone calls them and let them know you know, we're working on it.

Jason: Originally I had brought up earlier about the fact that pop culture covered this topic of alien sighting. I want to ask you, based on your personal involvement with MUFON and over 1000 investigations that you've been involved with, what would you say in terms of comparing how these investigations are portrayed on TV on other social media, in movies, how does the trail in pop culture different from the reality of an actual investigation of the other sighting or a close encounter?

Dinah: Well obviously we're not going to have all that background music and all those special props and settings you know, but in a way it's not too different because when you're talking to the witness sometimes a witness will tell me something that I am so captivated that you just want them to tell you more, more, more and you realize that by listening to them and helping them out--what I really want to say is a lot of times witness will start with something simple, they'll tell us they saw something that we can pretty well explain but you can tell by the tone of their voice there's a lot more to it, and sometimes we'll say have you had any other sightings? And then they opened up a floodgate that it becomes bigger than it really originally was, and they were able to tell you things that they have seen. Now I can't prove big foot, but sometimes someone will go from a simple sighting to had been out hunting and heard big foot or seen big foot, and you know what that's pretty interesting, but a lot of times they will not tell us until 10 or 15 years later so it's not like I can go investigate it and they'll be any evidence. But these people have no reason to tell us something that's not--in their world it is true. Jason, what they're telling us is true they have been embellished it; they are living it, you can feel them living it as they tell you about what they saw.

Jason: Do you think that there's a *Men in Black* type governmental organization out there that tries to cover up sightings and evidence of close encounters with aliens?

Dinah: Well I have never met one personally, but I've had witnesses say that they've had someone knock on their door, I'm not telling you its common but is not uncommon

either that if there is a close encounter and now I'm not talking in the more recent time I'm prior talking more in the 25, 30 years ago. I had one or two tell us, can I validate it? No, but for them it was someone knocked on that door and they always had--and like you said the pop culture has really put that *Men in Black* out there and people will use that same term they had that *Men in Black* look. Or if sometimes they'll say they had that military appearance, what does that mean? Well, their hair cut high and dry they just had the look. So pop culture does translate over into the words of the witness as they're telling us, and when they give us that example we instantly know what their meaning, what their meaning was when they say ah, ah military look.

Jason: Have you encountered witnesses that you've worked with that were actually fearful of reporting a sighting to you?

Dinah: Oh yeah. That's why they will tell us. That's why the initial sighting might be something simple and then the real story is something they're not going to commit to paper, they're just going to tell you.

Jason: Well, I think I want to cover--we've got 10 minutes left. So one of the things I want to cover with you, since you're a volunteer-driven organization, how would someone listening to this episode become involved with MUFON, what type rolls can they take other than you know you can even embellish of what we talked about ready but I just want to lay that out there for our listeners?

Dinah: Well, for instance, let's say not everyone wants to become a field investigator you can help us at meetings. There are meetings all around the state if you say, well where are our meetings? We have a meet up site once again social media is called meetup dot com, Florida MUFON, UFO research and investigation and we have a lot of people that come to those meetings in the different areas and help. They help present the material, they help the state director, I mean if the state section director is unable to run the meeting, one of the volunteers will step up and take the meeting because we have meetings once a month. So not everyone is a member, but everyone feels comfortable in helping. We have people that will volunteer their time to do publicity for us, they'll volunteer their times in different capacities and we have people who actually may be a photo analysis, we have photographers that will volunteer their time to look at photos for us. So there's other ways that people can help here in the states, they just have to get a hold of me and that's not a difficult thing, they just go to the Florida MUFON website find a chapter, find Florida and there's my name, click on it the email instantly goes to me. We have a lot of people who moved to Florida we just have some folks that just moved from Colorado that will reach out and say, hey were members, we see what's going on through your social media and this is how we keep people in our active and active here in the state of Florida. Obviously we can't react to all the millions of people here, but we can least put our social media out there so people can go to either our Facebook page or they can go to our website, and YouTube we have a YouTube channel with

some wonderful videos that we've done in the past, so like I say socially, with our social media were very active out there in the state.

Jason: That's great I was looking at your website and I want to ask you, what is your live UFO map?

Dinah: The live UFO map is, that will show you the last 20 report what's happening right now. What's happening right now you can look at that and you will see--you're looking at right now aren't you? And you're going to see around the United States all the UFO sightings right now as I was talking about and you'll see the sightings that have photos, you'll see the sightings that have if there's any media, there's a sighting right now that was reported 5 years later we just got the report in Fort Lauderdale and you can go there right now there is one up in Orange Park that just happened and for people they will say well I email--I sent a case into MUFON years ago and I'll say well if you have your case number go put the case number on there are the date and whatever and you can find out, it is an excellent starting point for researchers. I had a case in Louisiana back on the 23th of last month that was simply a set-up of F.18 jets flying and the rudders were sticking up through the clouds and someone caught that picture that was attached. The witness they got off with what we call UFO stalker that's what you're looking at, and they formulate a report and it came out of Jerusalem. So it was interesting to look at the photo and written in their language and their opinion of it, so we have someone from Greece that contacts us after they look at something on this the UFO Stalker. Now if you go to our website, Jason, which is the www.FLMUFON.com, we also have live 24-hour radar. There's a lot of people who say we saw something and we will go to that live radar and show them that there was a plane that crossed over to high altitude and that's probably what they saw. So there's an interactive map, but that's on our Florida MUFON website www.FLMUFON.com.

Jason: Tell me a little about alien abductions, I don't think we really covered that very much I know you mentioned Miss Martin, I'm sorry Captain Martin is the niece of a famous individual who got abducted by aliens. Have you encountered interviewing anyone who is actually that they allege that they were abducted during a close encounter?

Dinah: Yes and once it starts going in that direction we go ahead and ask them to fill out the ERT report and then the case is handed over to ERT, we don't want to get on our level as field investigators. We have to be very cautious with this type of case because this witness may need more of guidance than we're able to give and we want to make sure they get it as soon as possible.

Jason: I can imagine that. That is very intriguing to me with reference to that let me ask you based on your experience with MUFON, how can the organization help others gain an increase understanding of the UFO phenomenon? What could MUFON do as an organization to help the general public in your opinion?

Dinah: What we do and what we have done in the past is we're stable. We've been doing the same thing since 1969, we do what the Air-force didn't do we investigate, and the information is out there. Now some of the reports that we have you'll have to become investigator before the data is released because one thing I will let you know that we protect the witness. The witness none of their data is put out there and a lot of times witnesses will mark they have a choice of marking on the record anonymous or not, and a lot of times reports come anonymous. So their witness confidentiality is very important to us, but the data though, the report we try to look for other reports that conglomerates that one that they have as well as see if we can you know sometimes when we are working in an area we might be able to maybe the witness had two or three other people with them and we will talk to those two or three witnesses and maybe those will lead us to other witnesses.

Dinah: Once again to follow the data but until we open a case to start talking to people we don't know where it's going to lead us Jason, we have no idea. Sometimes it doesn't go anywhere and sometimes we're still work on it 90 days later, because is so intriguing, we just can't seem to get all, we get so many leads that we have to keep following, following, as a matter of fact the cattle mutilation case that I had 2 years ago, one of the researchers is getting ready to reopen it because it's been on his heart of hearts he says you know what, we need to go back and rework that case. And that's what I always find interesting about what we have our researchers are serious. Sometimes they feel like they need to go re-worked a case they will, and that's what's important.

Jason: That's amazing. I am so honoured to have you on today, we're running out of time unfortunately, but I do want to personally tell you how important was to me to be able to feature you on this episode. I definitely appreciate the fact that you took time to attend our show tonight and be here. From my vantage point I think dialogue is one of the most important things we need on these types of issues because to increase understanding and sharing of ideas is how we can decipher what mystery might exist in terms of unidentified flying objects or aliens or anything of those particular persuasions. I definitely want people and I urge people in our audience to contact MUFON and Florida MUFON and to reach out to you and try to attend current event coming up and I know there's... actually want to make sure I do mention if you can share with us there's an event actually coming up in Tampa if you could tell us a little more about MUFON speaker that's coming up shortly on that.

Dinah: Saturday June the 9th that's less than a month from now, here in Tampa, Jimmy Keel Regional Library you can go to our meet-ups site to get more information. David Marler will be just talking about the battle of Los Angeles and what's going to be important I will be there and we'll have all our leadership team, so if you have something you need to talk to us, come there, because we are the people that you can talk to and share your report plus that David is an extremely serious researcher and it's always good for the general public to see how a case has been research and how the material is presented on the platform. It just gives us a good sense of credibility when the organization can present a good researcher like David Marler.

Jason: Absolutely. Now other than Mr. Marler, you mention an event this upcoming weekend, Cassadega?

Dinah: Cassadega, Kathleen Martin will be speaking there and once again she is a serious researcher and she is the director, one of the directors of the ERT, the Experience on Research Team and so if this is something that you feel you have an abduction are close encounter and you need to report it or come listen to someone that would be working that type of the case because you need to have confidence, then it's just a short drive it's in the middle of the state. I'm like you, Jason, come see these people were putting them... the people are taking their time they're out there, you know what we're not hiding were very visible with our meetings every month, our state-wide speaker or other events going on, come see us we are regular human beings like everybody else and you can build that confidence up because a lot of times people they don't know who to talk to, where to turn, and I don't want somebody to lead a lifelong suffer if they can talk to one of us and that's what's important. That's what I really feel is important is let us know; let us help you if we can.

Jason: I definitely will be there on the 9th and I look forward to meeting you in person meeting Mr Mahler's well. I just want to take time thank you right now being on our show and appreciate you spending the time with us today, while we weren't able to answer the question, are we alone we at least had a very phenomenal in depth conversation about what your organization does to act as a sympathetic ear to be that shoulder to lean on for anyone who had a startling experience from a sighting or anyone who's witnessed any of type of phenomena. I deeply think that what you guys do it is incredible and I look forward to hopefully having you guys on again on a future episode as well explored this topic further.

Dinah: And I appreciate it and like I said I liked that sympathetic ear because that's really what we are, because we need your reports, we need to hear from the public and you know what Jason by what you do you're helping us put it out there and given the public confidence, you know here were real people come talk to us.

Jason: Well thank you so much and I look forward to keeping in touch with you I will definitely make my effort to be there on the 9th and I will look forward to working with you and your organization in the future to help promote this very important organization and everything you guys do and just helping people in general that's what this is all about, and de-mystifying and taking the stigma away from anyone who the naysayer to those who actually have these real life experience and that definitely our vantage point. So thank you for coming on, I will be in touch with you definitely look forward to helping MUFON achieve its mission.

Dinah: Thank you.

Jason:

Okay have a great evening. I just want to do a brief summary. One of our greatest questions is, are we alone in this world? When you look at the media coverage and you see things since the 1940's with the different sightings about the evidence you have a lot of people out there who are very passionate about this subject. It is important that we keep an open mind and embrace these people who try to share their ideas, have the courage to express themselves. From my vantage point MUFON represents anyone who deals with this. They utilize scientific methodology to investigate these sighting and also document it and work with one another to create a network that can hopefully be responsive to anyone who encounters a sighting. And my last point of reference MUFON itself their website is www.MUFON.com. Miss Lechner is very involved in this and I can't thank her enough for coming onto our program this evening, we will be back next week at the same time next Thursdays at 8 pm. Thank you very much.