

S.P.L.A.T. and Intuitive meet for first time at Dane Castle

By Kelly A. Lundgren
of Mainline Newspapers

It was the perfect setting for the night of Halloween. It was a scene plucked from the pages of MacBeth or Beowulf, maybe not that morbid but certainly thrilling.

Dane Castle, located just inside Strongstown, loomed stoically in a sea of tall grass, its tall windows lit from the inside created dancing shadows around its outer walls. The crescent moon hung peacefully among the stars inviting believers of the unseen and unknown out into the night.

The only items that jolted the viewers of the scene into reality were the dozens of cars parked around the castle, home to Cathy Homer and Mike Mahalko.

On this night, close to 60 people came to Dane Castle to listen to Intuitive Lou Ann Gray and five members of the Southwestern Pennsylvania League of Apparition Technologists discuss their thoughts on the paranormal or abnormal as members of S.P.L.A.T. would say, religion, investigations and the spir-its. This wasn't a debate or a seminar, it was a meeting of the minds, a coalition between science and the human senses.

Inside the front double doors was the great room, where anxious attendees awaited the start of the meeting. On first entering the great room, one might think that a séance was about to take place, or even some sort of public torturing. However, the shining, ornate weaponry decorating the walls, along with several colorful tapestries and paintings, are collected by the owners for show only.

At eight o'clock, the five members of S.P.L.A.T. and Gray sat on opposing sides of the long wooden dining table in the center of the room.

were introduced to the crowd by Homer.

With the introduction out of the way, both parties were invited to explain who they were, what they did and how they do it.

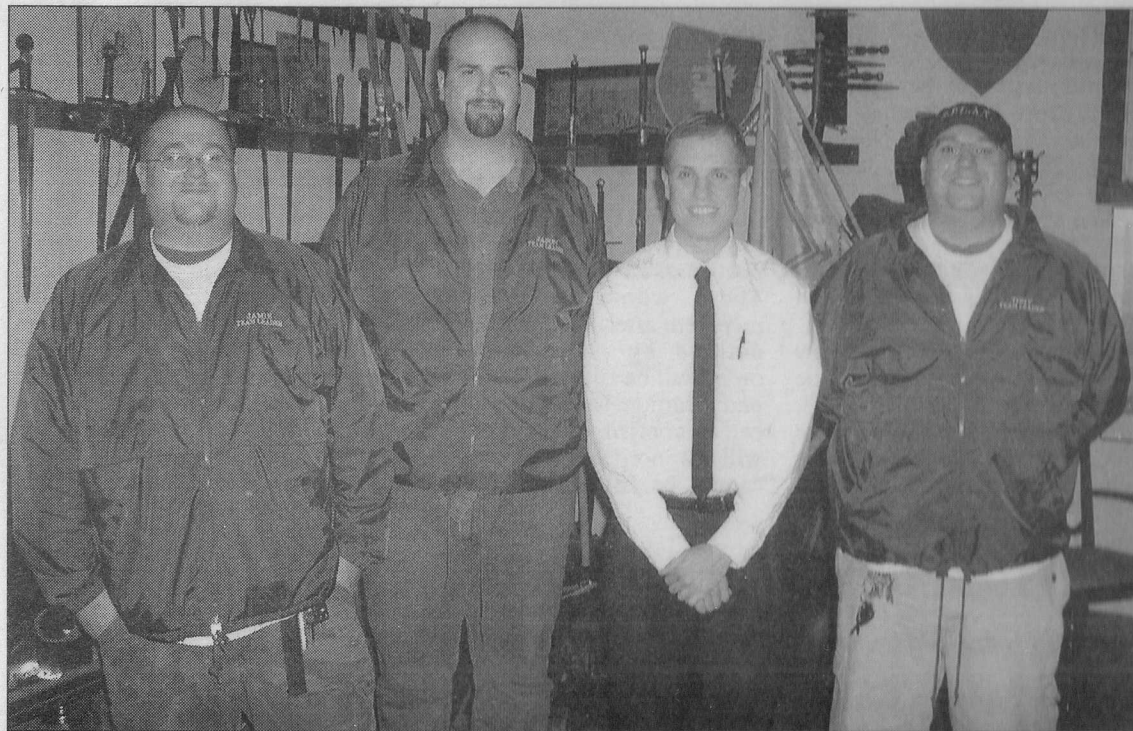
Jason Thornton, one of the founders of S.P.L.A.T. introduced himself, as did his colleagues and other founders, Jamie and Tony Muscatello and Walter Hutsky. Thornton, with help from the other S.P.L.A.T. members, explained to the crowd that they were not out to prove or disprove the existence of the paranormal. That, with the help of current technology, they go in to investigate a case, gather evidence, evaluate the material that they obtained and offer assistance, answer questions and discuss options to a client if they so desire.

All members of S.P.L.A.T. have very solid faith, holding their religion very close to their lives and in what they do. But they are men of science, and they are out to do what men of science do best; question and learn.

S.P.L.A.T. also informed the crowd that they were a non-profit organization and this was something they did outside of their Monday through Friday jobs.

After S.P.L.A.T. finished, Gray explained who and what she was. She too has strong faith, coming from a Cecilian heritage, where nothing is more important than family and God. Gray went on to explain that she had spent time learning to develop her gifts with others of different religions and backgrounds.

It's a known fact that much of the brain is unknown and that we humans do not use our brains to the fullest capacity. Gray goes on to explain that she thinks that when the human race was very young that we all had some form of intuition, some form of sensitivity and that after



Jamie Muscatello, Jason Thornton, Walter Hutsky and Tony Muscatello make up the Pennsylvania League of Apparition Technologists. Photo by Kelly A. Lundgren.

"If we could have a sensitive with us who can sense the spirit the same time that we have a electromagnetic spike, this could help research," Thornton explained to Gray.

Both sides of the table went on to answer questions and from the crowd and each other as well as tell some incidents that have occurred while dealing with the paranormal.

Gray went on to explain that she has ran into many people who actually have the gift but shrug it off. "I hear so many times I shouldn't have gone to that party, I had a bad feeling about it. Then why didn't you? People should listen to their gut instinct."

S.P.L.A.T. members let the crowd watch a video of an investigation that they did involving an air condi-

tion investigation.

The photo shows a little girl in a dress, holding a basket of flowers. Initially, S.P.L.A.T. members felt that the spirit in the photo might be demonic.

"The cemetery was holy grounds but over the years kids were coming into the place and drinking, partying, doing drugs and drawing all this negativity into this cemetery," Thornton explained. "I just don't think that this photo is of a little girl, I think it's evil. Her face doesn't even look human."

However, Gray looked at the photo and saw something completely different. "I see a heart shaped halo over this little girl," she said. "It's clear as day to me."

A woman in the crowd also

with a handicap, possibly a club right foot, and she was a cat lover, which is probably why her face looks the way it does, she's appearing how she wants to be seen." Gray achieved this all from studying the photo.

Before Gray left, she and S.P.L.A.T. swapped contact information, "I think it would be great to work together," Gray said as they passed cards.

After Gray left, the crowd formed around the table looking at photos and listening to captured electronic voice phenomenon that S.P.L.A.T. gathered. S.P.L.A.T. answered many more questions from the crowd as the night went on.

There was no angry mob this Halloween night at Dane Castle, nor

Gray could be described as the mysterious dark, beautiful type, some might say she'd be the perfect person to play a traveling gypsy. But she's not, a traveling gypsy, that is, she's a normal person with what she refers to as intuitiveness, she does not like the term psychic. Many Sensitives and Intuitives do not like the term 'psychic' because of the stigma involved with it. Gray gave the example of a late night infomercial guru Ms. Cleo on TV, many people chuckled because they know that the image many people get when thinking of psychics.

If you were expecting S.P.L.A.T. members to be described as being dressed in jumpsuits, strange gadgets strapped to their heads and a huge logo containing a white ghost on their backs then you were disappointed.

Several of them did, however, wear a dark green jacket with the S.P.L.A.T. name on the back. The five members all looked like average, hard working, American guys. They just happen to be the founders of a paranormal research group in southwestern Pennsylvania, based out of Portage.

Many will be disappointed to read that sparks did not fly nor was tension thick as slime when science and intuitive joined at the center table. In fact, they greeted each other cordially after both parties

form of sensitivity and that after thousands of years of evolution and development, we may have learned how to ignore or to pass it off as nerves. This philosophy is shared by many, it is not just a passing opinion of a few people with the intuitive gift.

"Things in life are not just black and white," Gray stated, "there are gray areas."

S.P.L.A.T. was excited to sit down and talk with Gray because they never had a chance to actually sit down with an Intuitive or even a member of the Catholic church to discuss the paranormal.

"If we could sit down, get the three sides that are deeply involved with the paranormal, the religious, the Sensitives and the technologist, and work together, we could do amazing things in this field," expressed Thornton.

Gray agreed very much with the idea of working with S.P.L.A.T. in the future.

S.P.L.A.T. works with many different forms of technology to gather information and evidence. One of which is an EMF detector, standing for electromagnetic field meter, which measures electromagnetic variations in the area.

In an investigation looking to collect data on the paranormal, electromagnetic fluctuation often occurs when in the presence of something paranormal.

and they did involving an all conditioner. Yes, it sounds silly, but it was still a client and they did what they had to.

One picture that became a point of interest was a photo that S.P.L.A.T. obtained while in a cemetery doing

A woman in the crowd also announced that she saw what looked like a wing on the spirit child.

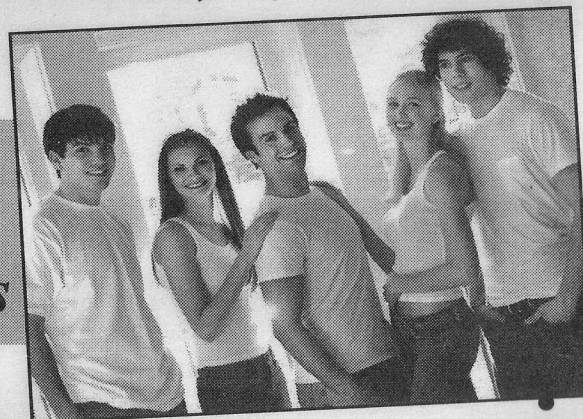
"I see it now," agreed Thornton. "I've never noticed that."

"I'd say that this child was born

Halloween night at Lane Castle, not were there solid answers found. However, many found comfort in knowing that people are out there who believe like them, are willing to listen and help and are out to discover the truth.

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The crowd gathers in the castle to listen to the presentation.
Photo by Kelly A. Lundgren.