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Thursday, April 07, 2005

print story | email story last updated: 3/30/2003

Flash in the sky caught on tape

Meteorites land in Park Forest



One of the meteorites recovered by police in Park Forest.

By **Ben Bradley**

March 27, 2003 (Park Forest) — A meteor shower lit up the skies last night, and parts of the meteor damaged several homes in the southwest suburbs.

A chunk of the space rock fell through the roof of Noe Garza's Park Forest house, swiped a window, and rolled across the floor before breaking a mirrored closet door.

"I thought somebody was breaking in. It was a big bang. I can't really describe it. I mean it was too quick to think," said Noe Garza, house hit by meteorite.

Garza and his family didn't know what was happening until they turned on a light. That's when 13-year-old Robert realized a five pound meteor fell just a few feet from where he was sleeping.

"As soon as I heard the big noises, I just curled up in a little ball and stayed there had until it was all over, and then I yelled for my dad," said Robert.

A news photographer shooting a fire scene on the Southwest Side caught the flash of bright light before midnight that experts say were meteor fragments streaking across the night sky. People as far away as Ohio reported seeing the light. Reports of small meteorites actually making their way to the ground have come in from Park Forest and Olympia Fields.

"Lit up the whole room. Sounded like a plane crashed or lightning going off. It was bad," said Chris Kasco, house hit by meteorite.

A Harper College astronomy professor is collecting meteor fragments that punctured the roof of the Park Forest Fire Department. He's like a kid in a candy store.

"This is the biggest thing to hit Illinois in a heck of a long time, to be funny about it," said Paul Sipiera, geology professor. "It's been more than 60 years since Illinois has been hit by meteorites that were witnessed as they fell to the ground."

The old story is we're getting hit every day by hundreds and hundreds of tons of meteorite, but this is only the ninth meteorite ever recovered from Illinois.

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ABC7's Ben Bradley

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TEMP
53°

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LOW: 36
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The experts say this meteor likely originated in the Asteroid Belt, nearly 300 million miles away. By the way, the man who had the meteorite smash into his house was in good spirits. He called his boss at work to say he wouldn't be coming in and told him why. His boss said, well, never heard that excuse before.

You can see the ABC7 report by clicking on the video icon at the upper right. You will need Real Player 8 to view this video. You can get it [FREE by clicking here](#). **NOTE: Video clips will only be available for 10-days from the date they were created.**

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