

UFOs Over Paris

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There's a UFO in town, but maybe not quite in the way residents think.

Paris resident **Connie Ball, 82**, has become a member of the **United Flying Octogenarians**, an organization for pilots over the age of 80.

The organization was founded in 1982 with 31 members, and has since grown to 1,272 members.

Ball said she heard about the organization and a February meeting in Tyler for Texas members. She and her two daughters traveled to the meeting to see what it was all about.

What she found was many older pilots, some still flying, some retired from flying, who enjoy the open sky as much as she does.

Ball began flying in 1948 at the age of 18, when women pilots were uncommon. She earned a private a commercial license, as well as an instructor's rating at the time, but gave up flying in her younger days at her husband's request.

Decades later, she decided she wanted to fly again, and about a week before her 80th birthday got the go-ahead from her Cox Field Airport flight instructor to get her commercial license renewed.

Although because of the expense, her flying adventures are now numbered, Ball said she still gets to fly every once in a while.



Having her license at the age of 80 is what qualified her for the UFO organization. She is now looking into ways she can get involved with UFO.

"I am very proud to be a member of such an organization," she said.

Ball said most of the pilots in the organization are ex-military pilots.

The oldest member is 103 and the average age of the members is 84.9 years old.