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Large meteor lights up sky over Liberal

- L&T staff report

A large, vibrant meteor lit up sky over Liberal early this morning, and one man who witnessed the meteor was impressed.

While dodging traffic turning into National Beef's north entrance at Eighth Street and U.S. Highway 54 this morning, Leader & Times Managing Editor Larry Phillips witnessed a large meteorite streaking through the sky just west of Liberal.

"Just as I was coming into town – at 65 mph – as always, two eastbound cars turned right in front of me onto Eighth Street," Phillips said. "I hit my bright lights and my brakes.

“As I passed the intersection just behind the second car turning in, I caught a large white light out of my peripheral vision in my upper right side of the windshield,” he continued. “It was too large and moving too fast to be a plane, and then a large tail started developing, and I knew it was a meteor.

“It was coming in from the north and heading earthbound at about a 50- or 60-degree angle,” Phillips said. “As the tail grew in length, it seemed to pass through low-lying clouds in the western sky and dimmed almost to a light blue or gray.

“As it neared the horizon, it just disappeared,” he said, adding the whole incident seemed to last 3 to 4 seconds. It was 6:30 a.m.

“My immediate thoughts were it landed just west of town, and I wish I knew where — they’re very valuable,” Phillips said with a laugh. “But as I approached six points, I realized with that size of fireball, it may have landed in southern Colorado or even further west.”

Phillips is hoping others in the area will call the paper and relate if they saw it or e-mail him.

“It was the biggest, brightest and longest shooting star I’ve ever seen in my 63 years,” he said. “It was something to see.”

Phillips can be reached at 626-0840 or at news@hpleader.com.

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