

Wounded highway patrolman says he's undaunted by bullets

By JAMIE MARKS
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SANTA CRUZ — Wounded California Highway Patrolman Jeff Lee says he's undaunted by the bullets that felled him and Sheriff's Deputy Mike Gray.

"I intend to go back to the (CHP) force as soon as I can," Lee, 24, told a crowded press conference Wednesday afternoon at Santa Cruz Community Hospital.

Lee was released this morning, from the hospital, where he has been recuperating from bullet wounds sustained in Monday's shooting near Felton.

Lee was struck in the right thigh and left wrist by 9mm bullets believed to have been fired by fugitive gunman Leslie Grover Wyman, 44.

Wyman is still being sought on an arrest warrant charging him with two counts of attempted murder and one of attempted robbery for the shooting near Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park.

Lee says he's "angry" that the suspected gunman "shot myself and Deputy Gray."

"It's unfair. He was shooting at everybody... He was shooting at us for no apparent reason."

Lee arrived on the Highway 9 shooting scene shortly after 1 p.m. — just moments after Wyman allegedly calmly opened fire on Deputy Gray.

Gray had stopped to question the "suspicious looking person." The bullet wounds he has suffered have left him in extremely guarded condition.

Lee said things happened quickly when he pulled up in his patrol car.

"I didn't know what was happening. I didn't know who the suspect was until some people yelled that it was the hitchhiker on the shoulder of the road," he said.

Lee yelled out, "Police, freeze," he said.

Just as he began to exit his car, the gunman fired a bullet that came through his windshield, he said.

Lee was shot as he tried to take cover, but he also managed to fire off three rounds from his service revolver before the gunman fled on foot into Cowell park.

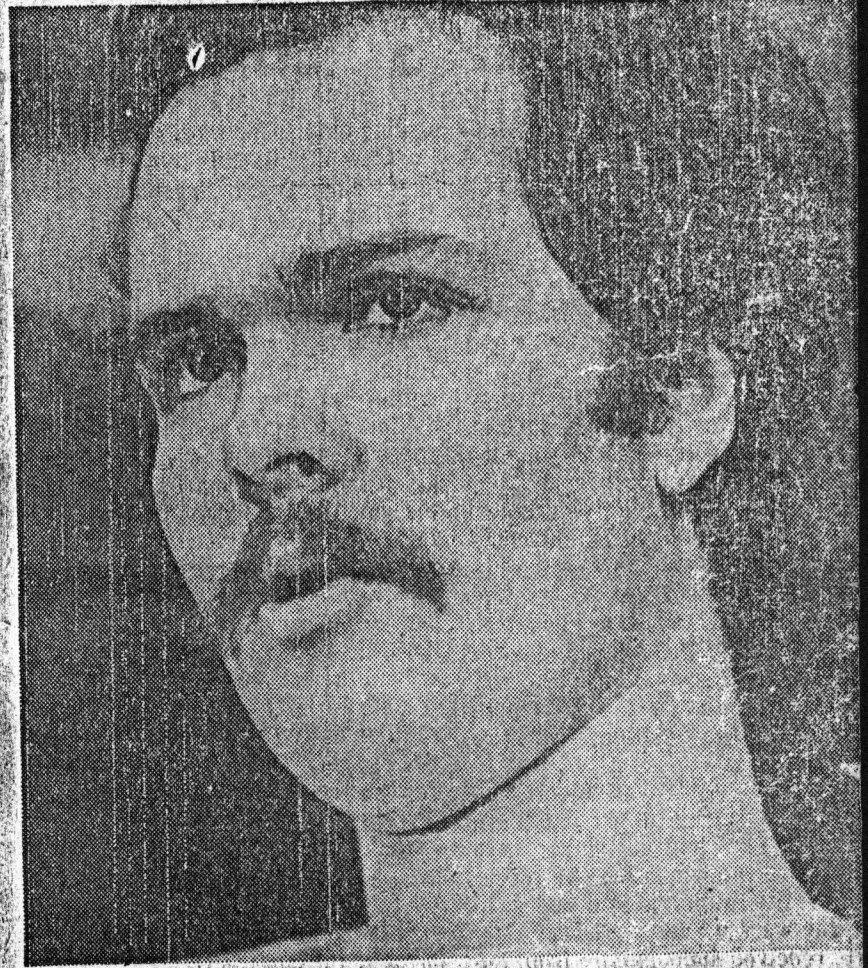
Since being hospitalized, Lee says he's received a lot of support from friends and persons he doesn't know.

Lee said he was wearing a bullet-proof vest at the time of the shooting, and intends to keep wearing one when he goes back to patrol duty.

Sheriff's department officials say Gray was not wearing a vest, although he carried one in his car. Because he was on a day shift, he apparently felt it was too hot to wear, they say.

Lee says he hopes the suspect is arrested and put in prison for a long time.

Upon his return home, Lee says he intends to recuperate with the aid of his wife "for about a month," and then return to duty.



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— Jeff Lee, wounded highway patrolman