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Sentinel

Eight hours of surgery for deputy

By JAMIE MARKS
Sentinel Staff Writer

FELTON — The suspect in the unprovoked shooting of a sheriff's deputy and highway patrolman Monday has been arrested in the past on weapons and assault charges, but he has never been convicted, sources close to the case said today.

The suspected gunman — who is still at large — has been identified as Leslie Grover Wyman, 44, whose last known address was 5014 Broadway, Redwood City.

Chief Sheriff's Deputy Marv Gangloff said Wyman has been living in the Santa Cruz Mountains for the past year in makeshift dwellings.

Sheriff Al Noren described Wyman as a loner, "survivalist-type" who may hole up for an extended period of time.

An extensive manhunt was under way today in the southern end of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, where the fugitive gunman was last seen.

Wyman is suspected of critically wounding Sheriff's Deputy Michael Gray, 40, and injuring Highway Patrolman Jeff Lee, 24, in what Sheriff Noren has termed a "totally unprovoked shooting."

Gray underwent nearly eight hours of surgery for three wounds in his abdomen — one an exit wound from a bullet leaving his body, said Dominican Hospital spokes-



Photo of suspect Leslie Wyman

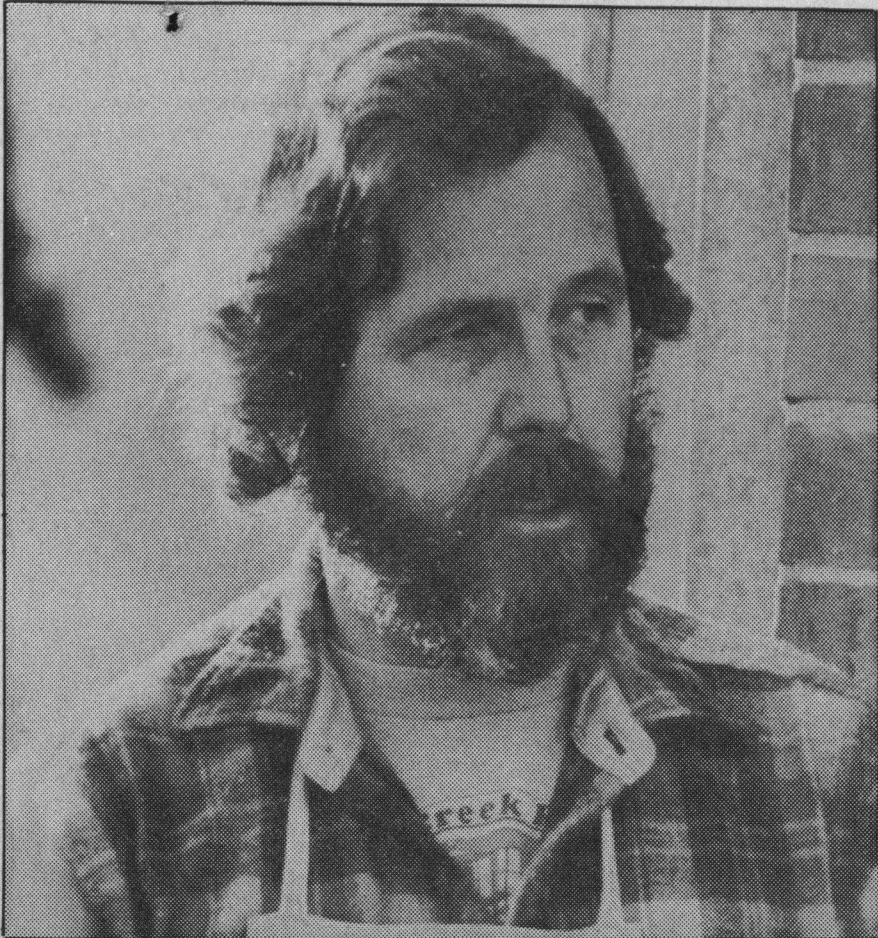
man Frank McGovern. He was unconscious this morning and in critical condition.

Gray, who has a rare blood type — B-negative — was helped during the long operation by blood donors and blood donations from as far away as San Jose. He received some 60 units of blood during the operation which ended at nearly 10 p.m.

Lee suffered flesh wounds to his left wrist and right thigh. He was listed today in stable condition in the surgical unit of Santa Cruz Community Hospital. He is expected to be released Wednesday.

Wyman is believed to be armed with an automatic 9mm handgun and is considered dangerous, said Sheriff's Sgt. Carl

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Pete Amos/Sentinel

Shooting suspect

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Kuebler. Hikers are discouraged from going into the park.

About 40 law enforcement personnel from the Sheriff's Office, Highway Patrol, Santa Cruz Police, Scotts Valley Police, UC-Santa Cruz Police departments were concentrating their search for Wyman in the area of the park between Felton and Santa Cruz.

Dog teams from Santa Cruz and Marina had picked up the suspect's scent Monday afternoon, but the dogs' search was called off at nightfall, said Gangloff.

Today, the dog teams were tracking the trail again, aided by the scent from a backpack believed to have been abandoned by the suspect, Gangloff said.

Detectives have also recovered the grocery bag the gunman had at the time of the shooting, he said. It has been sent to a laboratory for fingerprint analysis.

"The suspect has been seen in the area (of the park) at various times during the night," said Noren.

Several men resembling the suspect were detained for questioning and released, said officials.

Searchers are looking for a white man, 5 feet 11 inches to 6 feet tall, thin build, with brown, collar-length hair, brown eyes and a scraggly beard. He was last seen wearing an Army fatigue jacket, jeans and blue watch cap.

The suspect, Wyman, has been arrested in the past on numerous weapons charges, but not in this county, a CHP official said.

He bought a bag of groceries at Vista Food on Highway 9 shortly before 1 p.m., a checker at the store said.

The shooting broke out when Deputy Gray stopped to talk with a "suspicious-looking person" hitchhiking on Highway 9 in front of Big Tree Press, just south of Felton, about 1 p.m.

"I saw the sheriff's officer pull up in his car and he started to open the door," recalled Jytte Beatty, who was standing near the front entrance of Big Tree Press with a customer when the gunfire began.

The hitchhiker moved toward Gray and "with a cool, calm, collected head," and opened fire, shooting Gray once in the abdomen, said Beatty.

"I heard the shot and said, 'everyday

thing," said Royce Manchester, of Big Tree Press.

As the gunman walked away, Gray managed to fire several shots at him, witnesses said. The gunman fired back, but apparently missed the already-wounded officer.

However, some of the gunfire shattered the window of a Dart Swinger parked at Big Tree Press. A woman pedestrian, Mary Scibetta, ducked behind the car and escaped getting hit by the crossfire, witnesses said.

A teen-ager who was walking behind the gunman said she first thought she heard the backfire of a car. Then she looked up and said she saw "a guy pull a gun out and begin to shoot.

"Then he reloaded and began to hitchhike," she said.

The gunman tried to stop a white Rancho traveling southbound on Highway 9, witnesses said. But a man yelled out that the gunman was armed and the driver took off.

As the Rancho sped away, CHP officer Lee arrived on the scene.

Witnesses said the gunman opened fire in front of George's Log Cabin, piercing the CHP car's front window and shattering the back window.

Lee jumped out of his car and used the door as a shield, said witnesses. The gunman fired off two more shots which hit Lee in the left wrist and right thigh.

Witnesses said they heard Lee yell out "I've been hit." Then Lee fired off three shots at the gunman. It is unknown if the gunman was wounded, but a spot of blood was found in the road.

Witnesses said they saw the gunman run into the south entrance of Cowell park. A little after the shooting, James King, a resident of Redwood Grove Trailer Park, said he saw a man matching the description of the suspect run past his trailer and down the San Lorenzo River.

Chief Deputy Gangloff said searchers are scouring the southern end of the park today. If the gunman is not caught before 5 p.m., Gangloff said officials will meet to decide what to do.

"I just hope we catch the guy before anyone else gets hurt," he said.

Economy is first business for new Congress

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ing rural economy, farm-belt