

Watsonville Canning boss says he's victim of attacks

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Mystery continues to shroud reports and rumors that the president of Watsonville Canning and Frozen Foods Co. has been the victim of violence during the last week.

Last week, company officials announced that president Ron Trine had been beaten and implied strikers were responsible. This morning there were reports that Trine was shot at while driving to his home in Pajaro Dunes.

During an interview this morning, Trine failed to shed much light on the matter.

He refused comment on several specific questions, but repeatedly accused Teamsters union Local 912 of responsibility for the reputed attacks.

"Local 912 is responsible for the beating last week and is responsible for the continuing violence," Trine said.

Although Trine admits he was

beaten by "people he didn't recognize" sometime after midnight last Wednesday, following a stop at a tavern, he said the fight had nothing to do with anything that happened in town, but began near his home when three men jumped him.

Trine would not give details of that night. He would not explain why he failed to file a police report, except that he wished to protect his family.

Regarding last night's report of shootings, Trine would not give a chronology. He did acknowledge reports that he had continued to drive around town and across the bridge into Pajaro after the alleged shooting before returning to his home.

"I drove around after the shooting to make sure I was not being followed," said Trine.

Trine did file a report with the Santa Cruz County sheriff, according to Sgt. Mark Tracy, communications director for the department.

Tracy said the report was taken at 1:46 a.m. today at Trine's home. Tracy said Trine told the officers that he had dined at Aptos Seascapes and while driving home along San Andreas Road at about midnight he noticed he was being followed by a blue Chevy.

Trine said that at the intersection of Beach and San Andreas roads he heard what he thought was a series of gun shots, then speeded up and drove away in the opposite direction from his home.

The sheriff's report states there was no damage to Trine's car and that the Watsonville Canning official was unable to supply any further information about the alleged assailants.

"We have no reason to not believe him," said Tracy, "We take people at their word when they report things like this."

During this morning's interview at Watsonville Canning offices, Trine said he was considering hiring body guards.