

Fugitive's history of assaults

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SANTA CRUZ — The fugitive gunman being sought for the attempted murders of a sheriff's deputy and highway patrolman Monday near Felton has a history of assaults on peace officers.

An arrest warrant has been issued for the suspect, Leslie Grover Wyman, 44. He has been described as a survivalist-type who prefers living in the woods to living in a home.

Court-appointed psychiatrists in San Mateo County diagnosed Wyman in 1972 as a chronic schizophrenic. Wyman, they said, was then "potentially dangerous if experiencing thoughts and feelings which caused him to believe he was in danger of losing his physical or psychic freedom."

The psychiatrists were appointed to examine Wyman in a case in which Wyman was charged with assaulting three watershed keepers (officers) of the San Francisco Water District, near the Crystal Springs Reservoir.

Wyman was also charged with resisting arrest and trespassing in the case, said Watershed Chief Security officer Harry Tracy.

Tracy also said that one of the officers who arrested Wyman in 1972 spotted Wyman walking in the lakes area of the 23,000-acre watershed property just six days ago.

"It was the same guy, all right. The officer didn't stop him (Wyman) but he recognized him from the past case," said Tracy.

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The district attorney's office has charged Wyman with two counts of attempted murder for the shootings of Sheriff's Deputy Mike Gray, 40, and CHP officer Jeff Lee, 24. The \$500,000 warrant also includes a charge of using a firearm — believed to be a 9mm automatic handgun — and an allegation of causing great bodily injury on Gray.

Gray is listed today in extremely guarded condition in the intensive care unit of Dominican Hospital.

Lee is in satisfactory condition in Santa Cruz Community Hospital and will not be released today as previously believed, hospital officials said.

Lee suffered wounds to his thigh and wrist in the shootings.

District Attorney Art Danner also said Wyman has been charged with attempting to rob a man who was at the entrance to Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park Monday, as Wyman was fleeing from the scene.

That man, according to sheriff's office sources, is Eduardo Valbuena of Aptos. Valbuena and a woman companion were at the southern entrance to the park when Wyman ran up to them with a gun pulled out and said, "Give me your money."

Sources said Wyman pulled Valbuena a few feet, then let him go and ran down an embankment into the San Lorenzo River. Wyman has been at large since then.

A massive manhunt for Wyman has been under way in the southern end of Cowell Park, as well as parts of the UC-Santa Cruz campus.

Deputies are scouring the area on foot, and early this morning began using an infrared device on a helicopter loaned from San Bernardino County to spot any human forms in the rugged mountains. Dog patrols were abandoned today.

On Tuesday, attempts to use a land radar device loaned from the National Guard were abandoned when the rugged

terrain made use of the sophisticated equipment a problem, said Chief Sheriff's Deputy Marv Gangloff.

According to a Highway Patrol source, Wyman was described by a friend of the family as having psychological problems as a child.

"He climbed trees and tried to fly when he was 18 years old," said the source.

San Mateo County court documents show that Wyman spent seven months in Agnews State Hospital in 1970, after being convicted of petty theft from Portola Valley.

Wyman had been sentenced to County Jail for a month, but was transferred to the mental institution before his sentence was served.

Then in 1972, according to Watershed officer Tracy, Wyman was stopped as he wandered through a heavily-forested area of the watershed by a watershed keeper.

"The officer told Wyman to halt, but he (Wyman) said, 'Shoot me, shoot me,'" said Tracy. The officer decided not to arrest Wyman at that time, he added.

A few days later, when there were three officers, they saw Wyman again, according to Tracy. This time, Wyman was armed with a big club and attempted to strike the officers, said Tracy. Instead, he tripped and was wrestled into custody.

Charges in this case were dismissed because court psychiatrists determined that while Wyman was mentally capable of understanding the nature of the charges against him, he was incapable of assisting in his defense.

At the time, Wyman told the psychiatrists that he liked living in the woods because he could not afford to live elsewhere and prefers isolation, court documents show.

In 1975, Wyman was charged with violating a county infraction in Santa Cruz

County. There is no record of what happened in that case.

Then, on Jan. 7, 1982, Wyman was arrested in the city of San Mateo on charges of carrying two concealed firearms and resisting arrest, said San Mateo County Assistant District Attorney Bill Amideo.

Amideo said Wyman's attorney tried to get Wyman found unfit to stand trial, but psychiatrists did not reach that conclusion.

So, in March 16, Wyman entered a no-contest plea to resisting arrest and possessing a .38-caliber derringer, said Amideo.

The other weapon Wyman had had in his possession was a 9mm Bennelli handgun — the same caliber weapon used in the shootings of the two officers.

Deputy Gray was in extremely guarded condition this morning at Dominican Hospital, according to Frank McGovern, hospital spokesman.

Gray's father, Robert Gray of Felton, said his son lost his pancreas, spleen, a kidney, part of his intestine and part of his colon. His liver was also damaged.

Doctors spent nearly eight hours Monday repairing the damage done by the two 9mm slugs, one of which apparently went through Gray's body. The other apparently fragmented, and "just tore him up," his father said.

Doctors said Gray's brain was responding well this morning and the deputy's blood pressure was stabilized by medication, according to McGovern. Other problems were cropping up, however. Doctors would not release details of Gray's condition.

McGovern said each day the officer survives is "probably in his favor, but it doesn't mean the odds are stacking up in his favor yet. He could turn the corner at any time, and then, he might not."