



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 10, 2013

Gun Saves Lives of California Pharmacy Owner and Mother

"I thought yesterday was the last day for both of us," Madera, California, pharmacy owner [Bryan Lee](#) said Wednesday. "Luckily it didn't turn out that way."

If the gun-grabbers — now feeling their oats after mass shootings in Colorado, Wisconsin, and Connecticut — had their way, Tuesday would indeed have been the last day for both the 40-year-old Lee and his 68-year-old mother, Sophie. The two were working in Lee's Almond Avenue Pharmacy when, around 6:30 p.m., two men in ski masks burst into the pharmacy by the back door, which Lee had left unlocked for a customer, and began shooting.



"It was not a robbery so much as it was an execution," Lee recalled. "It was an attempted assassination. They didn't make any demands. They simply came in, went over here, I mean they were basically trying to shoot us in the back of the head."

The Lees ducked behind a counter; Sophie was hit in the leg. Bryan grabbed his gun and returned fire, hitting the shooter, 31-year-old Aquilla Bailey, in the face, torso, and leg. Bailey, a gang member from Fresno with "an extensive criminal history" (according to the [Fresno Bee](#)), fell to the floor but managed to get back up, exit the store, and run down the block before collapsing again; he died at the hospital some time later. A second suspect fled the scene but was [arrested](#) the following day; he will likely face attempted murder charges even though he was apparently unarmed at the time of the crime.

Sophie Lee was treated and released from the hospital Tuesday night and was back at work the next day.

Police believe the motive for the shooting was robbery — of drugs, not cash.

"The information that we've developed is that the pharmacy was targeted probably specifically for the drugs on hand there," said Madera Police Chief Steve Frazier. "We don't have any information that the owner was specifically targeted at this point."

Frazier was, however, certain of one thing: "I can tell you in this instance that this individual having that gun the time that he had it absolutely saved his life and if there's any take away from that, it's just that."

Unfortunately, for [some](#) the take-away will be that such crimes could be prevented if only the government would ban private gun ownership. Of course, the notion that a gang member and serial offender like Bailey would be deterred from possessing a gun simply because doing so is illegal is absurd. If he would stoop to murder, which is already illegal, why would he worry about gun laws? His victims, meanwhile, would be unable to defend themselves and would, unlike the Lees, end up dead. Only Bryan Lee's possession of a gun — not laws, not the police — saved his and his mother's lives.



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