

# SANTA MARIA TIMES

## Hobby Lobby to open soon

Arts and craft store almost finished. **CENTRAL COAST, A3**



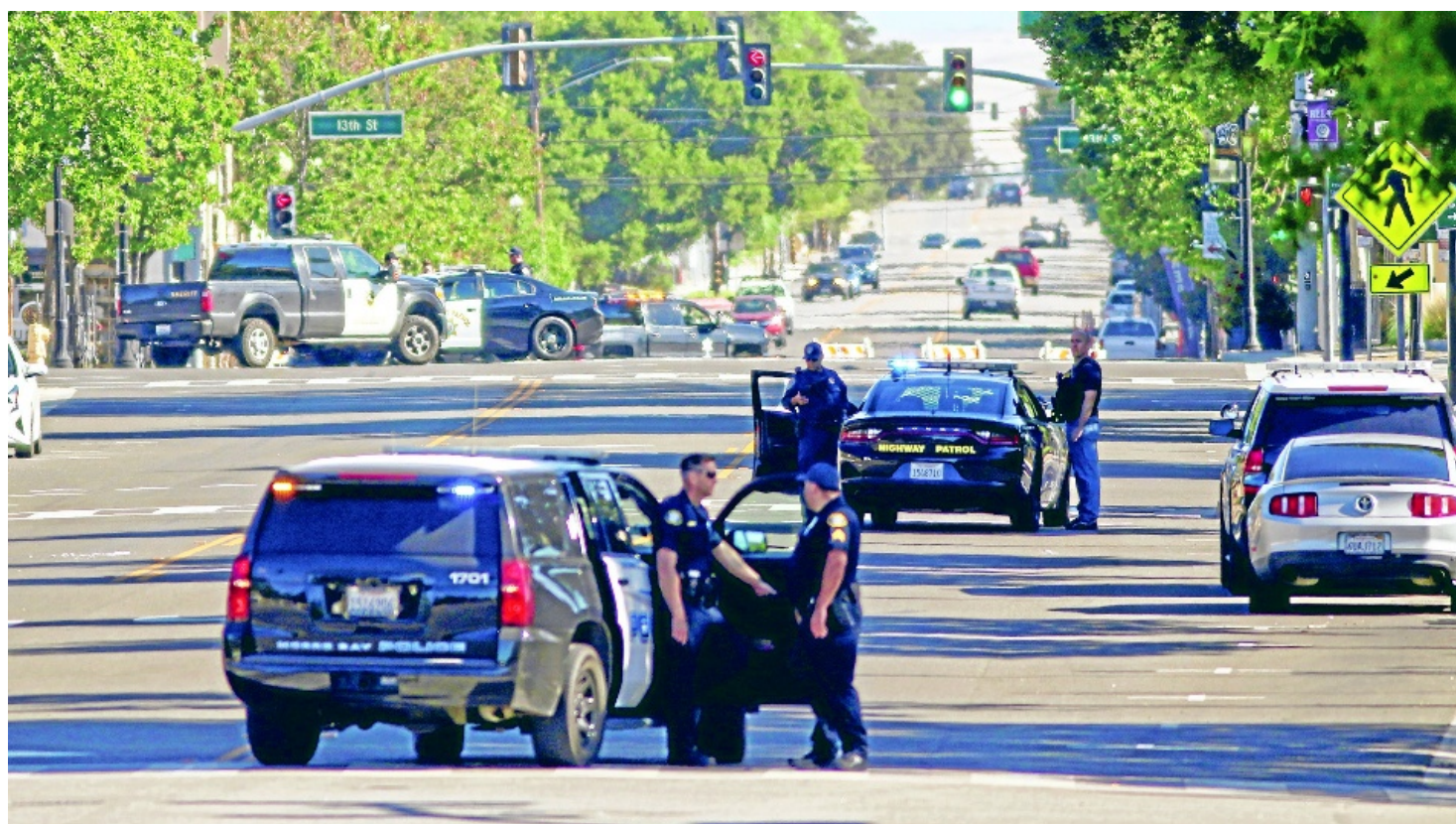
## St. Joseph pitcher

Hunter Barnhart goes to Tampa Bay Rays.

**SPORTS, B1**



**PARTLY SUNNY 69 • 50** FORECAST, B8 | **FRIDAY, JUNE 12, 2020** | [santamariatimes.com](http://santamariatimes.com)



DAVID MIDDLECAMP

Law enforcement personnel from several jurisdictions patrol Spring Street in downtown Paso Robles as law enforcement agencies responded to an early morning shooting after a sheriff's deputy was wounded early Wednesday.

# 3 officers injured, suspect dead following attack

**STEFANIE DAZIO**  
Associated Press

A man suspected of ambushing and shooting a San Luis Obispo County sheriff's deputy was shot and killed Thursday during a shootout with police in Paso Robles, authorities said.

Three officers suffered non-life-threatening injuries as the chaotic scene unfolded in a riverbed with residents in a 2-mile radius locked down.

A spokesman for the San Luis Obispo Sheriff's Department confirmed the death of Mason James Lira, 26. However, the circumstances around his death were not immediately available.

Officers from the Arroyo Grande police department, California Highway Patrol and Kings County Sheriff's Office were wounded.

Lira is accused of ambushing and seriously injuring a San Luis Obispo sheriff's deputy and killing a transient man Wednesday, setting off a massive manhunt that ended Thursday in the shootout.

Lira's father says his son had several mental illnesses and did not take his medication.

The manhunt for Lira began at dawn Wednesday, when authorities said he opened fire on the Paso Robles police station and then shot a San Luis Obispo County sheriff's deputy in the face. The deputy suffered serious injuries.

While scores of officers searched for Lira, they received a report of a body near a train station and found a 58-year-old man shot to death on the tracks. He appeared to be a transient

who was camping out overnight. Police believe Lira was responsible for the killing.

Although authorities have described the attack on the police station as an ambush, Lira's father told The Associated Press he thinks it might have been a suicide attempt.

Jose Lira said his son had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, Asperger's syndrome and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He said his son has been in and out of jail and treatment centers, and often thinks he is a special agent or a soldier.

"He lives in a fantasy world," Jose Lira said. "He doesn't have a beef with the police."

Soon after Jose Lira spoke to The Associated Press, authorities said an Arroyo Grande police officer helping with the search

was wounded in an exchange of gunfire with Lira at about 3 p.m.

The officer's injury is not considered life-threatening, according to a post on the city of Arroyo Grande website.

Later, after a second exchange of gunfire, the Paso Robles Police Department tweeted "Suspect down. Several officers wounded." There was no immediate word on their conditions.

Tony Cipolla, a San Luis Obispo County sheriff's spokesman, said Lira was "secured and is unresponsive."

Police say Lira opened fire on the police station around 4 a.m. Wednesday. Two sheriff's deputies heard gunshots and responded but didn't see the attacker until they were outside

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# Virus cases rise in states

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

NEW YORK — States are rolling back lockdowns, but the coronavirus isn't done with the U.S.

Cases are rising in nearly half the states, according to an Associated Press analysis, a worrying trend that could intensify as people return to work and venture out during the summer.

In Arizona, hospitals have been told to prepare for the worst. Texas has more hospitalized COVID-19 patients than at any time before. And the governor of North Carolina said recent jumps caused him to rethink plans to reopen schools or businesses.

The White House is exploring the possibility that travel from Mexico may be contributing to the new wave of coronavirus infections, rather than states' moves toward reopening their economies.

The notion was discussed at some length Thursday during a meeting of the administration's coronavirus task force

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## Monuments scrutinized

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**

The rapidly unfolding movement to pull down Confederate monuments around the U.S. in the wake of George Floyd's death has extended to statues of slave traders, imperialists, conquerors and explorers around the world.

Protests and, in some cases, acts of vandalism have taken place in such cities as Boston; New York; Paris; Brussels; and Oxford, England, in an intense re-examination of racial injustices over the centuries. Scholars are divided over whether the campaign amounts to erasing history or updating it.

At the University of Oxford, protesters have stepped up their longtime push to remove a statue of Rhodes, the Victorian imperialist who served as prime minister of the Cape Colony in southern Africa. He made a fortune from gold and diamonds on the backs of miners who labored in brutal conditions.

Oxford's vice chancellor Louise Richardson, in an interview with the BBC, balked at the idea.

"We need to confront our past," she said. "My own view on this is that hiding our history is not the route to enlightenment."

Near Santa Fe, New Mexico, activists are calling for the

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## Rancho Laguna Farms ups farmworker pay



LEN WOOD, STAFF

Farmworker Jose Luis Ramirez Carrera, in blue shirt, gives a thumbs-up after delivering petitions to Driscoll's in Santa Maria on Tuesday seeking a wage increase for workers stemming from the COVID-19 crisis.

## Essential workers' wage request stems from COVID-19 crisis

**LAURA PLACE**

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Rancho Laguna Farms in Santa Maria has raised farmworker pay from \$1.90 to \$2 per box of strawberries, after workers pushed for higher wages to help them through the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, workers are continuing to push for their goal of \$2.15 per flat of berries, and are currently in discussions with farm owner Larry Ferini as well as berry company Driscoll's, which Rancho Laguna supplies.

The effort to improve the wages at Rancho Laguna began in April and has involved a 100-person strike on May 4, alleged retaliation by the grower, and after weeks of refusal by supervisors to discuss the request, assistance from local nonprofit Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE).

Farmworker Jose Luis Ramirez Carrera, who was allegedly fired by the farm in May, said he continually asked his supervisors to pass on requests for a raise, but that his requests were met with refusal even when he asked to meet with officials himself.

"We're asking them to be more considerate, that they pay us a

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## Buffet of cannabis ordinance changes ordered by supes

### Board rejects blanket CUP requirement for all cultivation

**MIKE HODGSON**

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The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors has chosen a smorgasbord of amendments to address cannabis cultivation conflicts with residents

and other agriculture instead of requiring all cultivation operations to obtain a conditional use permit, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

In a series of votes, the board directed the Planning and Development Department staff to prepare potential amendments for more public comment, discussion and possible tweaking at an unspecified future meeting.

Supervisors began the hearing

on cannabis ordinances last week but couldn't begin discussing them because of the volume of public comments — 41 emailed comments still remained to be read into the record Thursday.

Of seven amendments proposed by various supervisors, only two won unanimous votes and two failed.

Under one of the two that won unanimous support, applicants would not have to adhere to the

revised ordinances if they have a permit approved and the appeal period has ended; if they have a permit that was approved upon appeal; or if an approved permit is in the process of appeal and ultimately wins.

Applicants with a permit in the process who ultimately lose on appeal would have to start over under the new provisions.

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STATE	A2	BUSINESS	A7	COMICS	B4
OPINION	A5	SPORTS	B1	PUZZLES	B5
OBITUARIES	A6	LOTTERY	B2	CLASSIFIED	B7

