



City of  
**Los Banos**  
*At the Crossroads of California*

**LOS BANOS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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September 15, 2016

Homicide Investigation-Update

The Los Banos Police Department has arrested three Merced men in connection with the September 13, 2016 homicide investigation. On September 14, 2016, Los Banos Detectives arrested 34-year-old Ronnie Lujan, 59-year-old Charles Frederick Lujan, and 55-year-old Steven Andrew Lujan.

On September 13, 2016 Los Banos Police Officers responded to an alley in the 300 Block of H Street after receiving a report of a male who was not breathing. Officers and medical staff attempted to render first-aid, however the victim, 35-year-old Rene Cruz Sandoval of Los Banos, was pronounced deceased.

Los Banos Detectives located an apparent gun-shot wound to the victim's upper torso and a single shell casing near the victim's body. A privately owned video surveillance camera system captured a Chrysler sedan driving through the alley and stopping at the victims residence, at the time of the murder. A witness observed a group of Hispanic males leaving the victims residence in the Chrysler sedan, one of which was observed carrying a firearm. Detectives were able to identify the vehicle, which was found at a Merced residence in the 1300 Block of Frankfort Ct., Wednesday afternoon.

A Los Banos Detective observed Ronnie Lujan driving the Chrysler sedan away from the Merced residence. Ronnie was stopped with the assistance of the Merced Police Department and taken into custody without incident.

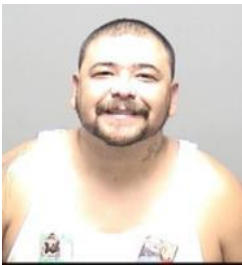
Charles Lujan and Steven Lujan were each arrested as they attempted to leave the Frankfort Ct. residence on foot. Los Banos Detectives served a search warrant at the residence, with the assistance of the Merced Area Gang and Narcotics Enforcement Team (MAGNET). At the residence, Detectives located additional evidence and information linking the three suspects to the crime.

All three suspects were booked into the Los Banos Police Department Jail, charged with murder and accessory to murder; bail is set at \$1,000,000.00 each.

Detectives believe a fourth suspect was present during the homicide and are continuing their investigation. Anyone with information about this crime is asked to contact Detective Sean Bayard at (209) 827-7070 ext. 115.

To leave an anonymous crime tip call **209-827-7070 Ext. 288**. If you have access to a computer and the internet you can also leave an anonymous tip at the Police Department's web page at [www.losbanos.org](http://www.losbanos.org). At the bottom of the "Contact" page simply click on the "report graffiti and other crime" link or visit the Merced Area Crime Stoppers by telephone at 1-855-725-2420, or at [www.mercedareacrimestoppers.org](http://www.mercedareacrimestoppers.org)

Ronnie Lujan



Charles Lujan



Steven Lujan



**\*\* Original Press Release \*\***

September 13, 2016

On September 13, 2016 at approximately 3:42 p.m., the Los Banos Police Department responded to the south alley in the 300 Block of H Street to investigate a report of a male not breathing.

When Officers arrived they located a 35-year-old male on the ground, bleeding and unresponsive. Emergency personnel began to render first-aid, however the male was pronounced deceased. Police Detectives are on scene and this incident is being investigated as a homicide.

This marks the first homicide for the year. The last reported homicide occurred on July 14, 2015 in the 400 Block of Ward Road, after a 20-year-old male was stabbed to death during a reported robbery. Two males were arrested in connection with the murder.

The Department is asking anyone who has information about this incident to contact Detective Sean Bayard at (209) 827-7070, ext 115.

To leave an anonymous crime tip call **209-827-7070 Ext. 288**. If you have access to a computer and the internet you can also leave an anonymous tip at the Police Department's web page at [www.losbanos.org](http://www.losbanos.org). At the bottom of the "Contact" page simply click on the "report graffiti and other crime" link or visit the Merced Area Crime Stoppers by telephone at 1-855-725-2420, or at [www.mercedareacrimestoppers.org](http://www.mercedareacrimestoppers.org)

As this investigation is ongoing no further information will be released at this time.

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