

## **Ambush kills two Detroit police officers - Motorist, 23, arrested; deaths spotlight rash of fatal shootings**

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DETROIT ? The traffic stop seemed so routine that the **two police officers** didn't trouble their dispatchers with the details ? a call that's only made if there's potential for danger.

Within seconds, however, **police** say Eric Lee Marshall of Detroit got out of his 1989 Chevrolet pickup, approached the **officers** and shot them both in a flurry of gunfire on Detroit's southwest side.

**Officers** Matthew Bowens, 21, and Jennifer Fettig, 26, died hours apart Monday after the 2 a.m. shooting that left friends, relatives and colleagues grappling with a simple, agonizing question: Why?

Marshall, the suspected gunman, has a minor drug charge pending and is known by family members to carry a gun. Still, there was little to suggest that the routine traffic stop would go so bad, officials said.

According to **police** investigators, Marshall, who turns 23 today, told his brother, "I f??- up. I blew some cops away." He suggested the **officers** were "hassling" him, but didn't make clear how, **police** said.

Marshall and his brother were arrested at their house in the 19200 block of Sussex about six hours after the shooting. His brother apparently had no role in the shooting and was released Monday afternoon.

Marshall, who is believed to have been in the vehicle alone, remains in jail and is expected to be charged in the slayings today.

"These are sad days for the department," Detroit **Police** Chief Ella Bully-Cummings said. "We have got to get these guns off the streets. We know where you are, we know who you are, and we're going to come and get you."

Asked for a motive in the shooting, the chief responded, "There was no reason for this shooting."

The **officers** ' deaths become perhaps the most dramatic example yet of a surge in shootings in Detroit this year.

Last year, Detroit posted its fewest killings since 1967 with about one per day. It was also the first year since 1997 without a **police officer** killed in the city.

But gun violence sharply escalated last month. That prompted Bully-Cummings and interim Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy to pledge recently to rein in the shootings.

In fact, a host of law enforcement officials is expected to outline initiatives today intended to cut into the escalating shootings.

### Opened fire

Bowens and Fettig had just stopped a rusted 1989 Chevrolet pickup on Gilbert north of Michigan Avenue and were likely about to make a computer check of the vehicle's license plate when the shooting began, Major Crimes Division Cmdr. Craig Schwartz said.

Both **officers** were in their **police** car at the time Marshall opened fire, Schwartz said.

"The man just jumped out of the truck with a .40-caliber handgun and opened up," Schwartz said. "He blew out the windshield."

Investigators found at least 22 .40-caliber shell casings at the scene of the shooting, Schwartz said. The gunman fled in his truck.

"We don't know what they stopped him for. It's hard to say," Schwartz said. The stop appears minor, however, because the **officers** didn't call it in to **police** dispatchers, a common practice.

The **officers**, from the 4th (Fort-Green) Precinct, were caught off guard by the gunfire and never shot back, Schwartz said.

Authorities, who have a videotape from the **police** car that partially shows the traffic stop, believe Marshall approached the passenger side of the **police** car, where Fettig was sitting. The gunman fired at least **two** shots ? point-blank ? at her face. Fettig also had injuries to her shoulder and right arm, but it wasn't known if those were the result of separate shots.

After shooting Fettig, Marshall disappeared by a fence line, Schwartz said. Bowens got out of the car, walked behind it and called for help, Schwartz said.

While Bowens was near the back of the **police** car, Marshall opened fire again, Schwartz said. The gunman shot Bowens nine times, including slugs to the face, and took his pistol, Schwartz said. Neither the gunman's weapon nor Bowens' gun had been located Monday.

### **Officers** vulnerable

It appears the **officers** may have left themselves vulnerable by not using a common traffic stop practice that is taught at the **police** academy, but is not required departmental policy.

After Marshall handed the **officers** his license, both returned to their **police** car. Some **officers** remain posted outside the suspect's vehicle to watch the driver while their partner checks the license and registration.

In this case, Fettig returned to the passenger seat of the squad car while Bowens had the license and was in the driver's side of the car.

"I don't understand how the guy could get up to the car," said **Officer** Wendy Sierra, who was a partner for both **officers** .

She said it was typical for both **officers** to be in the car unless the person that was stopped acted suspicious.

"But we park behind," she said. "How did he walk all the way back to the car without either of them seeing him? Matt always paid attention to details. He was a good cop."

"It surprises me, too, not knowing yet what happened," said Lt. John Morell, commanding **officer** of the Investigative Operations Unit.

The **officers** were taken to the hospital, where doctors pronounced Bowens dead on arrival. Fettig died before 2 p.m.

'I'm not guilty'

The suspect's sister, Janice Marshall, was at their home when **police** saw Eric Marshall walking toward the house after a trip to the grocery.

"He dropped the dog food," she said. "He saw the **police** . He said, 'I'm not guilty. I know why you're all here,' "

Janice Marshall said her brother hasn't been in trouble since he was a juvenile. He was unemployed but was working on getting a GED diploma, she said.

She described Eric Marshall as a hermit who rarely left the house and socialized mostly with his three dogs. He wept as **police** drove him away, she said.

It was the first fatal shooting of a Detroit **officer** in 19 months. The last **officer** killed in the line of duty in Detroit was **Officer** Scott Stewart, who died in August 2002 when he and other **officers** went to investigate gambling in front of a home near Detroit City Airport.

Monday's slayings bring to 19 the number of Detroit **officers** who have been killed since 1990; 220 have been killed since 1883. The totals are among the highest in the nation.

Caption: Detroit **Officer** Michael Conley mourns co-workers Jennifer Fettig and Matthew Bowens at the 4th (Fort-Green) Precinct. "I don't know how we're going to handle this," said Lt. John Morrell, commanding **officer** of the investigative operations unit. "It's going to take us a little while to recover from this," says Detroit **Police** Chief Ella Bully-Cummings, with Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick. **Officer** Matthew Bowens, 21, joined the Detroit **Police** Department in December 2000, and **Officer** Jennifer Fettig, 26, joined in October 2001. Marshall Detroit **Police** Chief Ella Bully-Cummings

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