

Mesa police: SWAT training paid off in ending shooting spree



Jim Walsh, The Republic | azcentral.com

8:12 a.m. MST April 2, 2015

THE ARIZONA
azcentra



Get Your I

3 MONTHS
FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

Click below to unlock

GET MY 3 MONTHS

Questions remain in mesa shooting rampage



(Photo: Maricopa County Sheriff's Office)

Meza and members of his command staff described the response to the March 18 incident in detail, saying it was unprecedented for Mesa to have six shootings occur all within a half hour, with 16 victims and 43 witnesses interviewed. The incident was so intensive that Tempe and Gilbert police were called in to handle routine calls as part of a mutual-aid agreement.

"It was very, very fluid," Meza said. "I am very, very proud of our police department."

That comment was greeted with applause from the 40 or so residents that attended the community forum at Mesa Community College, which is located less than a mile from the condominium complex where Giroux was taken into custody by police.

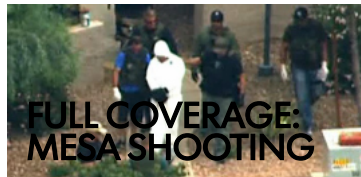
SWAT members spotted Giroux on a balcony, went inside the condominium and used a Taser to stun him. He was armed and did not fire at police, but he still resisted arrest and had blood and abrasions on his face in booking photos.

"Thanks for leaving the guy alive," said one man, who identified himself as being "seriously mentally ill."

The day before a murder and shooting spree terrorized west Mesa, several East Valley SWAT teams participated in joint training exercises.

Mesa Interim Police Chief John Meza said at a "community debrief" on Wednesday night that the regional training paid off when the Mesa, Scottsdale, Gilbert and state Department of Public Safety SWAT teams all worked in unison during the search and capture of suspected gunman Ryan Giroux.

"It was just an extension of their training," Meza said. "This time it was for real."



- [Life after the rampage](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/shooting-apartments-terror/25122529/)
- [Fear, relief and mystery on gunman's path](http://www.azcentral.com/longform/news/local/bereads/2015/03/20/mesa-shooting-fear-relief-mystery-gunmans-path/25067515/)
- [Shooting suspect held on \\$2 million bond](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/shooting-ryan-giroux-court/25023215/)
- [Mesa shooting: As it happened](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/shooting-near-light-rail/24961403/)
- [Suspect has long rap sheet](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/mesa-shooting-sprees-long-rap-sheet/24992123/)
- [The victims, scene by scene](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/shooting-family-friends-victims/24984511/)
- [Shooting victim takes selfie](http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/mesa/2/shooting-victim-gunshot-selfies/24994405/)
- [Our View: 2 big lessons from Mesa](http://www.azcentral.com/story/opinion/editorial/2/shooting/24993371/)
- [Montini: Horrible is the new normal](http://www.azcentral.com/story/ejmontini/2015/03/shooting-east-valley-institute-of-technology-mass-shooting/24967375/)
- [Allhands: Tracking down career criminals](http://www.azcentral.com/story/foannaallhands/20/shooting-intelligence-led-policing/25021921/)

The shooting spree began when David

Williams, 29, a maintenance man who lived at the Tri-City Motel, at 1504 W. Main Street, was shot to death in his room shortly after 8:30 a.m. His mother, Lydia Nielson, was shot in leg. In the parking lot, a woman by the name Jessica Burgess, who arrived with a friend to visit Williams, was also shot and wounded.

Mesa police Commander Jeff Thompson said a specific motive is still unknown, but he said Giroux and Williams knew each other and that Williams was the only shooting-spree victim who knew Giroux.

"These two had what we believe to be some sort of dispute or disagreement. We know there was some animosity between those two," Thompson said.

He said Giroux was "muttering" when police interviewed him after the arrest and provided no substantive information about his motives.

Thompson said police are awaiting the results of tests to determine if Giroux was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and if the gun he had in his possession at the time of his arrest was used in all six shootings. Police also are tracing to gun to see where Giroux, who has a long criminal history, got the weapon. Police do not believe the firearm was stolen.

After the motel shootings, police believe Giroux went to East Valley Institute of Technology's Bistro 21, where he shot student Isaac Martinez after demanding Martinez's keys. Giroux is accused of stealing a Honda Accord at gunpoint from an instructor at the restaurant.

The spree continued to two west Mesa apartment complexes, where victims Donovan Worker and Marcus Butler were shot at separate locations.

Acting Commander Thomas Intrieri said Butler was wearing some earphones while he worked on a maintenance project and had not heard Giroux's conversations with another man, who was willing to give Giroux the keys to his truck.

"As a result, he (Butler) was shot several times," Intrieri said.

He said SWAT teams were able to track the shooter's movements from one location to another.

"The response was professional, expedient and efficient," Intrieri said.

Read or Share this story: <http://azc.cc/1alidBP>

MORE STORIES



MCSO: Starved dogs prompt arrest of couple

[\(/story/news/local/surprise/2015/04/02/two-arrested-from-animal-abuse-and-child-neglect/70820964/\)](http://story/news/local/surprise/2015/04/02/two-arrested-from-animal-abuse-and-child-neglect/70820964/)

[\(/story/news/local/surprise/2015/04/02/two-arrested-from-animal-abuse-and-child-neglect/70820964/\)](http://story/news/local/surprise/2015/04/02/two-arrested-from-animal-abuse-and-child-neglect/70820964/)

April 2, 2015, 7:06 a.m.



News conference drops Ladmo Bag bombshell

[\(/story/news/local/arizona/2015/04/01/news-conference-](http://story/news/local/arizona/2015/04/01/news-conference-)