

New Mexico high schooler kills 3, injures half a dozen more in “purely random” shooting

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16 May 2023

On Monday, May 15, an 18-year-old high school student in Farmington, New Mexico, Beau Wilson, opened fire on neighbors and strangers, killing three and injuring six more, before he was shot and killed by police. Within 10 minutes, police claim Wilson fired over 150 rounds, leaving bullet holes in bodies, cars, windows and homes along a quarter mile stretch of mostly residential homes.

The deceased include Shirley Voita, 79, Melody Ivie, 73, and Ivie’s mother Gwendolyn Schofield, 98. Six more people were injured in the shooting, mostly from broken glass windows that lacerated victims after being shot out. One police officer was injured via gunshot and is recovering at a hospital.

According to police, a doorbell camera recorded Wilson walking down the middle of the street firing a weapon at 10:56 a.m. Less than a minute later, police said they received “hundreds” of calls for emergency services from people reporting a mass shooting. Farmington Deputy Police Chief Baric Crum said that the crime scene was “over a quarter mile” long.

Police report they first arrived on the scene at 11:02 a.m. at which point they observed Wilson firing at civilians. At 11:07 a.m. police exchanged gunfire with Wilson, at which point an officer was injured, and Wilson was killed.

Due to the volume of shots, early reports indicated there might have been multiple shooters. When the incident started, police put local schools on lockdown, forcing students to stay indoors for an extra two hours.

Police have confirmed that Wilson was living at an address in the area, although they have also said that he

had “multiple addresses” where he was staying at.

While police have not revealed a suspected motive at this time, Farmington Deputy Police Chief Kyle Dowdy told reporters that Wilson had legally purchased the “assault-style rifle” used in the shooting in November 2022, one month after he turned 18. Dowdy said that Wilson used two other guns in the attack which appeared to have been owned by his family members, although it is unclear if they were aware he was in possession of their weapons.

In a press conference on Tuesday, Farmington Mayor Nate Duckett offered empty platitudes and heaped praise on the Farmington police. The Republican mayor said the police response saved “countless lives.”

In the same conference, police said they had not uncovered a motive in the shooting and claimed that it appeared to be a “purely random” act.

“We’ve discovered nothing that leads us to believe that this suspect knew any of the people,” Deputy Police Chief Dowdy told reporters. Dowdy said that in an interview with family members of Wilson, they said he was suffering from mental health issues but that there was nothing documented that would have prevented him from legally purchasing a gun. He also acknowledged that Wilson had had previous interactions with police, but he described those as “minor infractions.”

Dowdy characterized the shooting as “pretty random ... the shooting was arbitrary and up and down the street.”

While it does not appear as of this writing that Wilson

deliberately targeted his victims, there is nothing “purely random” about the unending and growing scourge of anti-social gun violence in the land of inequality and never-ending imperialist war.

Located in rural northwest New Mexico, the population of Farmington has stagnated after oil and gas industries moved out of the city, leaving behind one coal-fired power plant, which provides 1,500 jobs in a city of roughly 46,000. About 20 percent of the population live under the poverty line.

Following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayor Duckett defied mitigation measures enacted by Democratic Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in April 2020, saying in a radio interview that closing businesses to stop the spread was an example of the “creep” of the “left” and “socialist mind-set.” In the 2020 election, Trump won the county by a nearly 2-1 margin.

As of March 2023, over 867 people in San Juan County, where Farmington is located, have died due to COVID-19 per the *New York Times*, no doubt a severe undercount.

Monday’s mass shooting is at least the 225th this year in the United States, according to the Gun Violence Archive (GVA). The GVA categorizes any shooting in which four or more people, not including the shooter, are injured or killed as a “mass shooting.”

So far in 2023, over 15,800 people have been killed by guns in the US, while just under 12,800 have been injured. Within the last 72 hours, the GVA has tabulated at least 92 gun deaths.

One of those deaths was the slaying of 32-year-old father and restaurant worker Matthew Davis on May 14 in Keene, Texas. According to police and eyewitness, Davis went to the parking lot to confront two unruly customers, 20-year-old Angel Gomez and an unidentified 12-year old for allegedly urinating outside.

The dispute escalated into a fight between Davis and Gomez at which point the 12-year-old returned to the vehicle armed with an AR-style rifle and shot six

rounds at Davis, killing him, according to police.

After fleeing the scene, Gomez returned and was arrested. The 12-year-old was also arrested a short time later at a separate house that police reported also had firearms in it. Both Gomez and the pre-teen are residents of Fort Worth, Texas, and both are facing murder charges.

In another mass shooting in the Southwest US, on Saturday two people were killed and at least five injured in Yuma, Arizona. In a Monday press conference, Yuma Police Chief Thomas Garrity confirmed that 20-year-old Ande Blackthunder and 19-year-old Danny Garcia were the deceased.

Garrity said that more than 30 shots were fired during a house party that “got out of hand” and that “several weapons” were recovered from the scene.



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