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As officers recover, portrait of their alleged shooter emerges

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BPD

Officer Richard Cintolo (left) and Officer Matthew Morris were wounded during a shootout in East Boston Wednesday.

By Evan Allen, Laura Crimaldi, Steve Annear, John R. Ellement and Jan Ransom

GLOBE STAFF OCTOBER 13, 2016

Two Boston police officers wounded in a “ferocious firefight” with a heavily armed man in East

Boston Wednesday night remained in critical condition Thursday, according to officials, as details emerged about the shooter, a Boston constable who claimed to be an elite security expert but was not licensed to carry a gun.

The wounded officers were identified as Richard Cintolo, a 27-year veteran, and Matthew Morris, who has been on the force for 12 years. Both remained at Massachusetts General Hospital Thursday night, where they underwent lifesaving blood transfusions and surgery after the gun battle inside 136 Gladstone St. They are the sixth and seventh Boston officers shot in the last three years.

The suspect, 33-year-old Kirk Figueroa, had been charged with impersonating an investigator and lighting his own car on fire in another state. Officials said he opened fire suddenly and without warning when police arrived after 10:41 p.m. to investigate a report of a fight between him and his roommate.

Volley of gunfire erupted, terrifying the neighborhood. Officials say Figueroa first fired on Cintolo and Morris and then exchanged shots with police who rushed inside to drag the wounded officers out. He was shot and killed by the officers.

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"I ... commend our officers for running into that building, with no fear," said Boston Police Commissioner William B. Evans, who called for people to donate blood to the American Red Cross in honor of the transfusions that he said saved the lives of Morris and Cintolo.



Photos: East Boston shooting

A 33-year-old man was slain Wednesday night after opening fire on two Boston police officers who were responding to a domestic disturbance call.

**Wounded police officers
remembered at vigil**
2 officers shot in East Boston
Reports from the scene

Those who know them described the wounded officers as well-respected and brave.

Cintolo, who has three children, comes from a police family. When his father, Michael, was a patrolman in Boston, he was shot in 1980, also while responding to a domestic dispute call, according to people who know him and news clips from the time. The elder Cintolo was struck in the arm and survived; the shooter was killed.

Retired Boston Police Detective Joe Lally worked with the younger Cintolo in Dorchester years ago.

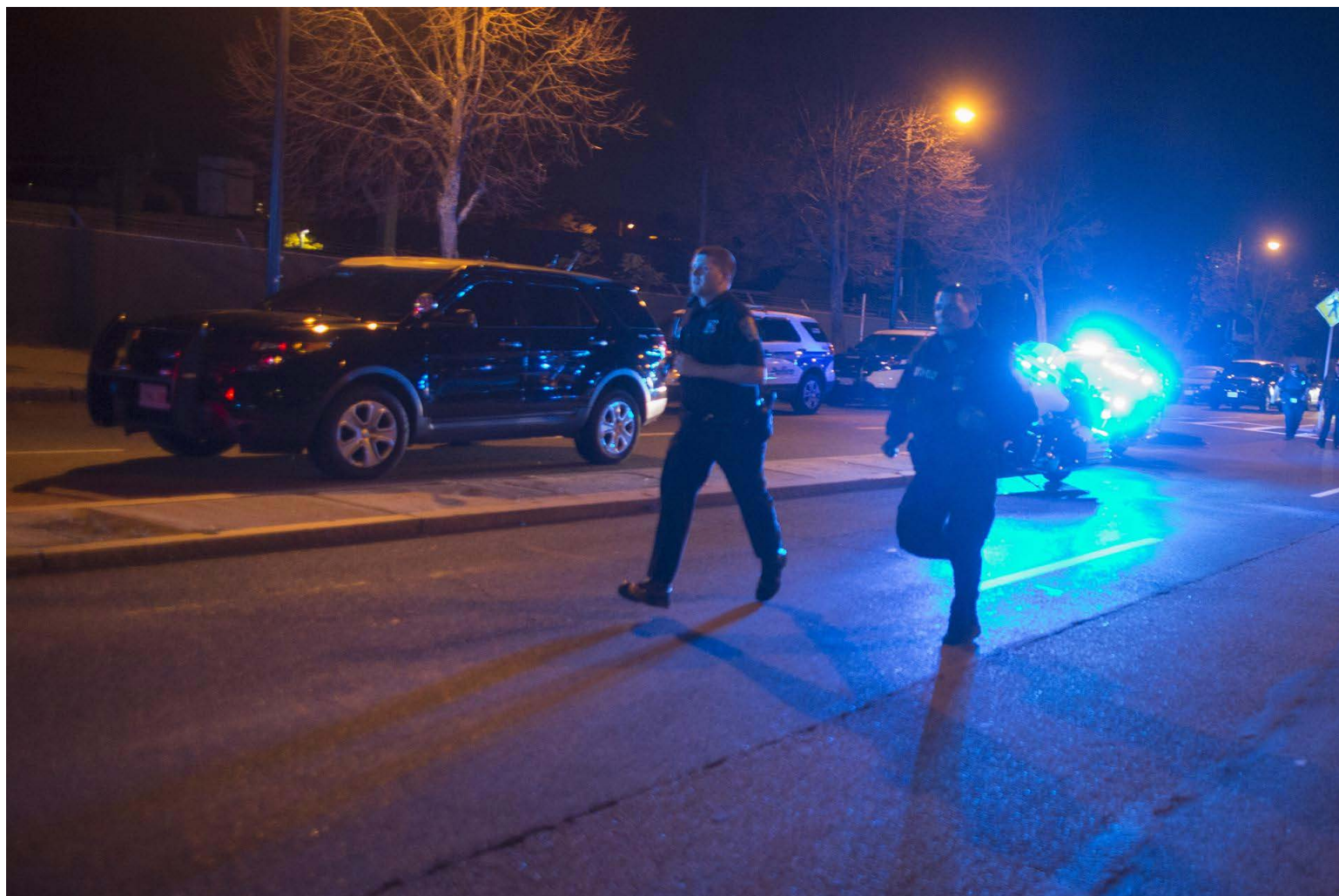
“He was a stand-up kid,” said Lally.

Morris, who is married, has been honored for his bravery.



In 2006, he and his partner received a Medal of Honor, the highest award the state can bestow on a police officer, for their actions on Dec. 2, 2005, when an armed and masked 15-year-old boy began firing into a crowded bus stop on Blue Hill Avenue. Morris and his partner blocked the gunman's escape, and he was arrested.

Evans said police did not believe that Figueroa, who was wearing body armor and carrying a handgun and a "tactical shotgun," planned to ambush officers, though he said anyone who would shoot at officers was "unhinged."



SCOTT EISEN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Boston Police officers ran towards the scene where two officers were shot in a firefight leaving a suspect dead in East Boston.

Figuroa was a recently licensed constable in Massachusetts. The City Council approved him for the position on April 13, allowing him to serve legal papers connected to civil litigation. Evans said the position was akin to that of a mailman, and police did a limited background check on him.

He was not licensed to carry a gun in Massachusetts. A tactical shotgun typically has a shorter barrel and is capable of quickly firing several rounds.

Figuroa had no criminal record in Massachusetts but had been in trouble in Georgia. Authorities said Figuroa set his vehicle on fire in Marietta in 2009. He was also accused of unlawfully representing himself as a private detective while not holding a license, according to court records. His attorney said in 2011 that Figuroa was seeking to enlist in the military and was looking for a job. In a 2015 divorce filing, Figuroa's wife accused him of giving her black eyes and choking her.

Figueroa's wife, Doreen Vanterpool, said she was not able to divorce Figueroa, whom she has not seen in at least a year, because she could not find him.

The pair met in New York and were together for five years, marrying in 2013 and moving to Florida, said Vanterpool in a phone interview Thursday. "I thought he was a good guy, a charming guy. I fell for him," she said. But the relationship quickly disintegrated.

"He had problems," she said. "He had a temper."

On his website, Figueroa advertised himself as the founder of a company called "Code Blue Protection Corp.," which he claimed held \$75 million in assets and provided a range of "high tech security services for a diverse range of international clients." The site lists no client names, and while Figueroa claimed to be a licensed private investigator in Florida, state records show his application was denied.

On the biography he posted on the site, Figueroa said he was a member of the Army Reserve Military Police Battalion from 2003 until 2011, though the National Personnel Records Center was not able to immediately confirm whether he had a military record. Figueroa also described himself as a California bounty hunter and mixed martial arts practitioner and said he was certified both as a jail guard and a "Homeland Protection Professional."

Figueroa also appears to have maintained a Facebook page under the name "Kocoa Xango," a moniker he applied for a trademark with the US Patent and Trademark Office.

"Kocoa Xango" posted an eclectic mix of videos about police shootings; music by the heavy metal band Slayer; and pictures of reality star Kim Kardashian. One link contains a video titled "Real Satanism a Brotherhood of Satan," beneath which he wrote "Hail Satan."

The fight between Figueroa and his roommate began over the heat in the duplex, officials said. The shootings sent the Orient Heights neighborhood into lockdown late Wednesday, and residents described hitting the floor in panic.

One resident said that after several volleys of gunfire, he looked outside and saw a man lying face down in a driveway, dressed in boxers. "They're shooting in my house," the man in boxers said, recalled the resident, who spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid being drawn into the case.

The resident said he didn't know Figueroa but recognized his car, which had a sticker for his Code

Blue company on it.

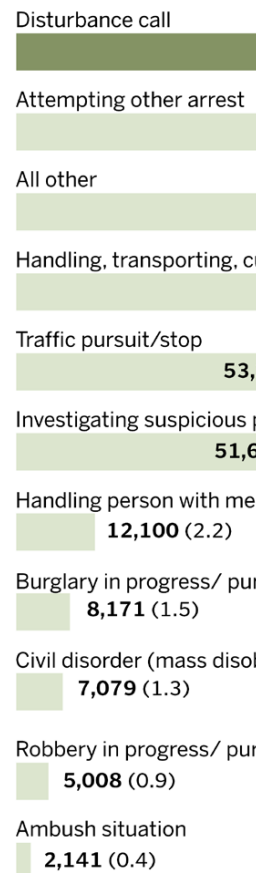
“It looks like a police car,” said the resident. “It’s very hard not to notice that. I thought of ‘Dog the Bounty Hunter.’ ”

Suffolk District Attorney Daniel F. Conley said the shooting scene was covered in blood. There is no question, he said, that many officers acted heroically to save Cintolo and Morris. His office, he said, will investigate the use of deadly force according to standard protocol.

“I ask the city and the region to please pray for them,” Conley said of the wounded officers.

Most officer assaults from disturbance calls

Nationally, among the 550,751 officers who were assaulted in the line of duty between 2005 and 2014 (the most recent data available), 32 percent were assaulted during “disturbance calls.”*



*According to the FBI, disturbance calls can include family quarrels, bar fights, etc.

Ways officers were assaulted during disturbance calls



3% by knife or other cutting instrument



4% by firearm



10% with "other dangerous weapon"

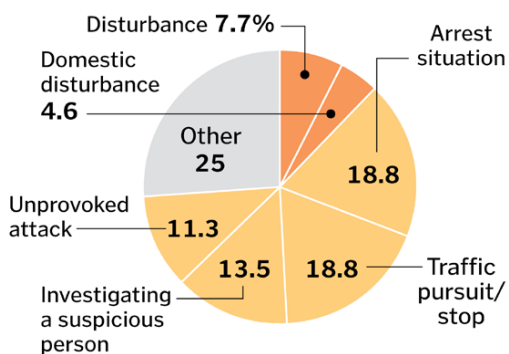


84% by hands, fists, or feet

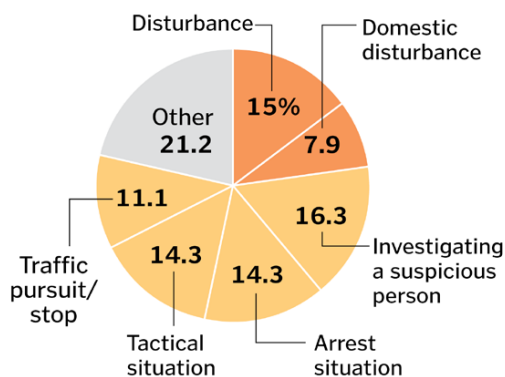
OFFICERS KILLED AND INJURED

From 2005 to 2014, of all officers killed in the line of duty, 12.3 percent were from a disturbance call (disturbance and domestic disturbance). About 23 percent of officers who are assaulted and injured with a weapon are from disturbance calls.

Officers killed at the scene



Officers assaulted "and injured" by a weapon



SOURCES: FBI Uniform Crime Statistics

MATT ROCHELEAU, JAMES ABUNDIS / GLOBE STAFF

Evan Allen can be reached at evan.allen@globe.com.

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