

# How media captured gripping police chase video in shooting

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## FULL TEXT

Audiences in greater Rochester and beyond watched Wednesday morning as a U-Haul van driven by a suspect in multiple shootings earlier in the day careened through city streets pursued by a fleet of police.

The extraordinary scene unfolded virtually in real time on social media for countless viewers, captured by news photographers and reporters who themselves were caught in the middle of a pursuit that ended in a burst of gunfire on a residential street.

Video shows police appearing to shoot the window of the vehicle as it passed a barricade on Forester Street and descending on its driver as he weaved onto Frances Street.

Not captured was what police later described as the van crashing into a driveway and its driver exchanging gunfire with officers before being shot dead. No officers were hit.

Nevertheless, it was a remarkable event for local journalists, who, despite their best efforts to deliver up-to-the-minute coverage to viewers and readers, rarely find themselves embedded in police action as it is unfolding.

More often than not, journalists are responding to crime scenes after the fact, after learning of them from a source or, most likely, from a police scanner, the incessant squawking of which is the soundtrack of most newsrooms.

Then, journalists and the public are typically cordoned off from the scene, penned into a staging area where they await a briefing from police after the situation is contained or resolved.

In the case of the chase, though, police were responding to a crime in progress and had not yet established perimeters.

Further enabling journalists to record the spectacle was the meandering driver, who kept returning to areas of the city where he had wrought havoc, so news outlets were already on scene reporting on the aftermath.

"There was so much fluidity to this chase that nobody knew what was going to happen," said Max Schulte, a Democrat and Chronicle photojournalist who captured perhaps the most dramatic footage of the incident.

Schulte was on the corner of Forester and Goodman streets, near where the chase would end, because he had been in the area reporting on one of the driver's alleged shooting victims, who had collapsed in a playground at nearby School 25.

He said he moved to the intersection because he noticed a strong police presence galvanizing there and carrying what appeared to be heavy artillery. His intention, he said, was to take photos of police in a heightened state of alert.

"The fact that this guy drove down the road and turned in front of me, in front of a bunch of police who unloaded their weapons on him, was dumb luck," Schulte said. "Maybe I was dumb for being there."

Will Morgan, a videographer for WHAM-TV (Channel 13), captured similar footage and later posted on Twitter a still image from his video that appears to show the driver aiming a gun at him.

"Just got back to the office and watched the video and saw this!" Morgan tweeted. "Suspect pointing gun at me!"

Stephanie Robusto, a reporter at WHEC-TV (Channel 10), tweeted a powerful photo of what appears to be a Monroe County sheriff's deputy yelling with his gun drawn and fixed on the van as it approached Goodman and Forester.

"This is the uhaul police were chasing –just seconds before gunfire was exchanged," she wrote.

The images make a convincing case for the standard police practice of keeping bystanders, including unarmed

journalists, at a distance from crime scenes —a practice that's relatively new in both fields and one that rankles reporters.

"Put yourself in the shoes of the officers and deputies," Monroe County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Michael Fowler said later at a news conference. "The suspect is driving through the streets of Rochester shooting people and they need to intervene."

The suspect, whom police identified as Terrell Blake, shot three people on his rampage, one of them fatally. Police said his victims were targeted.

As his U-Haul made its way south on Goodman Street and suddenly turned onto Forester Street, it was followed by a swarm of patrol cars with flashing lights and was confronted by officers with their guns drawn.

"I've been in situations where officers have had their guns drawn. I've seen them surround a house," Schulte said.

"But I've never, ever, ever seen anything like that in my entire life. I've never been that close to gunfire.

"As a photojournalist, it's your job to be in the right place at the right time, to look for the best images," Schulte added. "I'm drawn to things that show what's happening. I was drawn to those officers who were preparing for the worst."

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In this image pulled from the video by Max Schulte, an officer runs to follow the van after shots were fired at it on Forester Street.

Max Schulte/Rochester Democrat and Chronicle

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