

OFF-DUTY OFFICER SHOT DEAD AFTER BIRTH OF 2ND SON

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The people who fatally shot Detroit Police Officer **Charles Phipps** III early Friday are suspected of preying on at least three other people recently.

Phipps, a nine-year veteran of the department, was killed at 3:15 a.m. on Detroit's west side after a night out celebrating the birth of his second son.

Police found him shot multiple times in the head and back and lying in the street near the intersection of Joy Road and Longacre; his minivan crashed into a lamppost.

"The information we have right now is that he may have been a victim of a carjacking," said Police Chief Ella Bully-Cummings.

Police are searching for four to six men who were in a grey or silver Honda CRV.

Bully-Cummings said the department is investigating three other recent crimes in the vicinity. Although she refused to discuss the crimes, police said one was an attempted carjacking that shot up a woman's red Mercury.

"Many of you had questions about other incidents," Bully-Cummings told reporters. "I do not want to compromise anyone else's safety until we get to the root of what occurred."

Phipps, 33, of Detroit was dead on arrival Friday morning at Sinai-Grace Hospital in Detroit. At the same time, his wife, Collette, was at St. John Hospital recuperating from Wednesday's birth of the couple's son Cameron. Their other son is 2.

Phipps called in sick for his midnight shift and was out with friends, police and family said.

"He was very happy and he was celebrating and on his way home," **Phipps**' 56-year-old father, **Charles Phipps** Jr. of Detroit, said Friday. "He was just getting his family going. He had a really positive outlook on life."

Phipps' stepbrother Mike Anderson, 31, of Detroit spoke softly when remembering **Phipps**.

"He was just a working guy, a family guy. Always made you laugh," he said. "He was just a stand-up guy, man."

Phipps was shot in the leg six years ago during another attempted carjacking while he was off duty. In that case, three men targeted him in the parking lot of Martell Liquor, near 7 Mile and Evergreen.

Phipps pulled out his department-issued handgun and exchanged fire with Shade Bradford.

Bradford, 18, was shot in the head and died at Sinai-Grace Hospital.

"He got over that incident," **Phipps** ' father said. "But this just shows you how crime is just out of hand in this city. Our family will never be the same."

Bully-Cummings said **Phipps** ' colleagues at the Northwestern District are broken up.

"It is devastating, regardless as to whether or not the officer is on or off duty," she said. "He's a member of our family."

Officer Carol Harris, who worked with **Phipps** , said, "He has a lot of close friends. Everyone's hurting. It's very hard."

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is offering a \$5,000 reward to anyone with information leading to the arrest and prosecution of those responsible for **Phipps** ' death. Tipsters can call the ATF at 800-283-4867 or Detroit police at 313-596-2260.

Contact BEN SCHMITT at 313-223-4296 or bcschmitt@freepress.com

ILLUSTRATION: Photo

CAPTION: Detroit Police Officer **Charles Phipps** III, 33, of Detroit served nine years with the department.

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