

# SOUTH FLORIDA SunSentinel

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# WAKING TO TERROR

- At least 50 people dead and 53 more hurt in the nation's deadliest mass shooting
- 'People were trampling each other' to flee Orlando nightclub in early morning hours
- Man authorities call 'lone wolf gunman' was killed in a shootout



JIM RASSOL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Matthew Simmons hugs Marjorie Loring during a vigil for the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando. Hundreds of people attended the gathering at the Pride Center in Wilton Manors on Sunday afternoon.



JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES

FBI agents investigate near the rear wall of Pulse. SWAT members plowed through the wall with a battering ram.



STEVEN FERNANDEZ/AP

An injured person is escorted out of the Pulse nightclub after the shooting rampage early Sunday morning.

## Seeing men kiss set off Mateen, father says

BY RENE STUTZMAN AND JESSICA INMAN  
Staff writers

Omar Mir Seddique Mateen, the 29-year-old gunman accused of killing dozens of people in Orlando on Sunday, was a security guard, the divorced father of a 3-year-old boy and, in school, someone who acted "dorky."

He also was someone whose outspoken interest in terrorism twice put him on the FBI's radar screen.

On Sunday morning, Mateen became something far larger: A lone gunman who authorities say was responsible for the deadliest mass shooting in American history.

He called 911 from outside Pulse, a gay nightclub just south of downtown Orlando, pledged



ORLANDO POLICE/COURTESY

Omar Mateen was employed as a security guard.

allegiance to the Islamic State, authorities said, then began his assault.

See **MATEEN, 11A**

### More inside

■ Social media sites Twitter and Facebook sent first alerts about the gunman and a warning — "Everyone get out of pulse and keep running." **6A**

■ Theme parks expected to tighten screenings of visitors, but many tourist attractions were already on higher alert after other recent terror attacks. **8A**

■ As gay pride month events progress, organizers say they'll increase security at events while community leaders plan to meet with law enforcement. **10A**

■ Orlando joins the long list of cities affected by mass killings, and the Sun Sentinel Editorial Board wonders: Will these horrific massacres ever end? **13A**

BY ELYSSA CHERNEY AND CHRISTAL HAYES  
Staff writers

Distraught family members waited to hear about their loved ones as officials began identifying victims from Sunday's early-morning massacre at an Orlando gay nightclub — the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history.

By sunrise, at least 50 people were dead and 53 more were hurt.

Witnesses described terror-filled moments.

A DJ hid behind his booth. Loved ones got separated from each other as they sprinted away from the club so fast their shoes fell off. People carried bloodied strangers, suffering from gunshot wounds, to ambulances waiting nearby.

The gunfire, which erupted about 2 a.m. at Pulse nightclub, lasted for the duration of one song, a witness said.

The "lone wolf gunman," who was killed in a shootout with po-

lice about 5 a.m., was identified as Omar Mateen of St. Lucie County, according to the FBI. The agency interviewed Mateen, 29, three times in 2013 and 2014 for expressing ties to terrorist organizations and contacting a suicide bomber, but they determined he wasn't a threat.

"This is probably the most difficult day in the history of Orlando," Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer said Sunday.

Officials worked to identify the dead, but by Sunday evening they had only released eight names, with the victims ranging in age from 22 to 37. They warned the process would take time.

As hours elapsed after Sunday's shooting, Orlando and Orange County remained under a state of emergency at the order of Florida Gov. Rick Scott and Dyer.

More than 200 people went to Pulse nightclub at 1912 Orange Ave., south of downtown Orlando, to celebrate Latino Night.

See **PULSE, 12A**

**WEATHER** High: 88, Low: 77 Forecast: 10B **INDEX** Opinion: 13A Lottery: 2B Obituaries: 4B Go!: 10B

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