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Michigan K-9 is tragically killed near a baby shower before police returned fire and shot dead the 29-year-old suspect

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Byline: Kayla Brantley For Dailymail.com

Body

- A four-year-old police K-9 was shot dead Sunday in St Clair Shores, Michigan
- The dog named Axe was tracking down an armed suspect outside a baby shower
- The suspect, identified as **Theoddeus Gray**, 29, fled on foot and shot Axe when the dog confronted him
- Police returned fire and killed Gray, who was from Detroit

A police K-9 has been killed in the line of duty in Michigan.

The four-year-old dog named Axe was shot by suspect **Theoddeus Gray**, 29, Sunday outside of the Lakeland Manor Banquet Hall where 70 people were inside attending a baby shower.

The German Shepard was part of the St Clair Shores Police Department and joined officers around 6.30pm to respond to a call about a man with a gun.

Gray reportedly ignored officer's demands to drop his weapon before fleeing on foot. That's when Axe was deployed to track and chase him down.

When Gray was confronted by Axe, he opened fire and struck the male dog. Officers then returned fire and Gray was killed.

'We are saddened to hear that AXE, a St Clair Shores K-9 was killed in the line of duty this evening,' The Macomb County Sheriff's Office, the department handling the shooting investigation, wrote on Facebook. 'Please say a prayer for his handler and all the St. Clair Shores Police Department. We thank you for your service AXE. May you rest in peace.'

Axe was transported to an animal hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

A large crowd of police and K-9 handlers came to the animal hospital to show their support for Axe, who was with the department since 2016.

Axe was then removed from the veterinary hospital draped with an American flag and escorted away in a procession of police cars with flashing lights.

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'Axe was deployed and upon confronting the male, shots were fired from a handgun by the male, striking the K-9. St. Clair Shores Police Department officers returned fire, striking the male,' the department said.

Local resident Nick Altadonna told Fox 2. 'All of a sudden I heard, what I thought were fireworks at first, I knew right away once I heard the rounds going off that it was definitely not fireworks.'

'It's bizarre, a lot of people that live around here have been here for a pretty long time, it's generally a pretty safe area so people are really shocked to see this sort of thing go on here,' he added.

The department identified Gray Monday. He was from Detroit and previously arrested for a drug offence in 2013.

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