

Family speaks out about trooper in serious condition

Culton, Sarah . TCA Regional News ; Chicago [Chicago]26 Jan 2018.

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FULL TEXT

Jan. 26--UNION CITY -- The family of a Michigan State Police Trooper shot while serving a warrant has spoken out to the community.

The family of D/Sgt. Aaron Steensma expressed their thanks for the outpouring of support following the incident, which occurred Wednesday morning while Steensma and another officer were executing a search warrant related to a cold case investigation in Union Township in rural Branch County.

The shooting occurred at approximately 11:15 a.m. at a residence on Francisco Road. When troopers announced their presence prior to making entry into the residence, the suspect, 62-year-old David Kidney, leveled a long gun at the officers.

They were attempting to take cover when Steensma, of the Marshall Post, was shot in the chest and Trooper Daniel Thayer, also of the Marshall Post, received a grazing wound to the hand and chest. The round that struck Thayer in the chest was stopped by his ballistic vest.

All MSP personnel were wearing body armor at the time of the incident. It is unclear at this time how Steensma was injured despite being armored.

Steensma, a Cassopolis graduate with family in the area, was transported to the hospital, and was reported to be in serious but stable condition, according to Director Col. Kriste Kibbey Etue. Thayer did not seek medical attention.

Members of Steensma's family delivered the following statement via email:

"We would like to start off by saying thank you to everyone for your outpouring support," the statement read. "Not only from the Michigan State Police and but also surrounding police, fire and EMS agencies as well as friends and surrounding communities. We would like to give a special thanks to the personnel who helped take care of Aaron on the scene and help get him to safety, as well as all of the medical personnel who have provided excellent treatment and care for Aaron in his time of need.

"Aaron is a family-oriented guy and very involved in the community. He loves being involved with his children at their sporting events and he will be greatly missed while he continues to recover from this horrifying incident. It's something we knew could happen at any time, but there is no way to prepare yourself for it when it does occur. He loves his job and we are all very proud of his accomplishments while working with the Michigan State Police.

"Please continue to keep Aaron and our family in your thoughts and prayers as well as all of the emergency responders out protecting and serving."

People may support Steensma by making a donation to the Michigan State Troopers Assistance Fund, and writing "D/Sgt. Aaron Steensma" in the "Memory/Honor/Support of:" box on the form. Checks may also be mailed to 1715 Abbey Road, Suite B, East Lansing, MI 48823.

"Thanks to the quick actions of troopers at the scene and the excellent medical attention he received from ProMedica Coldwater Regional Hospital, West Michigan Air Care and the trauma team at Borgess Medical Center, D/Sergeant Steensma is doing remarkably well for the seriousness of his injury," Etue said in a press release. The MSP Emergency Support Team responded, and confirmed that Kidney is deceased.

As of Thursday morning, MSP Communications Representative Lori Dougovito reported that Steensma's condition was unchanged and that he was still in serious but stable condition.

An autopsy was conducted on Kidney Friday morning in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The autopsy confirmed that his death was caused by a single gunshot wound sustained while exchanging gun fire with trooper. The investigation is ongoing and Dougovito said she could not provide more information at this time.
CREDIT: By Sarah Culton

DETAILS

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