

Leavenworth man pleads no contest to threatening family members, police with axe

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CASE NUMBER: 2023-CR-000046

LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- A Leavenworth man who used an axe and a machete to threaten family members and police officers pled no contest to aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer.

Justin L. Toms-Gardner, 34, was arrested on January 22, 2023, after officers were forced to use a beanbag round fired from a shotgun to subdue him.

According to court documents, Leavenworth police officers responded to a disturbance call involving Toms-Gardner and two family members at a home located southeast of downtown Leavenworth at about 2:00 p.m. Upon arrival, officers were met by Toms-Gardner, who had an axe and approached them. Toms-Gardner eventually raised his axe and acted like he would throw it at officers. Feeling threatened, an officer fired a beanbag round, striking Toms-Gardner.

County Attorney Todd Thompson said, “The outcome of this situation could’ve been much different. We applaud our law enforcement officers for ending this situation without anyone being seriously hurt.”

Following Toms-Gardner’s no-contest plea, he was found guilty. Sentencing is scheduled for October 6 at 1:00 p.m.