

America Mafalda Thayler, who lived in Shakopee and worked at MyPillow in Chaska, was killed on Forth Avenue and Spencer Street near downtown Shakopee on July 28, 2021. She was killed by her boyfriend, who used a machete to cut off her head.





Fifty-five-year-old America Mafalda Thayer was found dead on Wednesday afternoon, July 28, 2021. The decapitated body was discovered in the middle of the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Spencer Street in downtown Shakopee. Just as a group of people was setting up for the Rhythm on the Rails concert that evening, helicopters were searching from above, the Shakopee Police Department arrived, and America, fresh with stab wounds, was pronounced dead at the scene, according to *The Independent*.

America, a 55-year-old woman from Shakopee, had dated the suspect, Alexis Saborit, who was from Cuba, for about seven years. It was a rough several years. According to Alpha News reports, Saborit had a criminal record which included domestic assault charges in Minnesota and Louisiana, a DUI, and running from a police officer. They attempted to deport him in 2012, but Cuba wouldn't approve his travel documents, so he remained in the country.

The 42-year-old Saborit was apprehended by police 1.5 miles away from the scene and faced first-degree murder charges. In 2023, Saborit was acquitted due to mental illness according to the *New York Post*.

He was convicted of domestic violence in 2017 when he pinned Thayer to the ground after becoming suspicious that she had been speaking to another man at a bar. Before the trial, a restraining order was put in place against him but was removed after Thayer sent the court a handwritten note asking for it to be overturned.

Saborit was scheduled to appear in Scott County court on the day of the killing on charges of arson after he allegedly set fire to his apartment.

After two psychological evaluations of the defendant, the Scott County attorney acknowledged the case was headed toward a likely finding of not guilty by reason of mental illness.

According to articles in various papers, on July 28, 2021, Saborit and Thayer were driving through Shakopee. Saborit said an altercation between the two of them broke out after Thayer told him that she wanted to break up. Saborit pulled out a machete, which he often carried with him, and beheaded Thayer.

Around 2:30 p.m., the Shakopee Police Department responded to a report of a headless body dumped from a car near Fourth and Spencer. Upon arrival, they found Thayer's headless body, along with her head, lying near her car. She was pronounced dead on the scene. Further investigation of the scene revealed a machete and bloody clothing in the recycling bin of a nearby alleyway, according to AP News. Police documents show that several people witnessed the killing. One person recorded a video of Saborit dumping the body, then picking up Thayer's head by the hair. Another reported seeing Saborit hitting something and throwing it, according to *Newsweek*.

Local police found Saborit wandering near Minnesota State Highway 101 and Shenandoah Drive. They arrested him at The Landing, roughly 1.5 miles away from the scene and three blocks from Travelodge, the hotel he had been staying in. He was charged with second-degree murder; his bail was set at $2.5 million. In an interview with the police, he admitted to killing Thayer with a machete.

According to the Scott County court system, he was assigned a public defender at his request. His first court appearance was scheduled for August 9. On July 17, 2023, Saborit was acquitted of the killing by reason of mental illness, according to *Law & Crime*.

In the *Shakopee Valley News*, friends remembered America.

Walker Martinez and Tori Finney recalled the two items that Thayer frequently purchased from the Speedway convenience store where they formerly worked: a can of Pepsi and a coffee.

"That's right, it was always Pepsi in a can," Martinez said.

Thayer, who worked across the street from the gas station at MyPillow in Chaska, often ventured over during her shift for a caffeine fix, they said – nearly every time she worked.

Martinez and Finney helped organize a vigil for Thayer Thursday evening, held at the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Spencer Street, a quiet, but busy residential area. The two lived just down the street, off Fifth Avenue. The day Thayer died, they were driving through the area and came across the crime scene tape. They initially believed a car crash had occurred.

"She was a really kind person who deserved better than this," Finney said.

"She was always really sweet," Martinez said of Thayer. "She was so kind-hearted and down to earth. She was a loving person."

America, who immigrated from Cuba, was kind, soft-spoken and had a good sense of humor. Her former



co-workers described her as extremely hard-working, caring, and the kind of person that would never hurt a fly.

“I knew her pretty well. We didn’t hang out but when I say she liked to work, she was putting in 70 hours a week,” said Jamie Worley, MyPillow employee and Thayer’s friend. “She would basically go there all day, go home for a little bit and come back. I went there today and went to the store and got her a rose and a teddy bear to put on her desk. When I got there I didn’t even look at any of my co-workers. I just stood at her desk with my head down. Everyone was just crying. It was a very emotional day and it still is.”

Nicky Kendrick, a friend of Thayer for five years, said Thayer would visit her at work every day, sometimes several times a day, when she worked at the Chaska Holiday Station stores. “She was soft spoken, so funny and always had amazing stories.”

“She always went out of her way to say hi to me when she saw me,” said Kendrick. “She was just truly the kindest to everyone. I haven’t met anyone as genuinely kind as America was since my late grandma.”

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Killed In Shakopee 2021

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