

## **Dog 'snaps,' attacks boy**

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ERIE, Colo. -- Just like he had the past seven years, 9-year-old Josh Jolliff slept with his dog, Gordy, on Sunday night.

The next day, the black Labrador retriever attacked the boy in the family's front yard as he and his sister Aubrey, 11, played horseshoes.

Police later shot Gordy dead after he lunged at an officer and showed his teeth.

Aubrey, who witnessed the mauling, said there was so much blood that she couldn't see Josh's face.

"I thought I wasn't going to have a brother no more," she said.

Tuesday, Josh was recovering from reconstructive facial surgery at Denver's Children's Hospital and doing well, said his mother, Amanda Jolliff.

In addition to severe trauma to the right side of his face and ear, Josh also suffered puncture wounds on his shoulder and hands that he used to shield his neck from the dog's jaws.

Doctors predicted a speedy recovery, but the boy may need plastic surgery when he gets older, Amanda Jolliff said.

Gordy had been with the family since he was 5 months old, Amanda Jolliff said, and there was no indication Monday morning that he was having any problems. Josh and Aubrey followed him out to play, and as they tossed metal horseshoes about 12:30 p.m., Gordy began to whine for attention, Aubrey said.

When Josh went to pet him, Aubrey said, Gordy "snapped" and grabbed the boy by his ear.

Aubrey screamed for help and said the dog grabbed her brother by the hair before their mom and her friend were able to kick and wrestle Gordy away.

The dog then escaped through the yard's picket gate.

When officers arrived, paramedics were tending to the boy in the cab of the family pickup truck -- where his mom had put him for safety because Gordy was at large.

Amanda Jolliff said she then spotted Gordy at the end of the alley that runs next to their green-and-white trailer.

"I told them, 'There's my dog. Shoot him dead,' " she said.

Officer Jamie Chester cornered Gordy and asked for a pole to catch the dog, but instead ended up grabbing his service gun because Gordy turned on him. He fired two bullets at the 50- to 60-pound dog. Once Gordy was down, he fired a third shot to put the dog out of its misery, said Lt. Lee Mathis.

All indications are that Chester was justified in the shooting, Mathis said, but the department is still conducting an investigation.

Gordy -- named after the talking-pig Disney movie character who saves his owner's life -- had never been aggressive in the past toward humans, Amanda Jolliff said. He had fought with other dogs and killed the family's parrot after grabbing it by its head last year, she said.

It may never be known why Gordy attacked the boy, Mathis said.

"We didn't have any indication of any mistreatment going on," he said. "Dogs do bite, and this happens from time to time."

Amanda Jolliff said she contemplated getting rid of Gordy after their bird died but didn't because she didn't want to lose two pets at once.

"I never thought that if he did that to my bird, he'd turn on my kids," she said.