

\$12 million awarded to family of killed cyclist

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Suit asked for damages to cover T.O. man's lost wages

By Raul Hernandez

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A jury Friday awarded \$12.5 million in damages to the family of a dentist killed in an accident while riding his bicycle last year.

Glenn Garvin, 49, an avid cyclist, was struck by a vehicle and killed on Sept. 16, 2006, while riding along Westlake Boulevard. The Thousand Oaks resident was a member of the city's traffic advisory board and a bicycle safety volunteer.

His family filed a wrongful death suit against the driver, Norma Seigel, 82, of Thousand Oaks. The president of the Ventura County Bar Association said he believes Friday's award of damages is one of the highest ever involving a personal injury or wrongful death suit in Ventura County.

"I am not aware of one, off the top of my head, that can top that," said attorney and bar president Jonathan Light.

The Garvin family's lawyer, Mark Hiepler, praised the jury's decision. "I am pleased a jury of conservative Ventura County people saw the value of the life of a father and husband and the value he brought to the community," said Hiepler.

In a prepared statement, wife Pamela Garvin, 50, said, "My husband, Glenn, was a volunteer traffic safety com-



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missioner for the city of Thousand Oaks who taught and lived bicycle safety. His death ... as well as the

deaths at the Santa Monica outdoor market, were all preventable and teach us that we must individually take responsibility for those we love, whether elderly or young, who should not be driving."

Pamela Garvin was referring to a 2003 incident in which an 86-year-old man drove his car into a crowd at the Santa Monica market, killing nine people and hurting dozens. The man said he couldn't stop and hit his accelerator instead of the brake.

In the Garvin case, Seigel admitted she was responsible for the death, so the accident's cause wasn't an issue in the case. Instead, the trial focused on monetary damages.

Seigel's ophthalmologist told her eight days before the accident that she had cataracts in both eyes, according to Hiepler. The day before the accident and during another visit to her ophthalmologist, she was told she had "dense cataracts" in both eyes.

Seigel's lawyer, Robert

Dentist earned large salary

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From B1

Hanger, couldn't be reached for comment Friday.

Attorney Light said he believes the jury's award was large partly because Garvin had a large annual income — future earnings the family will no longer receive. Garvin was an endodontist who earned about

\$746,633 in 2006, according to the lawsuit.

"There was a loss of life. That's a big deal," Light said.

Hiepler said Seigel has insurance and assets, and another court hearing will determine whether it will be enough to satisfy the judgment.

The wrongful death trial lasted seven days in Superior Court in Simi Valley.

During closing arguments, Hiepler never specified how much should be awarded but suggested it should be a large, multimillion-dollar sum. Hiepler said Pamela Garvin is now a single parent of two teenage sons who struggles without her husband of 25 years. Seigel had agreed to \$39,878 in damages to cover such things as medical expenses and funeral costs.

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