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IN THE NEWS

IN CIRCUIT COURT

The City of Evanston will pay \$2.7 million to the family of a homeless man who died nearly two years after being paralyzed, allegedly from police brutality.

The settlement was reached Friday in Cook County Circuit Court before Circuit Judge **Lynn M. Egan**. The case was scheduled for trial May 19.

Richard Bledsoe was homeless, jobless and suffering from a mental disorder when Evanston police arrested him in November 1999 for throwing a beer can at a park ranger, said **Paul P. Wolf** of Mitchell, Hoffman & Wolf.

Wolf alleged that police officers broke Bledsoe's neck and rendered him a quadriplegic by placing him in a headlock.

Evanston police denied all liability, said **Richard L. Jones** of Ryan, Smolens & Jones, who represented the city along with partner Richard T. Ryan. They said Bledsoe -- who was under the influence of cocaine and alcohol and was "yelling, jumping around and kicking" while in the van -- could have injured himself.

Bledsoe died from infections related to quadriplegia in 2001. *Bledsoe v. Evanston Police Department, et al.*, No. 00 L 6357.