

Jury awards \$4.5 million

■ 2001 crash left one woman dead, another with severe injuries

WILLIAM FINN BENNETT
STAFF WRITER

RIVERSIDE — Two families were awarded more than \$4.5 million this week by a jury in connection with a July 2001 crash on Highway 74 east of Lake Elsinore that left one woman dead and another seriously injured.

The crash occurred when an eastbound Budweiser delivery van crossed into oncoming lanes and crashed head-on into a car driven by Deanna Jean Evans, 32. Evans died a short time later at an area hospital. The driver of the van, Yucaipa resident Adam William Walker, then 29, told officers that a bee flew into the van just before the crash. He said at the time that he looked down to swat the bee and, when he looked up, the van had crossed into the oncoming lane. A passenger in the car, Loree Isenberg of Lake Elsinore, suffered serious injuries.

In November 2001, attorneys representing the families of the victims filed suit in Riverside Superior Court against Anheuser-Busch, alleging negligence on the part of the driver.

Thursday's jury decision awarded Isenberg \$4.256 million and Deanna's husband, Lawrence Evans, \$256,000, Carlson said Friday.

A previous settlement between Anheuser-Busch and Deanna Evans' family resulted in a \$2 million settlement in favor of the woman's children.

For Deanna's husband, the money will never ease the pain that continues a year and a half later, he said.

"It just broke my heart," he said as he choked back the sobs Friday. "I still can't get over her. I just came from the graveyard — I go there all the time," he said.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2003

LOCAL

THE CALIFORNIAN

B

INDEX TO VERDICTS AND SETTLEMENTS

18 FEBRUARY 24, 2003

DAILY JOURNAL EXTRA

➤ JURY

Evans family previously received settlement

PERSONAL INJURY

Auto v. Auto	V	\$57,960
Auto v. Auto	S	\$100,000
Auto v. Auto	V	\$13,748
Auto v. Auto	V	Defense
Auto v. Auto	V	Defense
Auto v. Auto	V	\$885,759
Auto v. Motorcycle	S	\$775,000
Auto v. Truck	V	\$4,532,771