

Pit bull attack settlement proposed

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WOODSTOCK – The family of a Cary boy mauled in a 2005 pit bull attack is willing to accept \$100,000 to settle a lawsuit against the dogs' owners.

According to court documents filed this week in McHenry County, Nick Foley's parents have agreed to accept the money – minus \$17,000 in attorney fees – in exchange for dropping their lawsuit against the dogs' owners.

The \$100,000 is the maximum amount available to Foley under the defendants' homeowners' insurance policy, according to the pending agreement.

"It is a reasonable settlement under the facts and circumstances of this case," wrote Steven Koga, Foley's attorney.

Attorneys announced in January that they had reached a tentative agreement in the suit that also involves Jourdan Lamarre, another girl mauled, and Gerd Gerdes, an injured neighbor.

Attorneys of all parties declined at the time to discuss settlement details. They said there still was housekeeping work to complete before a March 20 court date, when the lawsuit officially could be dropped.

The group sought damages from Scott Sword and his live-in girlfriend, Cathie Doyle, via their Allstate Insurance Co. policy. Foley and Lamarre, then both 10, were soliciting candy and magazine subscriptions near Cary for a Girl Scouts fundraiser when the dogs escaped after they knocked on Sword's Hawthorne Drive door.

Foley, now 11, spent more than a month recovering at Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge.

Foley suffered severe injuries to his abdomen, back, face, scalp and neck and underwent five surgeries during his initial hospital stay.

Since his release, Foley has undergone three re-constructive surgeries and will need additional surgeries, his doctor, Loren S. Schechter, said.