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**Nature of Action:** Value of physical and emotional injuries where plastic surgery led to minimal scarring

**Injuries:** Dog bite; facial injuries, scarring

**County:** Waukesha County

**Case name:** Jane Doe, a minor, v. Hartford Insurance Company

**Judge:** John Schmid (mediator)

**Verdict or settlement:** Settlement

**Original demand:** \$300,000

**Original offer:** \$50,000

**Amount:** \$150,000

**Plaintiff's attorney:** Jay Urban, Urban Taylor & Stawski Ltd., Milwaukee

**Defendant's attorney:** Larry Britton, Britton & Associates, Milwaukee

**Plaintiff's expert:** Thomas Korkos, M.D. (plaintiff's plastic surgeon)

**Plaintiff counsel's summary of the facts:** On March 17, 2001 a golden retriever bit a 9-year old girl in the face while she was delivering Girl Scout cookies to her neighbors. Forty-five stitches to her face and plastic surgery scar revisions repaired the torn skin. The dog had been recently adopted but it was unknown whether it had bitten before (the dog was put down after incident). Mother witnessed incident and made a companion claim for bystander emotional distress. Past and future special damages for medical expenses were approximately \$15,000.

**Theory:** Wisconsin Statute § 174.02(1)(a) - the Dog Bite Statute - imposes strict liability on the owner of a dog for a person's full damages if a dog bites a person. If owners know their dog has caused injury or bitten before, then they may be held liable for two times the full amount of damages.

**Defenses:** Dog owner contended the dog was provoked by the girl's attempt to show it a trick she taught her own dog. Damages were minimized by most of the stitches inside the mouth leaving hardly visible scarring after the reconstruction surgery.