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## suits & deals

### \$2.3M For Man Dragged by Transit Bus

**Arpad v. New Jersey Transit:** A man struck by and dragged underneath a New Jersey Transit bus for 1.7 miles settled his Passaic County suit on March 15 for \$2.3 million.

On the evening of Dec. 2, 2014, Seres Arpad, then 60, was walking his dog in the Wayne Transit Center in Wayne, near his home. He crossed at an intersection where the bus was stopped, and the bus began making a left turn across the lane where Arpad was walking, striking him and his dog, said his lawyer, David Mazie

of Mazie Slater Katz & Freeman in Roseland.

Arpad was lodged under the rear axle of the bus, which stopped to drop off passengers soon after striking him but soon continued on its route, with Arpad holding on underneath. The bus traveled at speeds of up to 50 miles per hour and didn't stop until after it had traveled 1.7 miles, when it was stopped by police called by a passenger on the bus who had witnessed Arpad being hit, according to Mazie. Arpad's dog, Crystal, was killed.

The bus driver, Erickson Manlapid, would later say he heard a noise but didn't realize he had struck someone, Mazie said.

Arpad, extricated from the undercarriage of the bus, sustained fractures to his right fibula and ribs, as well as severe abrasions and burns to numerous parts of his body, including his buttocks, where the injuries led to necrosis, the suit claimed, also alleging that blunt trauma led to a total vision loss in his right eye. Arpad was hospitalized for seven weeks at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Paterson and underwent five surgeries, Mazie said.

The suit also claimed that Arpad suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, is unable to engage in outdoor activities as he used to do, and suffered emotional damages from the loss of his dog.

The defense contended that Arpad was crossing the street where there was no crosswalk, during darkness and rainy conditions.

The parties were scheduled for a March 24 trial when they settled on March 15 during mediation with John Keefe Sr., a retired Superior Court judge with the Keefe Law Firm in Red Bank. The settlement was approved in a friendly hearing by Passaic County Superior Court Judge Bruno Mongiardi but has yet to be paid, according to Mazie.

Benjamin Clarke of DeCotiis, FitzPatrick, Cole & Giblin in Teaneck, for NJ Transit, didn't return a call seeking comment on the settlement.

— David Gialanella



COURTESY OF DAVIE MAZIE