

# \$5.5 million judgment is largest

BAY MINETTE, Ala. — A \$5.5 million malpractice judgment awarded in Baldwin County Circuit Court is believed to be the largest ever presented in that county, according to court officials.

A jury awarded the money to Amanda Ard, 9, of Summerdale, and her parents, Jeff and Annette Ard, in a lawsuit against Dr. William Williston, a former anesthesiologist at South Baldwin Hospital in Foley.

The girl suffered brain damage because she did not receive enough oxygen during an appendectomy operation performed at SBH when she was 4, according to James Yance, who along with Robert Cunningham Jr. represented the Ard family in the case.

Yance said Miss Ard is now blind and functions at the level of a 3- to 4-month-old infant as a result of the damage.

The jury made the award on Friday after hearing two weeks of testimony.