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TOPICS OF INTEREST

COURTS

Jury awards man \$1.2 million

A Yorba Linda man who fell from a second-floor apartment balcony, breaking both elbows after a railing gave way, was awarded \$1.2 million by an Orange County jury, his attorney said.

Brandon McDermott, 29, was helping a friend move Dec. 4, 1999, when the accident occurred at an Orange apartment owned by Bert and Taeko Abley of San Clemente, attorney Cynthia Hafif said.

The Ableys contended that they were unaware of the railing's condition. Their attorney, Charles Kittrell, declined to comment.

Hafif said the verdict Monday was unanimous, but the jury found 20 percent comparative negligence on behalf of McDermott.

The apartment building was built in 1954, and the Ableys bought it 10 years later.

- City News Service