

Jogger gets \$1.1 million settlement from town

■ The injured man claims a town police officer failed to assist him in crossing the street.

By ADAM BOWLES
Norwich Bulletin

A Groton man who suffered a severe brain injury when he was struck by a car while crossing Route 12 in 1994 won a \$1.1

million settlement from the town and its police department.

Ian Guthrie, a former Navy petty officer first class at the U.S. Naval Submarine **GROTON** base, was jogging when the accident occurred at the intersection of Route 12 and Gungywamp Road. He was 38 at the time.

Groton Town Attorney James Brennan and town police Chief David Vanasse were unavailable for comment Monday afternoon.

In the lawsuit, Guthrie said

the signs and cones placed by town workers and Henkles & McCoy Construction Co. to direct traffic around gas pipeline installation work were confusing to pedestrians and motorists.

Guthrie said the layout of the construction markers caused William Morgerson, who was driving a Jeep north on Route 12, to hit him. The lawsuit also claimed Officer Vernal Taylor of the Groton Town Police failed to assist Guthrie to cross the street. Taylor was assigned to the

construction site.

Guthrie allegedly was waved across the street by town employees in a town truck stopped at the intersection.

A press release issued by Robert Reardon Jr. of the Reardon Law Firm in New London said Guthrie was totally disabled by his brain injury. He was medically discharged from the Navy in 1996 and has been unable to work since the accident, said Reardon, the attorney representing Guthrie.

"Ian Guthrie was chosen

as 'Sailor of the Year' at the sub base the year before this tragic lawsuit," Reardon said. "He was destined to continue his very successful naval career had this unfortunate accident not occurred. Ian and his wife, Roseanne, are pleased that they have received some compensation for all of the injuries and losses they have suffered."

The lawsuit was filed in 1995 and was scheduled to go to trial in May. Lawsuits filed against Henkles & McCoy and against Morgerson still are scheduled to go to trial May 26.