

BEAR League director faces lawsuit on trespassing charges

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PLACERVILLE – BEAR League Director Ann Bryant appeared in El Dorado County Superior Court Friday on charges of trespassing. Bryant said she is being sued by Rubicon resident Helen Bornholtz after entering Bornholtz’s home in September following a break-in by a rogue bear in the West Shore area.

Bryant said she entered the home because the sow had turned on stoves and water faucets during previous plunderings. Bryant said she called Bornholtz to let her know the house was broken into and Bornholtz asked Bryant to board up the shattered window.

Bryant said Bornholtz was appreciative for the help, but filed a lawsuit two weeks later claiming Bryant trespassed.

“My motive was to go in to help them, and now they press charges against me,” Bryant said. “It’s just bizarre.”

Bornholtz could not be reached for comment. Bryant’s trial date is set for Dec. 18.

Bryant said the trespassing case is just a small distraction while she prepares for another lawsuit filed against her by the California Department of Fish and Game.

Bryant will be in a Tahoe City court Tuesday to face two misdemeanor charges of unlawful taking and possession of a wild animal.

The events occurred last spring when Squaw Valley USA informed Bryant of an emaciated, dehydrated orphan cub that was searching for food at a resort barbecue.

Bryant said she called Fish and Game and told them about the bear, but said the department told her to leave the cub alone. Bryant took the cub anyway, which resulted in the misdemeanor charges.

Bryant said she rescued the bear under a California law that allowed efforts to rehabilitate the animal.

Fish and Game took the bear to its offices in Rancho Cordova, Calif., and then shipped it to an animal orphanage in Texas.

“People are absolutely outraged about this,” Bryant said. “Fish and Game just wanted (the cub) to die. I don’t kill bears, I try to help bears.”

Fish and Game could not be reached for comment.

Bryant said she had to rescue the bear because it could have been rehabilitated and was more than 40 pounds underweight.

Bryant said she is prepared to stand up for what she still thinks was the right move, even though the charges carry a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

“(This lawsuit) is pretty discouraging when you’re trying to do the right thing,” Bryant said. “But you have to persevere when you believe it’s the right thing.”

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