



#IkeaMonkey's owner: 'We lived together as two being one'

by The Canadian Press on Wednesday, December 19, 2012 5:01pm

TORONTO – A woman whose pet monkey was found wearing a shearling coat in a Toronto Ikea parking lot is protesting at a Toronto Animal Services office today as part of her efforts to get him back.

Yasmin Nakhuda alleges the tiny primate was illegally taken from her by animal control officials and moved to the Story Book Farm Primate Sanctuary in Sunderland, Ont., where he now lives.

She is due in court Thursday to try to get an interim order to have the Japanese macaque named Darwin returned to her.

About 15 supporters are protesting with her this afternoon, urging animal services to “free Darwin.”

Her lawyer, Ted Charney, says he has been told the sanctuary plans to ask for the case to be adjourned Thursday, but the lawyer representing the sanctuary did not return a request for comment.

The young monkey captured worldwide attention earlier this month when he was spotted wandering the store parking lot in a little coat.

Nakhuda, a real estate lawyer, says she was never given the chance to remedy the situation after being fined \$240 for breaking the city's prohibited-animal bylaw.

“There has been no due process of law,” she told Toronto radio station Newstalk1010.

“Any animal taken away from an owner, the owner would have had the chance to relocate or do something to move with the animal, that's what's prescribed by the bylaw.”

In court documents, she says she, her husband and their two kids would be willing to move to a city that allows monkeys in order to keep Darwin, whom they consider part of the family.

“We lived together as two being one and I always believed that well, you know, I had to give him my back,” she told the radio station.

“(People say), ‘You always have a monkey on your back. You go to the washroom he’s with you. You go to the gym he’s with you. You do your nails the guy has to sit on you.’”

Until Darwin was gone, Nakhuda didn’t realize how attached she had become, she said.

“So suddenly having him taken away in such a cruel way and such a callous way, I just don’t think that’s right,” she told Newstalk 1010.

None of the allegations contained in the documents have been tested in court.

The primate sanctuary has previously said the monkey is doing well and the agency was prepared to fight any legal challenges for its return.