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**HUMANE SOCIETY OF BOULDER VALLEY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DENVER ZOO  
PRESENT KAREN PRYOR – REACHING THE ANIMAL MIND**

***Renowned National Behavioral Biologist and Author Karen Pryor to share ways to  
connect with minds and transform the lives of all kinds of animals***

**When:** Saturday, September 26, 2009: 1-2:30 p.m. & Sunday, September 27, 2009: 7-8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Denver Zoo, Norgren Hall, 2300 Steele Street, Denver, CO

**Cost:** \$20 per session

**Register:** Online at [www.denverzoo.org](http://www.denverzoo.org) or call 303-376-6741

**Boulder, Colo. (September 21, 2009)** – The same methods used to train wild animals in zoos can be used to train companion animals, even cats and fish! Many of these training techniques were created and refined by Karen Pryor, a renowned behavioral biologist, pioneer of clicker training and author. Pryor is coming to the Denver metro area this weekend – September 26-27, 2009 – to share new ways to connect with minds and transform the lives of all kinds of animals, from dogs and cats at home and in shelters, to elephants in zoos and sharks in oceanariums.

During two separate public speaking appearances at Denver Zoo taking place Saturday, September 26 from 1-2:30 p.m. & Sunday, September 27 from 7-8:30 p.m., Pryor will share fascinating first-hand accounts with everything from fish to polar bears on what modern training teaches us about the depth of animal intelligence, character and emotions. Attendees will be informed about the supporting scientific evidence, and they'll learn what each of us can do to bring out the intelligence and personality of animals in our own care. Tickets are \$20 per session and may be purchased online at [www.denverzoo.org](http://www.denverzoo.org) or by calling 303-376-6741. Saturday's ticket purchases include zoo admission. Pryor's appearance is sponsored by and benefits Humane Society of Boulder Valley and Denver Zoo.

Prior to Sunday's 7 p.m. main attraction with Karen Pryor, about 30 people will attend a sold-out VIP cocktail reception at 6 p.m. with Denver Zoo's Curator of Behavioral Husbandry Emily Insalaco. This VIP experience will include a private animal demonstration and reserved front-row seating at Pryor's presentation.

"Animals are far more intelligent than most people realize," says Pryor. "The standard methods of interacting are focused on suppressing undesirable behavior. These practices limit both the animals' development and our ability to see their true potential."

What happens if we eliminate force and train solely with reinforcement? What happens if we teach animals in the way they all learn best? What happens if we act more like a teacher and less like a trainer?

"What happens is remarkable," says Pryor.

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Karen Pryor is a leading scientist in the field of animal behavior and a pioneer in training without using fear or punishment. She is the author of numerous books and scientific papers. She will be signing copies of her newest book, "Reaching the Animal Mind" from Scribner, June 2009.

Karen's book includes the results from research conducted on dogs' learning rates with clickers by Humane Society of Boulder Valley Director of Animal Training & Behavior Lindsay Wood, MA, CTC. Lindsay's research confirmed that dogs trained with a clicker learn 40 percent faster than those trained with a word such as "good." The science validated what trainers are seeing when working with animals in zoos, aquariums and homes all around the world.

The Humane Society of Boulder Valley uses clicker training for behavior modification of shelter dogs and encourages its use in all of its public training classes. Use of the clicker has been extraordinarily helpful with fearful dogs, those that exhibit body handling difficulties and dogs that are reactive to other dogs.

According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), 70 percent of animals relinquished to shelters in the U.S. are given up because of behavior issues. The ASPCA also reports that 64 percent of all dogs obtained as puppies were disposed of by their guardians within a year, due to behavioral problems. Humane Society of Boulder Valley firmly believes that the most effective way to address these sad statistics and to teach polite animal behavior is to offer positive, reward-based training for shelter animals and companion pets.

Denver Zoo has an extensive animal behavioral program and utilizes many of Pryor's techniques in animal training. Animals are trained through positive reinforcement to participate in daily routines and veterinary procedures, such as offering a hip for a vaccination; this creates a positive enriching environment that allows animals to participate in their own care.

"Whether you're working with your dog or a hippo, positive reinforcement is very effective in animal training. By utilizing positive reinforcement in our training, we give our animals choices and power in their environment," says Denver Zoo Curator of Behavior Husbandry Emily Insalaco.

### **About Humane Society of Boulder Valley**

Humane Society of Boulder Valley is a community-supported, open-door facility that provides shelter, medical care and behavioral rehabilitation to more than 8,000 animals a year. Since its inception in 1902, the shelter has become one of the most recognized nonprofit organizations in the community and a national leader in animal welfare. It is the mission of Humane Society of Boulder Valley to protect and enhance the lives of companion animals by promoting healthy relationships between pets and people. More information can be found online at [www.boulderhumane.org](http://www.boulderhumane.org).

### **About Denver Zoo**

Denver Zoo is home to 3,500 animals representing more than 650 species and is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA accreditation assures the highest standards of animal care. A leader in environmental action, Denver Zoo is dedicated to ensuring the safety of the environment in support of all species and is the first U.S. zoo to receive ISO 14001 certification for the entire facility and operations. This international certification ensures the zoo is attaining the highest environmental standards.

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