

# Western Horsemanship

SECTION EDITOR MELISSA CASSUTT  
melissa.cassutt@westernhorseman.com

INSIDE: 42 COLT STARTING WITH MARTIN BLACK // 50 PRODUCTION SADDLE ARTISTS // 56 PERFECTING THE ONE-REIN STOP

## A Different Perspective

**HORSEWOMAN KAREN SCHOLL** knows why some women treat their horses like “big puppy dogs.” She also knows why women want to soothe their mounts when they’re afraid, and why having children equips women to face unprecedented fear. After all, she has a woman’s perspective on such things. As an equine educator, Scholl works to bridge the gap that

exists between men and women, as horse handlers and riders, and decipher horse communication in terms women understand. Often, Scholl’s techniques play on concepts relating to family, children and maternal instincts.

“The horse is really the greatest teacher,” she says.

*(Continued on next page.)*



Karen Scholl with her Andalusian geldings Bergante, left, and Debutante, right.

JENNIFER DENISON

## PHILOSOPHY

# A Different Perspective

(Continued from previous page.)

INTERVIEW BY MELISSA CASSUTT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JENNIFER DENISON



Karen Scholl uses a “mama’s bite,” a tap to encourage the horse to back, to re-establish boundaries after the horse snuck into her personal space.

## MATERNAL INSTINCTS

Oftentimes, when women have children they say, “I was fearless as kid, and then I had a baby. All of a sudden, I don’t ride like I used to.” Mother Nature kicks in these survival instincts because it’s not just you that’s at risk. If you’re harmed, you put your child at risk, as well. It seems like we have an irrational fear, but it’s supposed to be there. It’s a survival mechanism.

## OVERCOMING FEAR

More women than men have fear issues. But you can replace fear by layering more pieces of information, knowledge and experience, and by changing

your muscle memory. When all of that happens, that survival mechanism doesn’t need to be there because you’re prepared.

## COMMITMENT

I have not told a single person she needs to sell her horse. I feel like a relationship counselor. If a husband and wife come in, I’m not going to say to the wife, “Well, maybe you just got the wrong husband and we should start thinking about getting you a different one.” A horse is a living, breathing creature that is oftentimes, especially to a woman, a family member. We have a relationship and a commitment to it.

## A WOMAN’S NATURE

It’s in our nature to nurture, which, in general, becomes treating horses like big puppy dogs. But what horses really look for is the same thing children look for from a mother—loving leadership.

## KIDS AND HORSES

I often ask audiences, “When do kids bother you?” And every mom says, “When I’m on the phone.” Why is that? Why does a kid bug you when you’re on the phone? Why does a horse mess with you when you’re not paying attention? The answer is: They’re designed to mess with you when they can. It’s just their nature to continue to check out the leadership position at all times.

## PERSONAL SPACE

We have misinterpreted a horse coming into our personal space as meaning, “He likes me.” It doesn’t necessarily mean that. A horse wouldn’t come into the personal space of the lead horse. Horses have a very different thought process than humans do.

## COMMON GOALS

I don’t spend a lot of time talking about goals anymore because we all share the same goal: to go anywhere, anytime, and do anything with a horse and have fun doing it. If you have that goal, the possibilities are endless.

Learn more about Karen Scholl on-line at [karenscholl.com](http://karenscholl.com).

## POLITICS & POLICIES

# AQHA Postpones Cloning Decision

**THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE ASSOCIATION’S** board of directors delayed action on a member-directed proposal to change AQHA Rule 227(a) to allow a live foal produced via a particular type of cloning to be registered if its DNA matches that of a registered Quarter Horse. Citing a need for more information, the decision has been postponed until the 2010 AQHA Convention. In the meantime, the board recommended a task force

continue to seek information regarding cloning and determine how registering cloned horses could affect the association and its members. The rule change was first proposed at the 2008 AQHA Convention. (For more on cloning, see “Carbon Copies,” in the December 2008 *Western Horseman*.)

Stay updated on this issue and more on the Web at [whhorsemanship.wordpress.com](http://whhorsemanship.wordpress.com).

► **ADVISORS FOR WESTERN HORSEMANSHIP:** Gary Dunshee; Mike Kevil; Tammy Pate; Randy Reiman; Mark Revenaugh, DVM; Wade Shoemaker, DVM; Chuck Stormes; Joe Wolter