

Blue Spruce Riding Club  
644 Dogwood Dr.  
Alburtis, PA 18011  
www.bluespruceridingclub.com

August 2024

# The Trail News



## Letter from the Editor

This Sunday is our second Trail Obstacle practice of 2024, join us for a fun day with the horses trying out the obstacles. Did you know that this type of an event is even good for bringing green horses to? Gets them off the farm to see strange things, walk past obstacles and maybe go over them. We will have a couple new configurations—you must join us to see what they are. We always have at least 20 obstacles available to work on, some are simple, others more complex.

The Kitchen will be open for lite breakfast/lunch items. Members—we can use some donations.

We are doing setup at 9:00 am on Saturday to 12:00 noon if you wish to help.

**Note:** If you currently are not on our email list, please send the editor your email address, will be glad to add you to our distribution list. Email [cropeter@dejazzd.com](mailto:cropeter@dejazzd.com)

## Upcoming Events:

**2ND Saturdays of the Month**—The ring at the club grounds will be open for use—only in good weather. We ask that if you use the ring, please clean up after yourself.

**Sept Trail Obstacle Practice and Club Picnic**—Sept 8 starting at 9:00 am till 2:00 pm—members please bring a covered dish to share.

**Reminder to follow along with our events on FACEBOOK and check out our website at <http://www.bluespruceridingclub.com/>**



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Checking	\$2282.18



Fundraiser—Bags For Sale at the Clubhouse—\$5.00 each



## Memberships/Dues

Thank you to our members who faithfully mail in their dues each year. Membership dues are due in the beginning of each year. If you joined in Nov or Dec, of the previous year, no dues are required till the following year. The price is: \$20.00 for a Single Membership and \$25.00 for a Family Membership. If you need a membership application, it is posted on our website.

### Mail Dues to:

Charmaine Ropeter  
535 Fagleysville Rd  
Perkiomenville, PA 18074

## 2024 BSRC Officers:

**President:** Open Office

**Secretary:** Open Office

**Treasurer:** Open Office

**Maintenance:** Open Office

**Show Chairman:**

Sue Moss—570-345-0754

**Newsletter Editor & Trail**

**Boss—**

Charmaine Ropeter—610-310-7984

**Webmaster:**

Theresa Reabold— 610-826-5309

**Board of Directors 2022:**

**Chairman of the Board:**

Pat Zentner—610-845-2205

**2024 Board Members:**

Open Board Position

Open Board Position

# Loping 'Out Loud' by Daniel Dauphin

If you get breathless and jittery at the lope, try this to substitute enjoyment for anxiety. “Omi-gosh! Omi-gosh! Omi-gosh!” If this is your internal conversation when you’re loping your horse, you’re not alone. For many of us, the lope is the point at which our courage can begin to flag. All sphincters, pupils, and even pores contract as we lean forward, tense our muscles, and hold our breath. We do all these things because we’re trying to control what feels like a saddled trampoline building velocity like Willy Wonka’s speedboat.

Let’s change that conversation, shall we?

Over the years, I’ve worked with many adult students suffering from loping anxiety, and there’s one simple strategy I’ve learned can make an enormous difference. It’s reciting out loud, at high volume, from memory.

It sounds crazy, I know. But I guarantee it’ll enable you to relax and let go of those nerves, which in turn will allow you to sit properly and ride with more confidence. Loping anxiety can cause a “fetal crouch”: hunched forward, shoulders rounded, muscles tensed, legs gripping and creeping up, breath held.

### Why It Works

First, I’ll assume your horse is safe to ride at a lope. (If not, your anxiety is warranted and you should address your horse’s need for training with a qualified professional.)

Knowing you’re safe and *feeling* safe don’t necessarily go together, however. And because nervousness causes you to tense up—even curl into a “fetal crouch”—it creates a feedback loop. The physiology reinforces the nervousness, which reinforces the physiology...all leading to the “omigosh!” chant in your head.

How does reciting from memory correct this? By requiring you to concentrate on something other than your nerves. As you work to remember the words to your favorite Robert Blake poem or Winston Churchill quotation (more on that in a moment), you’re distracted from your tension. Instead

of succumbing to mild panic, you begin to notice that everything is going along just fine, and you can relax.

Reciting out loud also makes it impossible for you to hold your breath—something a surprising number of riders do at the lope without even realizing it. And because you can’t “hold forth” while holding your breath, reciting from memory solves that problem, too. Reciting from memory will distract you from your nerves so you can sit relaxed and erect, with your shoulders squared and your weight in your heels. Bonus: You can’t hold your breath!

### How to Do It

First, choose your recitation. It might be your favorite Bible verse, Kipling passage, Frost poem, commercial jingle—whatever you like. (My personal favorites are the Pledge of Allegiance and anything Dr. Seuss.) All that matters is that you know the passage by heart.

Next, warm your horse up properly so he’s physically and mentally ready to give you a nice, cadenced lope. As you ask him to strike off, begin reciting your piece out loud. And when I say out loud, I mean *loud*, as if you’re addressing a group of 500 people without a microphone. Project your voice! (As an alternative, you can also sing a favorite song, but if you do, belt it out like an opera singer.) If you aren’t getting weird looks from unwitting spectators around your arena, you’re not doing it right. But if you are, you’ll feel the tension melt away, replaced with the simple pleasure of enjoying a lope. As silly as this sounds, I routinely see a significant difference in people’s posture, relaxation, and expression after just a few circles’ worth of reciting something out loud.

### Keep It Up

For the time being, start each loping session like this. Over time, a new emotional pattern of comfort and confidence will have replaced the old pattern of tension and anxiety. At that point, you can stop. But if the anxiety comes back, use the tool again.



# 6 STRETCHES FOR BACK HEALTH



## NECK STRETCHES

This is mainly a neck stretch but using a treat, ask the horse to reach past its mid belly and it then stretches the back, ribs and abdominal muscles.

## ROUNDING

Using a treat, ask the horse to reach between the front legs or to the outside of the fetlock to stretch the wither, back and abdominals to help posture and suppleness.

## BELLY LIFT

Starting at the sternum, use your fingers to ask the horse to lift its back up and hold. This helps to flex the thoracic spine and help back posture, but you must hold it!!



## HIND END TUCK

Using the reflex point over the SI joint, rake your fingers slowly down asking the horse to flex through its lumbosacral junction, contract the abdominals and flex the thoraco-lumbar spine.

## PELVIC TILT

Using the same reflex point on one side, ask the horse to bend round with the pelvis instead of flexing, stretching the abdominals and lifting the back.

## TAIL PULL

Gently take hold of the tail and gradually pull backwards, incorporating an entire stretch of the spine and associated back muscles. Hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds.



# Blue Spruce Riding Club

## 644 Dogwood Dr Alburtis, PA 18011

Our Website: <http://www.bluespruceridingclub.com>

### Trail Obstacle Practice Series

#### Trail Obstacle Practice Dates:

**July 14, 2024 - 8:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**\*\*August 18, 2024 - 9:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Sept 8, 2024 - 9:00 am to 2:00 pm—Club Picnic**

**Cost is \$10.00 for club members and \$15.00 for non-members per horse.**

Contact Charmaine for more info: [cropeter@dejazzd.com](mailto:cropeter@dejazzd.com) or 610-310-7984 or check our Facebook page—Blue Spruce Riding Club, Alburtis, PA. You can see some of the pictures from last year's Trail obstacles.

**For the Practice:** Practice on 20 plus different obstacles. Great way to get your horse used to new obstacles. Examples: Bridges, pool noodles, mailbox, teeter-totter, pin-wheel, back through and trot overs, gate, drag, ball push, side-pass, etc. Kitchen—We will have the kitchen open for lunch items to purchase.

All riders must wear a shoe with a heel. Riders 18 years and under must wear a helmet.

Clubhouse Café will be open all day.

Please clean up around your trailer.

Follow signs to show grounds.

All Dogs on club grounds must be on a leash.





## BSRC ADVERTISEMENT

Reminder: As a club member you can have your business card or advertisement included in the monthly newsletter.



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## Ways You Can Support Healthy Hoof Growth - Nichole Chirico

As we approach the cold, wet winter months, hoof care is more important than ever. Hoof wall is typically produced at a much slower rate in the fall and winter months than in summer. That doesn't mean you can't support healthy hoof growth during this period, though. In fact, it may be more important than ever. Here are four ways to improve the quality of your horse's hooves in the months ahead.

### 1. Provide as much exercise as possible.

Movement increases blood flow, encouraging growth and providing "feedback" for the horn that does grow to come in strong. If you ride less often in the winter, remember that turnout is just as beneficial—and with proper blankets and shelter, even a clipped horse can stay warm in frigid weather.

### 2. Keep his nutrition on track.

Most commercial feed products provide the necessary nutrition for average horses and those at specific life stages or activity levels. If your horse is on a primarily forage-based diet, buy the best quality hay you can find to replace the nutrition lost when grazing is no longer available. If you are unable to consistently secure good hay, talk to your veterinarian about using a "balancer" pellet that can provide needed nutrition without unneeded calories.

### 3. Consider a supplement.

The nutrient biotin has been shown to encourage hoof growth and improve horn quality. Methionine and lysine are important for protein production in horse hooves, and copper and zinc play important roles in the formation of protein.

### 4. Pay attention to footing.

Ground that is too hard or too soft can adversely affect hoof health. The ideal is dry and firm—but forgiving—soil, which can be difficult to find during the fall and winter. Improve drainage in turnout areas if you can and be mindful of riding a horse too fast over frozen soil—it can be just as harmful as speeding over parched soil in summer.

Finally, try to be patient. Even with ideal nutrition and management, it takes about a year for a horse's hooves to grow out from coronary band to the ground. Results from changes you make today may not be visible for weeks or months.

## 2024 BSRC Schedule

**General Meetings: 7:00 PM  
at the clubhouse**

**Aug 18—Obstacle Practice  
Sept 8—Club Picnic and  
Obstacle Practice  
October 6  
November 3  
December 1**

**\*\*Note - if inclement  
weather check with a club  
officer for meeting status, on  
our Facebook Page or email.  
Trail Rides are usually the  
Third Sunday of the Month.**

**BLUE SPRUCE RIDING CLUB Editor:  
Charmaine Ropeter  
535 Fagleysville Rd.  
Perkiomenville, PA 18074**

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

