

MEDICINE AND MANAGEMENT

By CARL TROOP, VMD



Veterinarians never stop learning

If your veterinarian was missing the past week of December 11-17 or the group practice serving your area was short a person or two, I have a good idea where many of them could have been found. The Tenth Annual Conference of the American Association of Bovine Practitioners was being held during that time in St. Louis, Mo. For many veterinarians it may be their only vacation but it is also an educational and fellowship period beyond compare. Gathered together are hundreds of veterinarians with only one common interest, the cow, the bovine species of animal be it dairy, beef, or cow-calf operations.

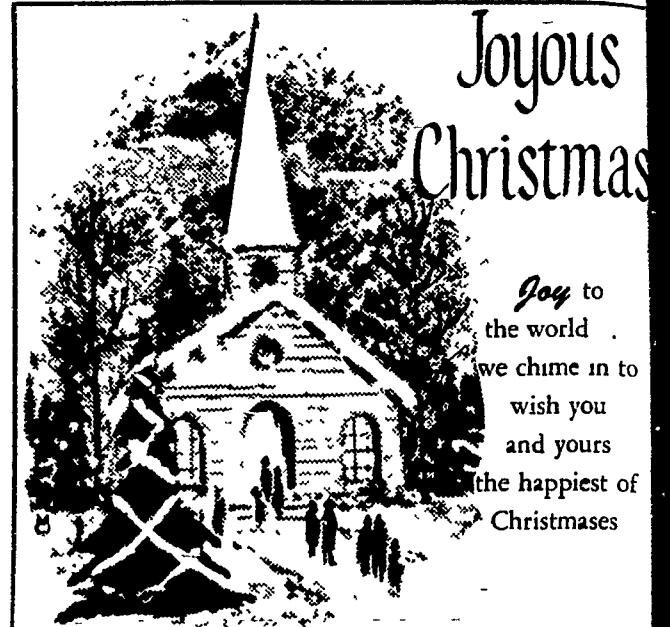
When a veterinarian graduates from veterinary school his education has only been a slight trickle in the sea of knowledge. His experience and learning in the actual field of practice adds the substance to the foundation which was learned in school. He is kept up to date with veterinary journals and in talking with his associates and colleagues. But there is still something missing.

Veterinary medicine is not only an ever enlarging field, but also an ever changing field. What was thought to be true yesterday might be changed today, and may be changed again tomorrow. An animal is not a manufactured product such as a car, and much of its workings and innards are still not known or understood or predictable. It is an extremely challenging field physically as well as mentally. And nothing is as challenging to the mind as being in association with hundreds of other minds with the same ideals and goals, the same problems, searches for solutions, the same successes and failures, the same procedures that produce gleeful unexpected results and the same treatments that should be routine, but unexplainedly fail. The immense satisfaction at times, the unbearable frustration at others. All are together looking for better ways, to share tips and hints, and to listen to the more learned among us who have brought to light new and better ways and means.

Before the conference itself even starts there are pre-convention seminars; four days on "Production of Quality Milk" emphasizing sanitation and milking techniques, milking machine function and testing, bacteria and culture techniques, everything that is involved in helping clients in profitable production. There is also an intensive two day seminar on applied nutrition. Although it is true that some do not believe that nutrition is a field for the veterinarian, it is hard to realize how the two could possibly be separated.

Once the conference itself is opened there are sessions on over fifty different topics to listen to and partake in. Subjects vary from "Modern Dairy Management as a Road to Profit" by Mr. Louis Longo, popular writer for Hoard's Dairyman, a report from Mr. John White, United States Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, to technical reports on dry cow treatments, economics of worming routines, laboratory diagnosis, reproductive problems and many more. There are also panel discussions by veterinarians of how they handle different problems and procedures such as herd vaccination programs, downer cow problems, retained placentas, abomasal diseases, repeat breeders, calf scours and pneumonia, and many more.

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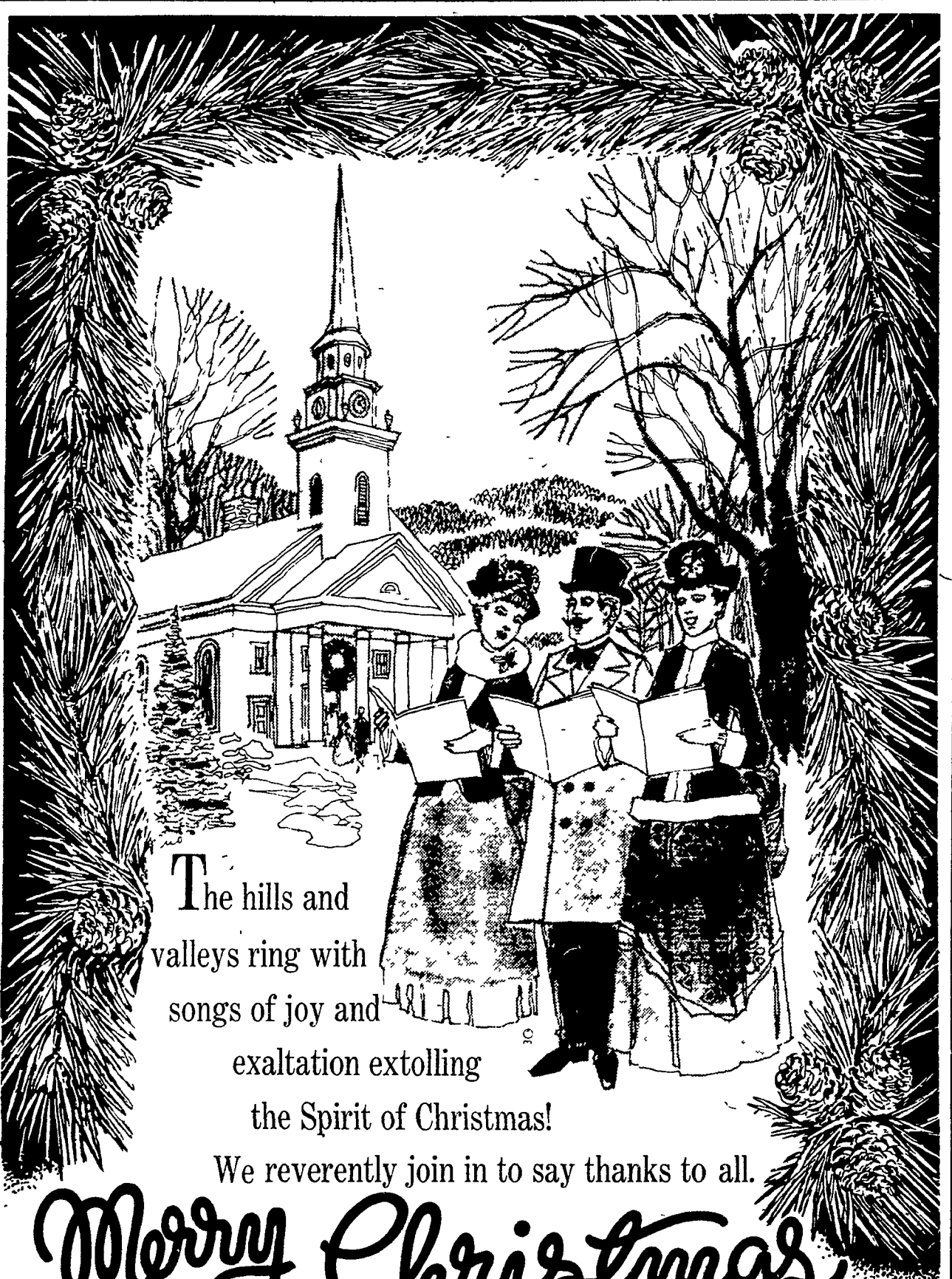
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