

Joe Kavanaugh, Bovine Podiatrist Talks While He Works

JOYCE BUPP
York Co. Correspondent
MT. AIRY, Md. — Joe Kavanaugh calls himself a bovine podiatrist.

With a broad grin and twinkle in the eyes, the Maryland cattle hoof trimmer sometimes uses that term to describe his profession to new acquaintances. He is especially fond of telling clergymen that he "makes the lame walk."

And while his dairy farmer clients wait in line to contract Kavanaugh to fix their cows' ailing feet, they get a healthy dose of his own brand of entertainment free with the service.

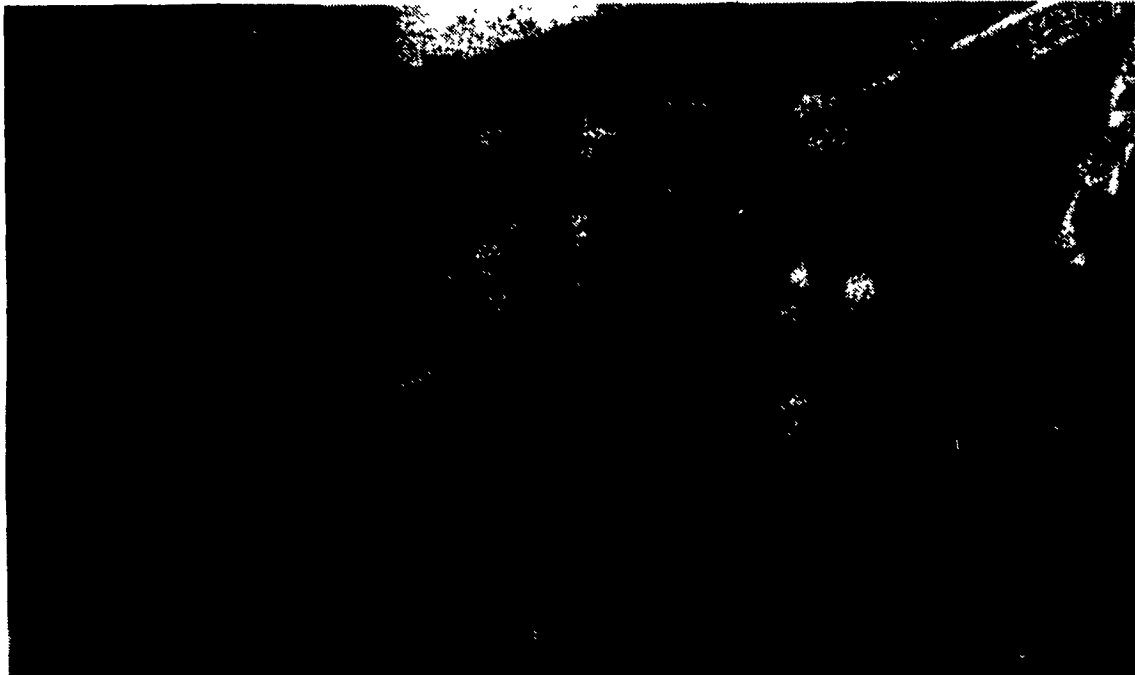
"All I ever wanted to do was fool with cows," affirms this confessed cow enthusiast who says he's one of the happiest men on earth pursuing his chosen profession.

thought I'd found heaven. It was my first pilgrimage to Mecca."

Almost as much as he loves working with cows, Joe Kavanaugh enjoys making people laugh. His country-philosopher brand of humor, mixed with a broad knowledge of the dairy industry and a lively interest in what is happening in the world and political fronts, keeps Kavanaugh's clients chuckling while he improves the foot and leg health of their cattle.

While still in high school, Kavanaugh began breeding cows for the Curtiss company. Following classes for the day, he would make his scheduled A.I. visits to area farms. His vo-ag teacher had encouraged him to get involved in

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Cattle are humanely strapped to a tilt table, then gently laid on their side, positioning the feet when the trimmer can more easily and effectively trim, shape and treat sore feet.

Though his father was a Maryland State Police officer, the Rockville native spent every waking moment possible as a boy on his grandparents' dairy farm.

"The moment school was over in the spring, I'd be at my grandparents' farm at Westminster," relates the veteran cowman. "I had a grandmother and a great-grandmother who let me get away with just about anything. It took my parents two months to get me back in shape every fall when I went back home."

Even while in school, he wanted only to be out on the farm.

"My second-grade teacher finally convinced me to learn to read by going out and buying a book called 'The Wobbly Calf,'" he admits. "Hey, it was about cows, so that got my interest. And when I was about eight, I visited Irvington Farms (home of the legendary Holstein sire Irvington Pride Admiral). With their beautiful barns and cows in fresh sawdust and employees in white uniforms, I

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