

Holstein Club Travels To Mifflin County

(Continued from Page A21)

dian last year as a 4-year-old.

According to Neer, the business of hoof trimming allows him the opportunity to see a large number of cows in his daily work and provides him with contacts to help build his herd.

Mel Peachey, along with wife Judy and children Michael, 13; Tonya, 11; and Colton, 8 tend a high-producing herd of 50 Holsteins in a tiestall barn. Tran-Acres is the farm name.

The Peachey herd posted 32,106 pounds of milk, 1,073 pounds of fat, and 951 of protein in last month's Dairy One report.

Close attention to feed quality and breeding plays a big part in making the Peachey cows one of the top-producing herds in the state.

Of the homebred Holsteins on the farm, Mel is particularly pleased with Tran-Acres Moon-breeze, classified Very Good-88 as a young cow.

The Peachey family also own Great View Marina Marbeli, a 15-year-old EX-93 cow with 194,000 pounds of lifetime milk production to date.

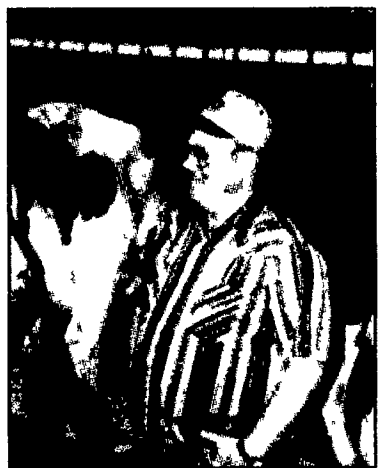
The Spicher family, David and sons Keith and Kent of Kish-View Farms, told the story of rebuilding a new dairy setup after a fire destroyed the old one in November 2001.

The family milked the herd in headlocks under a makeshift roof from November through January — a total of 164 milkings — while working on the new facility.

"A new parlor wasn't really in our 5-year plan," Kent said, noting that most of the equipment in the double-8 parallel parlor is secondhand.

Fifty volunteers helped the Spichers clean up and rebuild after the catastrophe, which brought a drop in rolling herd average from about 26,000 pounds to 23,000 pounds, and increased the average calving interval by three months. But the family is at work bringing things back to normal.

"This (new facility) is something the boys dreamed of having someday," David said. "But this



Vernon Yoder talks about his herd, Ver-Nan Holsteins near Belleville.

isn't the way we wanted it to happen."

The Spichers milk about 200 Holsteins in the new setup. They farm about 500 acres, growing their own forages and high-moisture corn.

Vernon Yoder and wife Nancy of Ver-Nan Holsteins started dairying in 1993. They operate in a 55-cow tiestall barn and farm 120 acres, about half of which they own.

The Yoders also experienced some unique challenges in recent years, including a battle with mycotoxins in feed and losing some top cows in the heat of last summer.

A large number of replacement heifers on the farm, however, helped the Yoders get the high-type herd back on track.

"Two years ago, we had a 70 percent heifer-to-bull ratio," Vernon said. Today, 22 of the 55 cows in the barn are first-calf heifers.

Highlights in the Yoder herd include two Excellent cows with production records of 35,000 and 38,000 pounds, respectively.



Kent and David Spicher of Kish-View Farms show visitors their new dairy facility, seen here in the background. The holding area and parlor were built after a fire destroyed the old setup in 2001.

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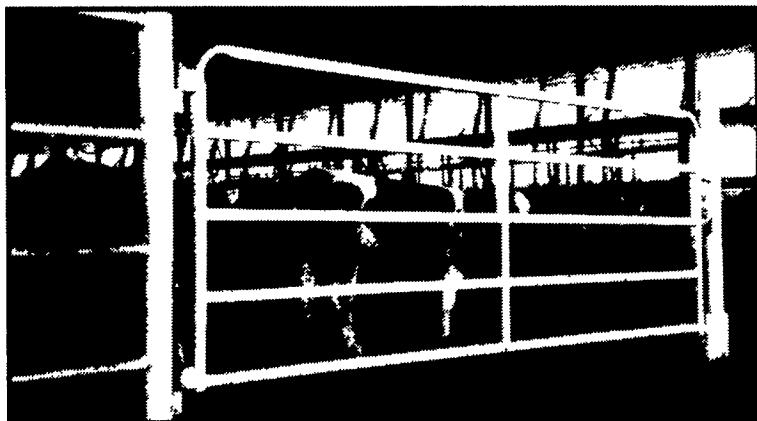
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