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Virginia-based Farrier Mike Poe Passes Highest Level of Certification Offered by the American Farrier's Association

Mike Poe, a farrier based in Louisa, Va., recently passed the American Farrier's Association (AFA) **Certified Journeyman Farrier** (CJF) certification. Only 20 percent of the approximately 2700 AFA members are CJF certified.

The CJF exam "requires in-depth knowledge and highly developed performance skills displaying a level of professional artistry," according to the AFA.

CJF certification consists of three phases. Poe passed all three phases in only two days, even earning a 90 percent score on his written exam.

The written exam requires a thorough understanding of gaits and movements, blood circulation and pathology of the horse as well as the ability to correctly identify the functions and origins of all bones, cartilage, joints, tendons and ligaments in both front and hind limbs.

For the practical exam, farriers must shoe four feet of a horse with handmade shoes under time constraints. The final phase is a forging exercise in which candidates make a bar shoe from scratch that fits a specified pattern in less than 35 minutes.

Since graduating from the Eastern School of Farrier Science and studying in the Animal Sciences program at Virginia Tech, Poe has shod horses in seven states on both the East and West coasts.

His clients include owners of performance and pleasure horses in multiple disciplines, as well as equestrian programs like the one at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Poe also offers his services at world-class events such as the Pan Am American Endurance Championships in Trout Lake, Wash., which he was the event Farrier for in 2003.

For more information and to inquire about availability, contact Mike Poe at 540-205-9521 or by email at alphafarrier@hotmail.com.