

KEY NOTE SPEAKER



DR. JAN POL

Biography

Dr. Jan (Ya-n) Pol is not your typical veterinarian. Born and raised in the Netherlands on his family's dairy farm, he is the charismatic and world-renowned star of Nat Geo WILD's #1 hit series, "The Incredible Dr. Pol," as well as author of the best-selling book, NEVER TURN YOUR BACK ON AN ANGUS COW: My Life as a Country Vet, a memoir that recounts amusing, and often poignant, tales from his illustrious and incredible 45+ year veterinary career.

Possessing brains, wit and charm, Dr. Pol has been treating pets and livestock in rural Michigan since the 1970s and is a pioneer in his field. He has more than 25,000 clients, and his patients range from white mice and snakes to cows and 2,600-pound horses – and everything in between.

In "The Incredible Dr. Pol," viewers have the opportunity to travel with Dr. Pol across rural Michigan, as he tirelessly cares for every family pet and herd of livestock in need of his expertise and kindness. Unflappable and unstoppable, Dr. Pol routinely puts in 14-hour days making farm calls and treating patients in his very busy clinic. The 17th season of the show is currently airing on Nat Geo WILD, and previous seasons are available in the U.S. and internationally on Disney+.

From the pivotal moment at age twelve when he helped deliver a litter of piglets and knew he wanted to become a vet, to the incredible moments captured on his hit TV show, Dr. Pol has amassed a wealth of stories of what it's like caring for a menagerie of animals. The lovable veterinarian and now author shares his vast experience and lively anecdotes in his hit book, NEVER TURN YOUR BACK ON AN ANGUS COW, that he has written with David Fisher. Reminiscent of the classic books of James Herriot such as "All Creatures Great and Small," Dr. Pol's memoir is charming, fascinating and delightful to animal lovers everywhere.

As the youngest of six children growing up in the Netherlands, the pre-doctorate Jan Pol lived among dairy cows, sheep, pigs, chickens, geese, turkeys, rabbits, dogs and Friesian horses. An enthusiastic and naturally inclined scholar, he graduated from the prestigious Utrecht University Veterinary program in 1970 and began his career working for a local vet in Harbor Beach, Michigan. Eager

to begin his own practice, he and his wife Diane started their own animal clinic, Pol Veterinary Services, in Weidman, Michigan in 1981, out of their garage. The business continued to grow and they, along with their 10 employees, have serviced hundreds of thousands of patients since opening their doors.

An expert in large farm animals and a true friend of the farmer, Dr. Pol works passionately to ensure that the diminishing population of family farmers remains in business. And he plays an integral role in keeping farmers' livestock healthy and their businesses profitable.

With his down and dirty approach to veterinary medicine, Dr. Pol routinely comes to the rescue, taking on cases that are vital to the community's livelihood, ranging from checking a cow for pregnancy to helping a goat with pneumonia, to saving the career of a young racehorse with a severely wounded leg, to treating a rabbit with overgrown teeth.

"In this business, it is totally unpredictable what you're going to get, day to day. Animals don't wait to get sick, and they don't take appointments. So, some days you're gonna go in, and there's gonna be nothing going on. And other days, you're gonna go in, and you can't run fast enough," offers Dr. Pol.

Dr. Pol's son Charles was his constant sidekick as a child and helped in the clinic and on farm calls starting at the age of 5. Although he knew from an early age that he didn't want to follow in his father's professional footsteps, Charles has great admiration for his father and his work. Charles has worked in Hollywood in the entertainment industry, and in 2011 he convinced his father to allow him and his filmmaker friends to do a documentary on Dr. Pol, which ultimately led to the concept for the television series, "The Incredible Dr. Pol."

A firm believer in spaying and neutering animals, Dr. Pol continues to be active with his local philanthropic organizations 4-H and FFA (Future Farmers of America), non-profit charities that help teach young adults how to take proper care of animals. He believes that children who are taught to take care of animals at a young age make better adults.

Dr. Pol is an avid car collector. Among the cars in his collection are a 1937 Rolls Royce, a 1999 Plymouth Prowler and a 1981 "Back to the Future" DeLorean. Dr. Pol and Mrs. Pol helped design their log cabin home themselves, and they have always owned a Great Dane since they were married 45 years ago. Other family pets include two Friesian horses, a Newfoundland, five cats and a menagerie of peacocks, doves, chickens, ducks and tropical fish.

When Dr. Pol isn't working, he enjoys spending time with his wife Diane discovering new and exotic destinations, scuba diving in the Caribbean and traveling across Europe. He is a fan of European Football and follows the Dutch team, as well as American soccer. He is fluent in four languages – English, Dutch, German and French.

With his thick Dutch accent, signature mustache, down-to-earth practical approach and fun-loving, never give up attitude, Dr. Jan Pol is nothing short of a legend in his small Michigan community, and now as America's favorite veterinarian!

KEY NOTE SPEAKER



JOEP DRIESSEN

Biography

CowSignals® Expert –
Owner of the CowSignals® Training
Company Veterinarian and
Communicator

- Born on 16 November 1964 from Dutch parents on a dairy farm in Ettelbrück, Luxembourg
- Raised on a sheep farm in Holland
- First business on the age of 14 as sheep shearer
- Military service in the medical corps
- Tourguide for farmer studiegroups around Europe and America
- Teacher in ice-skating, skiing, snowboarding, dancing and sailing
- Qualified as a vet at the university of Utrecht in 1994
- Two years in dairy practice as a vet
- Half year on 14.000 cow dairy farm in Saudi-Arabia
- Founded Vetvice together with Jan Hulsen in 1997
- First CowSignals® workshop in 1999
- Founded CowSignals® Training Company in 2007
- Start of Certified Trainer Course
- Developed PeopleSignals action model to motivate farmers and advisors
- Opening of CowSignals® Training Center in Bergharen, The Netherlands in 2010
- Active with CowSignals® training in 55 countries in 2013
- 250 Certified CowSignals® Trainers trained in 33 countries in 2013
- Launch of online Video training program: V-learning & V-coaching to reach the world in 2014
- Happily together with my wife Annelies Pernot and our 3 kids Teuntje, Puck and Pep

My story – how I became a CowSignals® Expert

I was raised on a sheep farm in Holland. My parents taught me first-hand what it was like to be a farmer. I learned what it meant to make your income from animals and what hard work it is. It's also what made me care for animals a lot. So for me, it was a logical choice to study veterinary medicine.

In 1995 I started working as a vet in a mixed practice. Most of the time it was very fulfilling to be helping animals for a living. However, it was also very difficult to see the problems with cow health: cases of digital dermatitis, mastitis and ketosis to name just a few. I also saw a lot of farmers working really hard, dealing with these

problems the best they could and genuinely caring for the cows. The hardest part was knowing that the problems I saw could often be prevented with just a few changes and not being able to really do something about that as a veterinarian.

Talking to one of my friends from college, Jan Hulsen, it turned out I wasn't the only one who was getting frustrated treating cows who didn't need to get sick in the first place. That moment we decided to start working on prevention rather than medication. This was the start of the Vetvice company, later also resulting in CowSignals® Training Company.

Jan and I started translating all information gathered through science into practical advice for farmers. Also, we started looking at the top 1% farmers in the world: what were they doing, that the others didn't? Their results were incredible:

- Their cows lived to an average of 5 lactations instead of the estimated worldwide average of 2,5.
- They barely had any lame cows where on other farms it would be 30% of the herd, or even as high as 60%
- Where the Dutch average for mastitis has now decreased to 26%, they even get below 5 treated cases each year per 100 cows

We decided to take their best practices and combine that with the scientific knowledge we already had. All this translated in to the first CowSignals® workshop in 1999.

Another challenge we faced was communication. As a vet I had already tried to advise farmers on what they could do differently. As I mentioned, I saw a lot of disease that could have been prevented with just a few little changes. I thought they may like it if I just told them these changes, however it turned out people don't always appreciate very direct advice they didn't ask for. So, I also explored the fields of communication and advisory skills. This taught me how to work together with the farmer, to really listen to him and help him reach his goals. It turned out they appreciated the advice that way! This developed into a second training subject: PeopleSignals.

Now, we have a very successful training company that offers 12 different training subjects to farmers in live training and the first nine subjects in video courses. Not only do we train farmers, but we try to get the entire dairy industry involved. 400 vets, feed salesman, barn designers, dairy processors and others are educated as a certified CowSignals® trainer or advisor. They are now training and advising their clients, farmers and colleagues in more than 50 different countries and spreading the knowledge. Jan has taken it upon himself to provide our knowledge also in books. He already published 17 different books in 35 languages.

We continue to work to increase the impact we have with our educating. Our goal is to reach all farmers and cows around the world. By preventing disease, we can double the productive lifetime of cows: 5 lactations instead of 2,5. Also, we can give farmers more working pleasure and income. Thirdly, we can diminish methane production by 30% in the dairy industry. By spreading the knowledge, we can create a win-win-win situation for cows, farmers and the planet.

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