

Third Place Winner of "This Place Matters" Student Essay Contest

Preserving the Smith Family Farm for the Second Century

Jace Smith from Doland Elementary School, Doland, SD

My historic site to preserve is my Grandpa Smith's Farm. The farm is located in Antelope Township, Spink County, South Dakota. It was honored as a century farm in 1989. The farm was homesteaded by my Grandma Bonnie's Great Great Aunt Sarah Fryer Wood. In 1937 Sarah passed away and my Great Great Grandpa Ralph Gilbert purchased the farm site for \$850. In 1955 their oldest son, Kieth Gilbert, my Great Grandpa, moved to the farm and they farmed together. In 1980 my Grandpa & Grandma Smith moved back to the farm to help Great Grandpa Gilbert. My mom and dad moved to the farm in 2007 and have now built a home 1 mile south of the original farm.

My grandparent's farm is my favorite place because my whole family has worked on it. My family has encountered many troubling times on the farm. We have put a lot of effort into maintaining and improving the farm. Grandpa lets me have my own pen for my 4-H calves and in the summer they let me borrow a barn for my pigs. When I was younger Grandpa gave me rides in the tractor. I like to scoop manure out of the barns and I like to feed the bottle calves. I like it when I get to shoo the cows away from the feed bunks so the feed wagon can refill the bunks. Sometimes I play on the round bales by running and jumping across them. In the summer I get to mow the lawn and I get to drive the four wheeler in the pasture to help move the cows. When we are in the pasture I zap the cows with a hot shot to move them into the chute to give them medicine. I like going to Grandma and Grandpa's house because of Grandma's cooking.

The farm should be preserved so my children have the chance to grow up the way I am. Preserving the farm will let me grow up to be like my Grandpa and do the work he does now. I will get to drive the big machines and care for the animals. We need to preserve our family farm so we can keep raising food for people around the world.