

“AARP South Dakota Grandparent of the Year” 2010-2011 ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES

Subject: “Why my grandparent should be the AARP South Dakota Grandparent of the Year”

--A grandparent is defined as any older adult who fulfills a grandparenting or “senior citizen mentor” role for a child. A familial relationship is not necessary in order to meet this requirement.

Eligibility: Contest is for 5th graders in public and private schools.

Technical Requirements: Essay must be an original work of the author, up to 500 words in length, be written in English, and include the components of a formal essay, e.g., introduction, supporting points and conclusion.

Essay must be submitted on white, lined 8” x 11” paper (standard size notebook paper), and be legibly *hand-written* by the author on one side only of the page. Only the WINNING essay from each school building is to be submitted to the local Retired Teachers’ Association (RTA) contact, along with Form A. The author’s name and school must also be written at the end of the essay.

Judging Criteria & Awards: Qualifying characteristics of nominee 60%, Creativity & Expression 20%, and Grammar, Form, & Neatness 20%. Previous winning essays may be viewed at (www.sdrta.net) using the Grandparent Essay link.

Deadlines:

School winner’s deadline: **February 1, 2011**

- The school winner is chosen by 5th grade teachers from the participating school based on the judging criteria provided. The winning essay from each school must be received by the local RTA unit contact by the deadline provided. Form A MUST be attached to the school winner’s essay.

Name of RTA Contact _____

Address _____

Phone number _____ E-mail address _____

Unit winner’s deadline: **February 15, 2011**

- Judging for the unit winner will be among all the school winners in that unit’s area. The unit winner is chosen by representatives of the local RTA unit. The winning essay from each unit, along with Form B, must be completed and sent to Marilyn Kratz, Yankton RTA Essay Committee Chairperson, by the deadline.

- The top three essays in the local unit judging will receive first, second, and third place medals for their efforts from the AARP South Dakota office. If a unit has fewer than three schools from which to judge, medals will be provided according to the number of essays submitted for local unit judging. NO participation certificates will be provided to units; only the top three essays will receive recognition. If units choose to provide participation certificates, it will be a decision made and followed through by the local RTA unit.
- The local unit should also indicate on Form B the number of medals they need (up to three). The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will then provide the AARP South Dakota office a list of participating units and the number of medals requested. The medals will then be given to the unit representatives at the SDRTA convention in May.
- Local units should make a copy of their winning essay since they may wish to have it read at a meeting or at the presentations of medals after the convention. The submitted copy will not be returned.

Regional judging: **March 1, 2011:**

- The Yankton RTA will do the regional judging for the essay contest. AARP Regions are Southeast, Northeast, and West.
- The three regional winning essays, chosen by the Yankton RTA Essay Committee, will be submitted to the AARP South Dakota State Office by March 1, 2011. Forms A and C must be attached. The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will inform the regional winners that they have reached the finals of the essay contest. All units entering an essay in the contest will be informed of the three top winners at that time.

State finals judging: **April 1, 2011:**

- The AARP South Dakota office will establish a judging panel consisting of members of the AARP South Dakota Executive Council and the AARP South Dakota State Director.
- The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will notify the first, second, and third place winners of their placing on or before April 15. The committee will invite the first place winner to read his/her essay at a noon luncheon on the second day of the SDRTA Convention in May. The winner is not required to attend the convention, but AARP South Dakota will pay mileage (for ONE car) and the noon meal for the student, parent, and grandparent(s) if they travel to Pierre for the award presentation.

- The local units of the second and third place winners will receive their awards at the annual meeting so that they may be presented locally at the appropriate time. A representative of each unit participating in the contest shall pick up his/her unit's medals at the state convention.
- The Yankton RTA Essay Committee will provide an electronic copy of the winning essay to the SDRTA website (www.sdrta.net) following the May convention.

Awards: First place—a plaque and \$500 savings bond; Second place—a plaque and \$300 savings bond; Third place—a plaque and \$200 savings bond. All awards are provided by AARP South Dakota.

Information for the Savings Bonds will be provided to the SDRTA treasurer by the Yankton RTA Essay Committee prior to May 1. This will include the names and social security numbers of the three winners, plus the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of their parents. The state Grandparent Essay Committee chairperson shall inform the top three winners that the bonds are sent directly to them after the state convention.