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and Curtis (2 years old). Today, Steve and Barb are the trustees. In addition to Donna, Steve’s other sister, Connie, also receives an income from the trust.

One element of Steve’s inheritance from his father was the farm’s equipment. Steve had already bought some of the tractors and other equipment, and his father willed him the rest. “That’s the way we both wanted it,” says Barb.

A Constant Reminder

Steve and a buddy of his recently restored an antique 1958 tractor. It plays a miniscule role in the overall working scheme of the farm. “We use it a little bit,” he says. “We just pull wagons around with it and move stuff around the shop.”

But the act of resurrecting the tractor carries its own significance. “It’s the kind of thing that would have made Dad proud,” says Steve. And each time he cranks that tractor, Steve sees the silver inscription on the small black plaque he tacked to its side: “In Loving Memory of Willis (Bill) Snider.”

“I miss the advice,” says Steve. “That’s where it is really tough.”

Steve says he used to spend each day with his dad. Now, he spends just about every day with his sons, and in many ways they remind him of Bill. “Everyone who meets Curtis [the youngest] says he looks just like my dad,” Steve remarks fondly. “And all the boys do is play with [toy] tractors—just like my dad did.”

Brayden, the oldest, is not ready to handle the 8600 Series, but, says Steve, “He tells me, ‘One of these days, when I get big, you’ll be sitting here and I’ll be driving.’” **FL**



Green to Red

STEVE SNIDER SAYS HIS FATHER, Bill, and grandfather, Rufus, had owned Masseys decades ago. Some time in the 1960s, however, they transferred over to John Deere. Steve doesn’t know the exact reasons, but he suspects it was because they felt that John Deere’s tractor technology was evolving better to meet their needs. So, green machines were all Steve had ever known growing up.

About five years ago, however, Steve and his late father began making the switch to Massey Ferguson. In their opinions, the red machines had begun gaining the technological advantage.

“They say history repeats itself,” says Steve with a laugh.

They approached Roger Burton at the Arthur, Illinois-based Kuhns Equipment Company, one of the largest Massey Ferguson dealers in the Midwest.

“They liked our equipment,” says Burton. “They liked the ease of it.”

Steve and Bill also liked how it looked, among other factors.

“We liked the style,” says Steve. “But we also liked the features. We liked the high-speed transmission, the ride. We

liked all the comforts. We’ve been really satisfied with them.”

Since then, Steve says he has noticed a significant and positive change in his fuel efficiency.

“Oh yeah,” he says. “They’re a good bit better. It’s been very noticeable. I can fill up in the morning and go all day without having to refuel.”

Steve primarily uses four big pieces of Massey Ferguson equipment. He harvests the corn and beans with an MF9540 axial combine. He plants in the spring and disks in the fall with his MF8670 tractor. He hauls his wagons, especially in the fall, with an MF8650 tractor. And he’s found his MF1660 compact tractor to be the perfect utility tractor. “I’m mowing with it, and it helps me feed the cattle,” he says. “It’s a pretty handy little tractor to have around.”

When asked about the success of the big switch and if he’s been pleased with the decision, Steve laughs and responds matter-of-factly, “I’d say yes. Since then, I’ve owned three of the 8600s. If I didn’t like the first one, I wouldn’t have gone back for more.”

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