

# Controversy swirls around pipeline

## Eminent domain fears among landowners

LINTON, N.D. — A resident of Emmons County said she fears that if North Dakota approves a carbon capture pipeline bringing in carbon dioxide from other states, it will lead to a parade of other similar projects.

"Why do our government heads of state, representatives and government officials agree to allow our beautiful state to be turned into a dumping ground for other states' garbage," Julia Stramer said. Emmons County has been a hotbed of re-

sistance to the Summit Carbon Solutions pipeline, with the county commission passing ordinances to make it more difficult to site the pipeline through the county in south-central North Dakota.

The main trunk of the pipeline, a 24-inch pipe, would run through Emmons and McIntosh counties on its way to an underground storage area west of Bismarck. It would carry liquid carbon dioxide, a hazardous material collected from 32 existing ethanol plants across five states. One of those ethanol plants, Tharaldson Ethanol at Casselton, is in North Dakota. The others are in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska and South Dakota. Tharaldson Ethanol in Casselton, North Dakota, produces about 1,500 tons of carbon dioxide per day, but that would be slashed with a carbon capture pipeline.

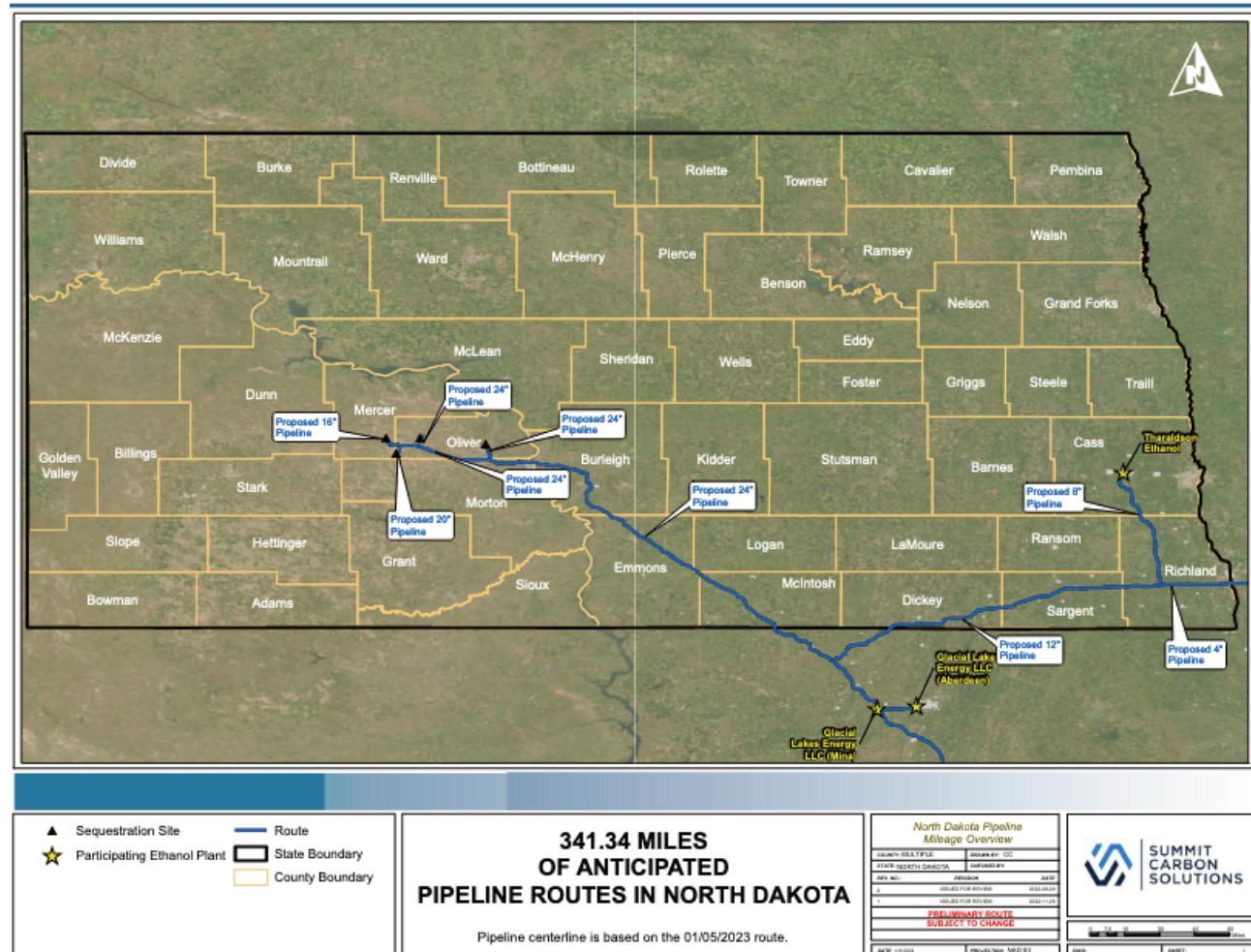
Stramer's land is on the proposed route but she has refused to sign a voluntary easement. Summit is offering to compensate landowners for access but she says she was insulted by the terms of the 99-year easement agreement.

She said it comes out to \$23.23 per year for 99 years. Meanwhile she says she has already spent more than \$8,000 on attorney fees in her fight against the pipeline.

Landowners face the possibility of Summit using the right eminent domain to force landowners to provide right of way. Summit has begun that process in South Dakota. Summit, meanwhile, says it has nearly 72% of the easements it needs in North Dakota. The McIntosh County Commission has passed a resolution opposing the use of eminent domain, something Summit has put into motion in South Dakota's McPherson County.

Stramer was providing testimony at a North Dakota Public Service Commission hearing in Linton on Tuesday, May 9. Another Emmons County resident, Stephanie Doolittle, also vented her frustration. "The attacks by Summit Carbon Solutions on the landowners of North Dakota, or personal lack of respect and consideration for all of us through this whole process is eye-opening," she said.

Among the others testifying were North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring and Jerry Briggs, a first-responder to a carbon dioxide leak in Mississippi in 2020. Goehring said he has been getting a lot of calls and emails about the massive project, with concerns about things such as soil compaction and damage to drain tile that could



Summit's proposed route through North Dakota featuring Tharaldson Ethanol at Casselton, the only ethanol plant in state currently on board with the project.



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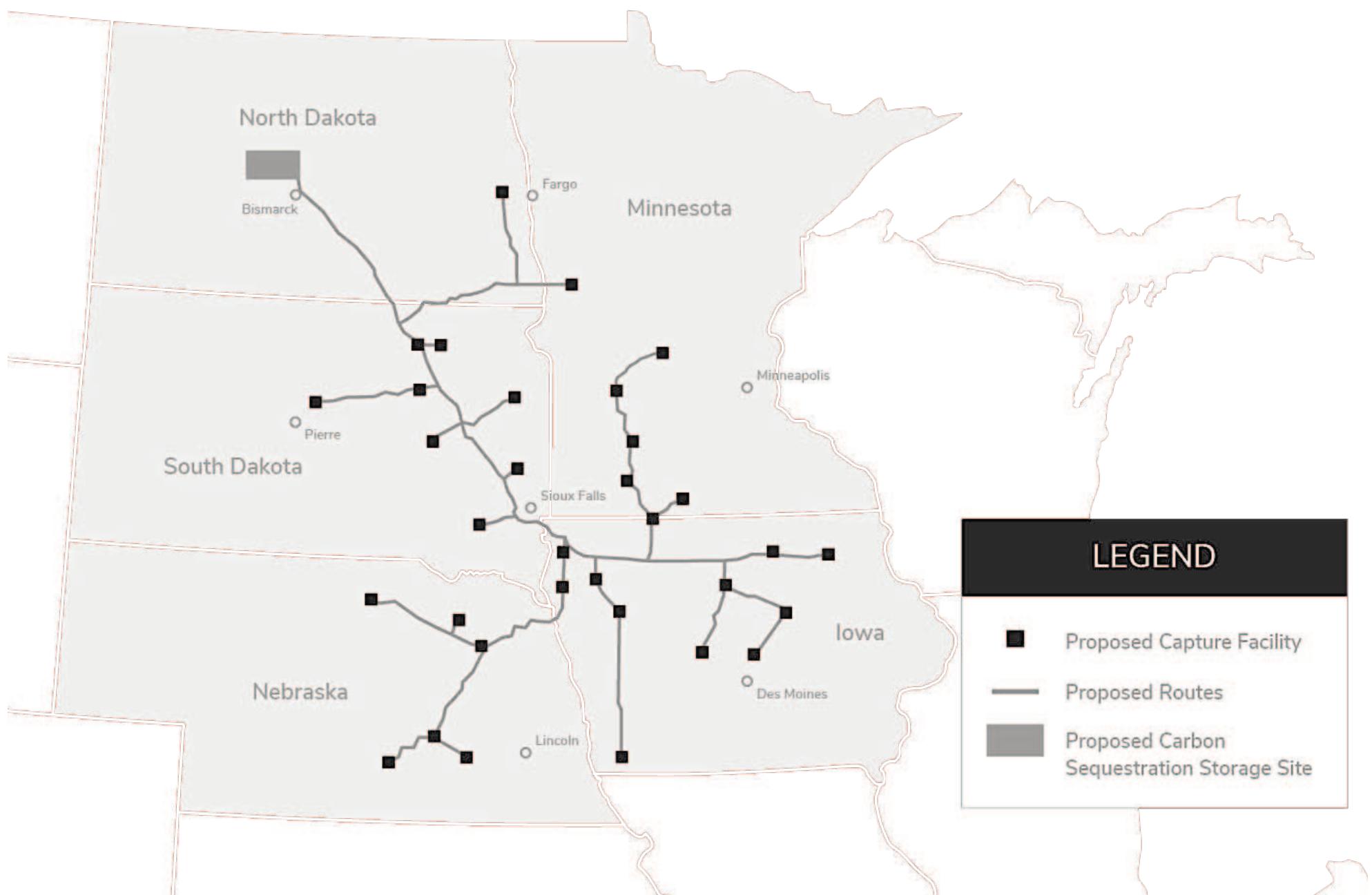


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Summit Carbon's proposed pipeline route, with a sequestration or storage site north of Bismarck.

affect the productivity of farmland.

While he recognizes that the federal government has created incentives for curbing carbon emissions and those of other greenhouse gasses, he noted that carbon dioxide is essential. "CO2 ... provides great value to the earth, the climate, society and all living things," he said. He said keeping subsoil and topsoil separated during the digging of the trench and ensuring the topsoil gets put back on top and that gypsum and manure can help address compaction.

He also advocated for shortening the distance between shut-off valves, or block valves. Instead of miles, we might want to think about 1000s of feet where we would have block

valves and a rapid release would immediately shut the pipeline down," Goehring said.

Goehring is a voting member of North Dakota's Industrial Commission, which has authority over the permit for the storage area, while the PSC must make a decision on the pipeline route.

Brought in by attorney Randy Bakke, who represents an opponent of the pipeline, Jerry Briggs was part of the emergency response to the CO2 pipeline leak in 2020 near the village of Sataria, Mississippi. He described finding a car with three people inside unconscious with foam around their mouths after breathing the CO2. The vehicle was still in

drive but quit running because the carbon dioxide spewing from a broken pipe robbed the vehicle of oxygen.

Briggs said he was unaware there was a CO2 pipeline in the area but later added that it was unusual for the pipeline operator, Denbury, to not have informed emergency responders. He said an early warning system and proper equipment are needed to be able to respond to a rupture effectively.

The hearing started at 9 a.m. and members of the public were still testifying at 5 p.m. The next PSC hearing on the pipe is June 2, an extension of an earlier Bismarck hearing that was not able to accommodate all who wanted to testify about the pipeline. —Jeff Beach, AgWeek

## Bioscience innovation grants available

**BISMARCK** — Proposals are being sought that support biotechnology innovation and commercialization, promote the creation of bioscience jobs in the state, and promote bioscience research and development in North Dakota.

"The bioscience innovation grant program supports biotechnology innovation and commercialization in areas including crop genetics, biofuels, biomaterials, biosensors and biotechnology," Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. "Any eligible bioscience company in the state is encouraged to apply."

Eligibility requirements and an application template can be found on NDDA's website at <https://www.ndda.nd.gov/big>.

Applications must be submitted in electronic form by 4 p.m. CDT Friday, June 16, 2023.

## Forever winter puts farmers behind

North Dakota is a leading producer of corn, soybeans, spring wheat, sugarbeets, sunflowers, oats and barley. This year has been a nightmare in terms of spring planting.

As of May 22, farmers in the state have only planted 20% of its corn crop, which was estimated to be 3.6 million acres this year. Normally 66% of the state's corn planting is complete by late May.

"I'd say most guys are in that 10% to 20% range for corn planting," says Lee Briese, agronomist and soil scientist in southeast North Dakota. "Some guys haven't been able to turn a wheel yet."

"It seems like we get a rain shot about every four or five days," Briese says. "So, we get maybe one day of planting and then we get rained out again. But today guys are rolling wherever they can, hitting the high ground and in the corners."

Most of North Dakota has a final planting date of May 25 for corn, May 31 or June 5 for spring wheat and June 10 for soybeans.

Briese says some farmers in the state have already switched to shorter-season

corn varieties.

"Corn still looks like a good crop for us this year," he says. "A lot of guys are going to start taking a little bit of a discount on their crop insurance. Some guys are going to go to the end of the month to plant corn or even the first part of June."

But that decision is risky.

"We need a good fall to make that work," Briese says. "Or we're going to end up with wet corn and potentially light corn. So that's, that's really the worry is we just want won't quite make maturity."

For soybeans, North Dakota farmers have planted only 7% of this year's crop, which was predicted to hit 7 million acres. Normally about half is planted by late May.

"We have time to put beans in until the middle of June," Briese says. "But it's still risky. We're still wet and we've got more rain in the forecast about every few days."

Spring wheat planting is also dramatically behind. As of May 22, only 27% of the crop in the state has been planted, and the average is

80% by this time. North Dakota is the top spring wheat state and 5.2 million acres were forecasted for this year.

"We have significant concerns about spring wheat," Briese says. "When we start getting late with spring wheat, the summer heat tends to really hurt yield. However, being a shorter season crop, it's going to make it to maturity."

North Dakota farmers have an opportunity to make

money off of spring wheat this year, he says, if they can get it in the ground.

Overall, Briese says farmers in his area will try to avoid prevent plant acres.

"A couple of years ago we had a lot of prevent plant acres, and we really battled with it all year and then even into the next year," he says. "I think guys are really going to shy away from that as much as they can--the market incentive is too strong. We're going to have some preventive plant, but I don't think it's going to be whole field."



A long winter has led to a delayed spring planting season.

Farmers across the country were able to plant a quarter of the corn and soybean crop last week, and that was also the case in states such as Illinois. USDA pegs planting at 78% in Illinois, which is right in line with the five-year average. Soybean planting hit 62% complete, which is now 5 points ahead of the five-year average. —AgWeb

# Ashley firefighters do more than fight fires

by Tony Bender

Safety is a key concern of any successful community, whether that be through policing, infrastructure, or preventative and disaster care. Safety is integral to maintaining the functionality of any rural community, and that requires dedicated individuals like the members of the Ashley Fire District. It's solely a volunteer crew.

Link Golz, fire chief of the Ashley Fire District, said it's hard to know what challenges they'll face when alarms ring. "The amount of calls we get varies so much, and it's getting to be a tossup between structural and accidental fires," he said.

The Ashley Fire District covers quite a large swath of land, about 200 square miles, that reaches into parts of South Dakota. Historically, grassland fires can be deadly nightmares. "Thankfully that isn't something we've had to deal with much in the last few years," Golz said. However, he did mention that when controlled burns are going to take place it is important for anyone conducting one to reach out to state radio, as to not cause the department to get false calls.

A crackerjack fire department not only saves lives and property, it also saves money—your money—if you have home or business coverage.



The area fire departments working their way through emergency response training.

Golz explained the ISO (Insurance Service Offices) ratings system, which is governed by the Fire Suppression Ratings Schedule (FSRS).

The FSRS lists a large number of facilities and practices that a community should have to help fight fires effectively. Each different criteria met adds points to a city or community's rating which is calculated on a scale of 0 to 105.

While most factors are dependent on the scale and scope of the fire department itself, some are tied to the emergency communications systems within the district. An emergency reporting plan, the com-

**"The amount of calls we get varies so much, and it's getting to be a tossup between structural and accidental fires," — Link Golz**



The old Ashley Fire hall is a historical landmark in the city.

munications center which includes the number of telecommunicators, computer-aided dispatch capabilities, and the ways that the dispatch center contacts responders all affect the ISO rating.

The department itself affects about 50 points of the ISO rating. The factors on the department's side of the rating include the type and extent of training department members have received, the number of people who participate in training, previous responses to fires, and maintenance and testing of department equipment.

When the topic of training and equipment came up some of the department's tools entered the discus-



The Ashley Fire Department L to R: Link Golz, Travis Schnabel, Luke Miller, Victor Fischer, Dillon Becker, Anthony Richter, Jordan Jenner, Kirk Reub, Tristan Lippert, Micheal Rawstern, Shawn Haugom, John Kempf, Stan Schnabel, Scot Schauman, and Tyler Haugom.

sion. These First Responders deal with much more than fires. The department has been trained on using a grain bin extraction device. The device is essentially a tube large enough to be placed down the top of a grain bin around the trapped person, and be pushed down via steps on the sides.

Once the tube is fully attached a vacuum system is used to grab the grain from around the person al-

lowing the department to drop down a ladder or rope to complete the rescue. Golz said, "Thankfully, we haven't had to use it yet."

A more common life-saving device is the Jaws of Life. Golz said it's been one of the most useful tools the department has, seeing multiple uses already this year alone.

Keeping the department going takes money. That comes from dedicated tax dollars and a myriad of

fundraisers. The department also welcomed a recent donation of more than \$20,000 from the Gary Sinise Foundation.

Sinise is the actor most famous for his role as Lt. Dan in "Forrest Gump." His foundation supports veterans and many other community causes. His generosity allowed the department to purchase life-saving battery-powered extrication tools.



The controlled burn of the old elevator in Ashley. —File photo

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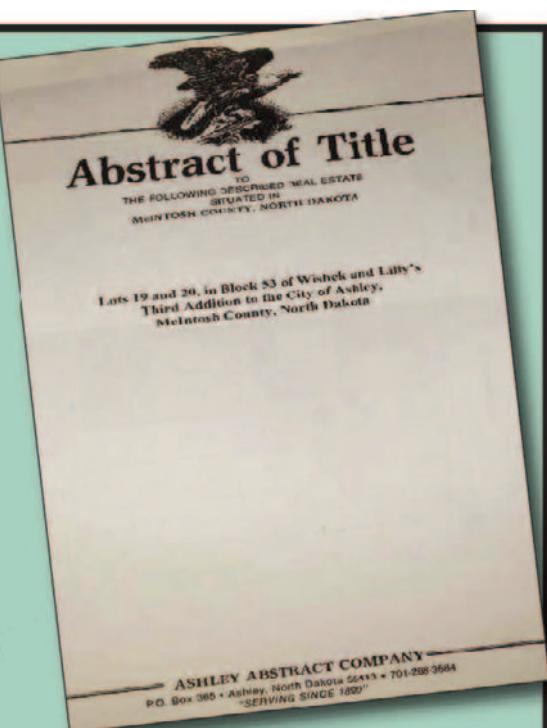
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Daniel and Quentin Schumacher of Q's Welding and Machine.

## Q's continues blacksmith tradition

by Tony Bender

Difficulty finding the things we need has been a consistent problem over the last couple of years. The COVID pandemic disrupted global supply chains. The supply chains still haven't recovered.

This has led to a slew of creative problem-solvers rising to the occasion. Enter Quentin Schumacher and Q's Welding and Machine.

When something can't be found, it can usually be made, and Schumacher is one of the best. It's a time-honored tradition in farm country. Old timers will harken back to the Depression and WWII shortages than demanded innovation and a make-do mentality. Through clever machining or milling, a part that has proven pesky to track down can be recreated.

The role of the machine shop has and continues to evolve as time passes. Machine shops like Q's Welding and Machine, located just east of Ashley, continue to rise to the challenges of the agriculture industry.

The business was founded by Schumacher in 2015. He's been operating it with the help of his son Daniel, a high school student and hard-nosed linebacker. So, hard work doesn't scare him. A chip off the old block.

Quentin first started developing his skills while working in the oilfields and continued developing the skills picking things up here and there as he went. In 2019, he expanded his business by purchasing Gary Ehley's Blacksmith Shop in Ashley. This was a way to upgrade the scale of the operation almost overnight. Gary had some good toys.

Schumacher's purchase of the long-standing—historic, even—business created a sigh of relief in the region. "What are we going to do when Ehley retires?" was commonly whispered. Every community needs



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Quentin coaching Daniel through a repair.

"that guy or gal" who can do anything and will help you out in a pinch. Break the welds on your Cub Cadet with the grass growing three inches a day? Hello, Quentin!

So, relax. Q's has the tools, and equally important, the will to tackle nearly any imaginable job. He's got the skills and tools to do any sort of welding, be it aluminum, plasma, TIG (tungsten inert gas arc welding), MIG, or the various other approaches. (Metal Inert Gas (MIG) welding is an arc welding process that uses a continuous solid wire electrode heated and fed into the weld pool from a welding gun.)

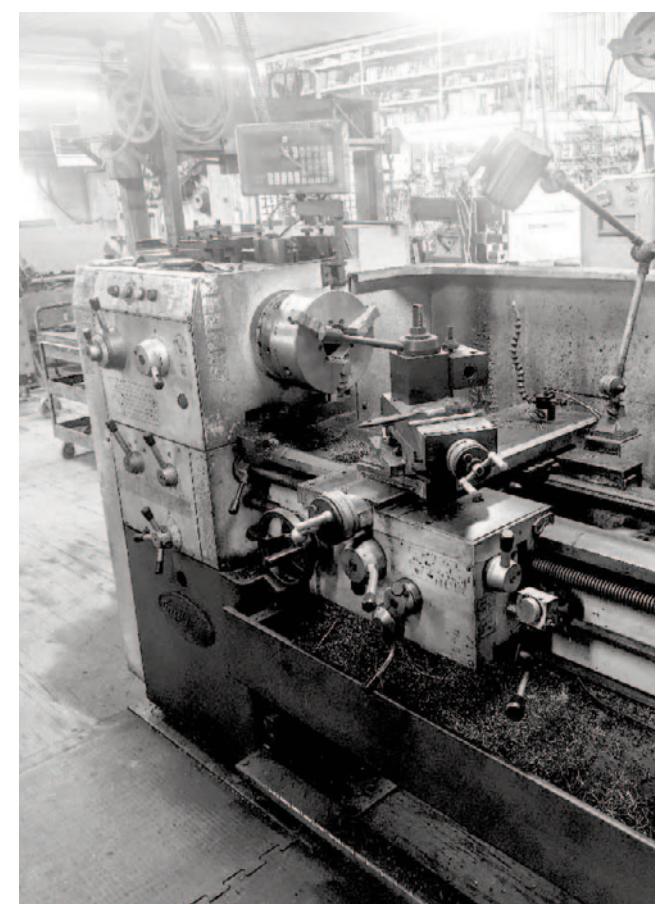
The versatility of Q's is critical in an industry as demanding as agriculture. With planting season finally in full swing after a grueling six month winter, Q's has entered one of the two busiest seasons, the other obviously being harvest.

Quentin said that right now about 95% of the work he's doing is implement or livestock-related repairs. He still finds time for passion projects, though, like the donated grandstands at the baseball diamond. His effort was a huge upgrade to the ballpark, and he's proud to have built it, "even though it was an easy build," he shrugs.

He embraces the challenges his work entails. "Machining is where the pride is. The stuff that takes more from you mentally." Schumacher's approach is emblematic of classic small town ingenuity— always ready for a challenge. Q's Welding and Machine can be reached at (701) 374-5541 and found at 5270 Highway 11 Ashley ND.

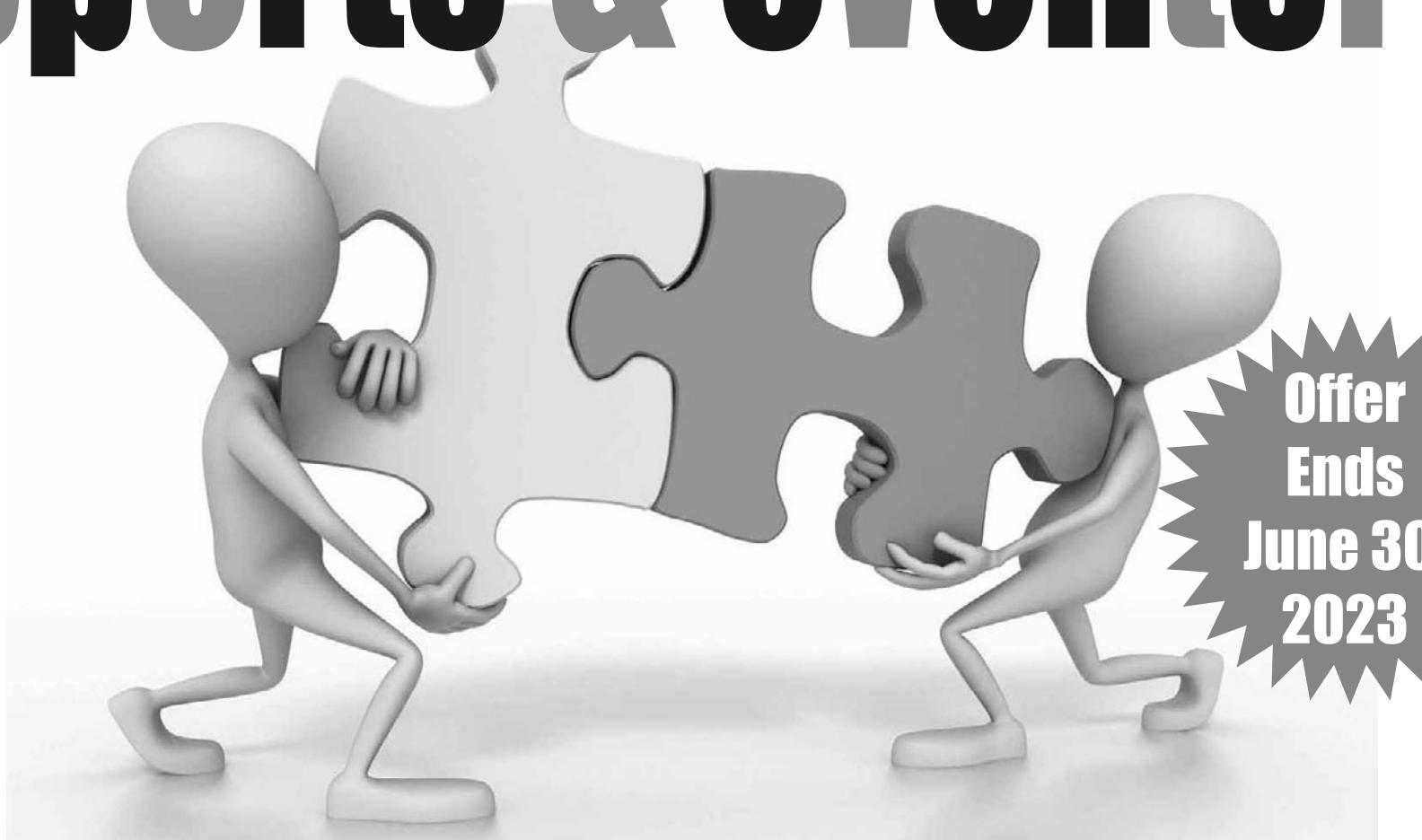


The sign outside Q's Welding, made in house.



The milling station at Q's.

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