General Repair and Supply's ability to adapt has kept the company in business for half a century. And just as every other trade around, technology has changed the metal fabrication business, notes R.S. Bobb.

Bobb says the days of blacksmithing, pounding out and shaping metal with a hammer and anvil, are long gone. Bobb has seen a half-century's worth of changes in his own business of "different types of business endeavors," he said.

Bobb got his start in 1959, when he was then the R & S Machine Shop. He jointed with his father in 1968 when they purchased the old C.C. McCarley shop — a 1950 structure that had been in Iola since the turn of the century — and General Repair was born.

The Bobbs relocated in 1974 from the intersection of Shawnee and South streets to their current home at 1900 N. Industrial Rd. There, "he began carrying a complete stock of steel, bolts, bearings and related items."

The business now is overseen by Bobb's son, Bob, and his wife, Becky. "I was supposed to be retired, but I'm still working," Bobb said. 

"That's because we won't let him laugh," Becky Bobb interjected with a laugh. General Repair may be reached at 365-1594.

Jason Alkinson of General Repair and Supply uses a lathe to fabricate a piece of metal for a local industry.