

ing projects through 2007. It would take about two or three years to build up funds from the federal allotment to use for a new Ripley Cutoff Bridge, starting with 2008 funds.

Moreover, county officials would have to provide a 20 percent match for any new bridge, which could wind up costing the county \$300,000,

cost the county about \$20 million to have all of its bridges reopened to all traffic and weight restrictions removed.

"That would be as good an estimate as any. And that doesn't count all the bridges closed and weight restrictions placed in the municipalities," he said.

"We've got several down

bridges and four were scheduled: Myers Road Bridge in the Rosehill community, Mill Creek Bridge on Smith Lake Dam Road, Cedar Lake Bridge below Goodsprings and the Ripley Cutoff Bridge.

Only three of the four got constructed. Commissioners had anticipated other city and county governments to turn down projects for various reasons, allowing some

Riley's comments on the subject recently.

"Do we have plans for another bond issue? Probably not," Riley told the *Daily Mountain Eagle*.

He added that any decisions will not be based on politics and that the first criteria for addressing bridge problems involves safety, followed by economic development.

## Engineer

From A1

ed. The high positioning, probably about 50 feet or so, complicates matters.

Moreover, Edgil points out the wood substructure, and some of it is visible looking over the side of the bridge.

"The state tested it and it was rotten," Edgil said, adding the recommendation from the state was to close the bridge.

A 3-ton weight restriction had already been placed on the bridge before it was closed, he said.

"Any time you close a bridge, it creates a hardship. We know that," Edgil said.

Any time local authorities determine a bridge may have to be closed, even for temporary repairs, Edgil calls in the bridge inspection team from the state Department of Transportation to get its opinion first.

If a bridge is closed or has a weight restriction placed on it, the county then provides a map to the Walker County 911 center and the Walker County Board of Education so they can plan for detours.

Even some bridges that are not currently closed are not near up to current standards. Edgil drove down a steep hill at a one-lane bridge, the Smith Cemetery Bridge, that was obviously old and had less than usual side railings to prevent one from going over.

Edgil admitted it was far from the current construction standards, but by normal standards in the county, it was considered safe - although crews need to monitor it for any new problems

### Bridges closed as of Aug. 4, 2005

Bridge	date closed	proposed open	
Steel Road	Jan. 18, 2001	unknown	Gibson Hill Bridge - 13 tons
Lost Creek	Jan. 18, 2001	unknown	Hunter Chapel Bridge - 10 tons
Ripley Cutoff	Nov. 30, 2004	unknown	Pendley Creek Bridge No. 3 - 10 tons
Myers Bridge	July 1, 2004	late summer	Lockhart Hill Bridge - 10 tons
Pendley Creek	July 9, 2005	Sept. 1, 2005	Browns Bridge - 10 tons

#### Bridges with restricted load limits

Haley Bottoms Road Bridge - 15 tons	Johnsey Bridge - 3 tons
McClain Bridge - 15 tons	Country Club Bridge - 3 tons
Slick Lizzard Road Bridge - 15 tons	Calumet Bridge - 3 tons
Nichols Road Bridge - 15 Tons	Day Hill Bridge - 3 tons
American Junction Bridge - 13 tons	Kings Mill Bridge - 3 tons
Atkins Road Bridge - 13 tons	

Source: Walker County Engineer's Office

and drivers need to be careful when approaching it, he said.

"We've got the oldest bridge in the state that is still in action," he said, pointing out Country Club Bridge, which was built in 1898.

"We inspect it regularly," he said.

The county even has the third oldest bridge, the Johnsey Bridge at Blackwater.

A great number of bridges actually date back to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects of the Depression era.

"They're some of our best bridges," Edgil said.

Still, Edgil notes that some bridges in the county have been at 3 tons for decades, and half of the bridges in the county date back to before 1950.

Edgil said bridges now open are safe to travel on, although many don't meet modern standards for guard rails or width or for leaving out curves in bridges.

The county may have less than 10 bridges that are one lane, while the modern minimum standard is 24 feet wide.

"Very few of our bridges meet that specification," Edgil said.

The number of problem bridges may be higher as some of them belong to cities, not the county. River Road Bridge in Cordova, built in 1953 over Cane Creek, is an example.

Earlier this year state inspectors posted a 3-ton limit on the bridge, which could cost up to \$1.15 million to replace. Due to the limit, the Cordova Fire Department has to take a 8.5-mile detour to reach residences on the east side of the bridge. The city of Cordova has appealed to the state for help.

Some progress has been made on some bridges - if slowly. The Myers Road Bridge in the Rosehill community, which was closed on July 1, 2004, is undergoing last-minute work and should

be open by mid-summer, Edgil said, although it had earlier been set to open in mid-spring.

Edgil said the county in early July closed a low profile bridge on the Pendley Creek Road, in west Walker County near the Fayette County line.

The closing was set to last for four to six weeks to rebuild the bridge. Now, the completion date is set for Sept. 1.

The Pendley Creek Bridge is small enough that district crews will be able to do the work, which will widen the 40-foot long bridge from 12 feet to 24 feet wide.

Some material was on hand already, and the county will only have to spend roughly \$50,000 out of pocket for the rebuilding.

The state had allowed the Pendley Creek Bridge to continue for several months after repairs to allow school buses to run, under the condition the bridge would be rebuilt in the summer, Edgil said.

## Mitnick

From A1

its Executive Committee, before the company was acquired by Consolidated Foods. He was a principal of Crowne Partners until his death.

Mitnick was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on December 21, 1917. He graduated from the University of Connecticut in 1940, and after his military service in World War II, moved to Jasper.

Mitnick was a Director of the First National of Jasper, and a past director of First Commercial Bankshares. He was past President of the Alabama Retail

was his participation in the liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp in 1945 that cemented his commitment to Judaism, and his stalwart support of Israel. He was a president of the Temple Emanu-El in Jasper, past president of the Walker County Lodge of B'nai B'rith, and the founder and president of Americans for Good Government, an Alabama political action committee. He was a member of the executive board of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC),

Engel Mitnick, who he described as "the most beautiful woman in Alabama," their children, Karen Mitnick and Ronne and Donald Hess, and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren: Joye, Phillip and Morgan Madden; Heidi Hess and James Rucker; Carl, Monty, Evans, Luke and Andrew Hess; David Nelson; Lisa, Nathan and Dillian Lowrie; Stuart, Hilary and Stella Nelson; and Emily Hess and Bob Levine. He loved and treasured his numerous nieces and nephews. as