

FORT MORGAN NEWS

May 2016 ~ Issue 111



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,

Our incorporation bill did not get out of the Baldwin County Delegation committee in the Alabama House. Out of five on this committee, two voted for, two against, and 1 abstained. We will give more information as it is available.

Watch your mail for information and application forms for opting out of the twice weekly garbage pickups. Hope to see a good turnout at the May meeting.

Paul

Paul Barefield



MEMBER NOTICES

FMCA April Highlights

On your next trip out Fort Morgan Road, don't miss the Welcome to Fort Morgan District 25 sign on the north side, just west of the Gulf Shores city boundary. It was installed March 5th just in time for the Town Hall meeting. Thanks again to the committee, headed by Carol Kittrell, and to the installation crew Ken and Emily Steiner and Paul Barefield. It is a handsome welcome to our community.



We now have 386 members including 28 brand new since March 5th. **Welcome, new members!** In spite of this good news, we are sorely missing the 104 who, so far, have failed to renew this year. IT'S NOT TOO LATE. The member form can be found at our website (under the Membership tab):

www.fortmorgancivic.org

Photo: Janice Neitzel

Please keep an eye out for motorized vehicles on the beach. Driving motor vehicles on the beach is illegal in Alabama. According to Alabama Statute Title 32-Motor Vehicles and Traffic, motor vehicles are not permitted on beaches or dunes except for construction of houses or repair of utilities. In addition, on Fort Morgan Peninsula, the Share the Beach turtle conservation program is allowed to drive ATV/UTVs on the beach to protect and monitor nesting turtles from May 1-October 31 each year. Please report violations immediately to the Sheriff. On Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, Refuge staff and law enforcement officers are allowed to drive on the beach throughout the year.

For an excellent article on the Town Hall meeting by Robert DeWitt and a photo of the 200+ crowd, see:

<http://lagniappemobile.com/fort-morgan-incorporation-gathers-steam/>

You can find other Lagniappe

articles about Fort Morgan community by Robert DeWitt by searching their website for:

Ferry Ridership Increasing as ALDOT Considers Future Service; Romantic Schooner Rachel's Past More Mundane than Legend Suggests; Legislator May Introduce Bill to Incorporate Fort Morgan.

Update on Incorporation Bill ~ Fort Morgan District 25

The incorporation bill never made it out of the Baldwin County Legislative committee. Of 5 Baldwin members, 2 voted for our bill, two voted against, and 1 abstained. FMCA officers and Incorporation Committee will be looking into this situation. If you want first-hand information, you may contact **Rep. Steve McMillan: bcld07@gmail.com.**

Senator Trip Pittman may be contacted at: trip.pittman@alsenate.gov.

Message from the Treasurer.....Chan West

As treasurer I want to make a plea to our membership about dues. Our dues are annual dues with no proration; however, new members joining after October 31 are credited with payment for the following calendar year. In the past, near the end of March, I have mailed a letter, membership form and addressed envelope to all who were delinquent. This year the number was 189 of 428. I decided to reduce the chore and the expense by simply sending a reminder postcard.

A number of members have responded that they had not paid because they never received an invoice or statement, yet every month for the past five months the newsletter has included a notice that dues are due and a membership form. Do these folks not read the newsletter? In the future, please respond promptly to the notice that dues are payable. Thank you.

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire DepartmentChief Glenn Stevens

As Spring Break winds down, hopefully, we'll get a little break before the summer season begins. The combination of high winds and salt build-up on power pole connections has been dangerous, causing numerous grass fires in our area. The salt causes arcing, which sets the power poles on fire, and the high winds have caused power lines to fall and start grass fires. At times, we had multiple fires going on at the same time. Also, the number of auto accidents increased in March, and we can probably attribute that to Spring Break.



The total number of calls for March was 32:
~ 10 medical ~ 4 motor vehicle accidents
~ 6 false alarms ~ 3 power pole fires
~ 4 brush fires ~ 2 public assists
~ 1 suicide attempt ~ 1 drug overdose ~ 1 water rescue

The ADEM burn ban begins on May 1, so if you do burn before then, please use caution on windy days, always have a water-charged garden hose on hand, and never leave a fire unattended.

Drop by Fire Station #1 to see our latest addition: a high-water rescue truck, able to traverse 6' deep water, donated to us by the U.S. Army. Our meetings are open to the public every 1st and 3rd Monday at 6:30 p.m. at Station #1. Hope to see you there.

Fort Morgan State Historic Site.....Mike Bailey, Site Director

Spring break was a busy time at Fort Morgan this year. Besides large numbers of visitors, there have been numerous school groups visit the Fort during the month of April. On April 14th a new historic marker was dedicated by the Galvez Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. This marker details the exploits of Bernardo de Galvez in lower Mobile Bay and Mobile Point. Galvez was responsible for the construction of the first documented fort on Mobile Point that was constructed in February 1780 and was armed with eight cannons and manned by 100 men. This cooperative effort between the Sons of the American Revolution and the Fort is a fine example of private groups and the Fort working together to preserve and enhance the site's long military history.

Turtle Tracks 2016~~~~~Season Opens May 1st!!

The turtle nesting season begins May 1st!!! The "Dawn Patrols" to identify and mark nests begin that day. The Fort Morgan team thanks Bon Secour Refuge for the loan of their UTV to patrol the beach. Fort Morgan team members will do all the driving for the first time this year. Patrols will begin at Vacation Lane. Thanks to Tucker Crumb for the use of her facilities.

Mama Turtles are coming soon, so be sure your exterior lights are off after dark and blinds and curtains are closed. Lights seen from the beach can prevent turtles from laying and, later, lure hatchlings away from the water and into danger from traffic, predators, dehydration and death.

Please remove your tents, shelters, and chairs from the beach each evening so mama turtles have access to the safer, upper beach to lay nests. Also, avoid digging gargantuan holes in the sand or cover them up before evening when you leave. Turtles have been known to become stuck in deep holes, unable to climb out. Deep holes are also a danger to morning patrol volunteers.

For more information, contact team co-leader Debbie Harbin (251-391-8333) or Debi Gholson dlgholson@hotmail.com or send an email to fmseaturtles@hotmail.com

Keep Fort Morgan Beautiful.....Chan West

ALERT! Alabama Department of Transportation planned to complete Hwy.180 roadside mowing by the end of April. This will leave previously hidden garbage in plain sight for our valiant Keep Fort Morgan Beautiful volunteers. Please do everything possible to keep folks from dumping garbage on our roads.

Mobile Baykeeper Launched #ReduceTheUse Campaign on Earth Day

Mobile Baykeeper launched its #ReduceThe Use campaign April 22nd (Earth Day). The goal of this social media campaign is to reduce the use of **single-use** plastic straws, plastic bottles, and plastic bags to prevent these products from littering local waterways.

Mobile Baykeeper Education & Outreach Coordinator Jamie Bullock is leading the campaign. "Educating our citizens on the negative environmental impacts of these products is vitally important, particularly in a community that thrives on its natural resources," says Bullock. "We aren't asking people to completely get rid of these products--we know there are instances when we all need them. We just want to encourage citizens to think twice about it, and consider using alternatives when possible."

Bullock and the rest of the Mobile Baykeeper team will be challenging individuals, restaurants, bars, and businesses to reduce the use of these products and consider more environmentally friendly materials as an alternative. Participants are urged to share their stories on social media by posting photos, videos, and testimonials and tagging "@MobileBaykeeper" with the hashtag #ReduceTheUse. For more information:

Jamie Bullock, Education & Outreach Coordinator jbullock@mobilebaykeeper.org

Mobile Baykeeper is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization that works to provide citizens a means to protect the beauty, health and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our waterways and coastal communities. To learn more about Mobile Baykeeper, please visit www.mobilebaykeeper.org or 251-433-4229.

Construction Update for "Governor's Mansion" on Fort Morgan

The State-owned beach house was damaged some 20 years ago by a hurricane and has sat unused and deteriorating ever since. Gov. Bentley is having it completely renovated with funds from the 2010 BP oil spill settlement. The perimeter wall is now extended 50' southward toward the beach. It appears the new roof is ready to be installed. Hopefully it will be metal, clay or ceramic. Estimated completion: early May 2016. Cost: \$1+million of BP funds.

BREAKING NEWS: Baldwin County claims new extension of wall is on county property and must come down.

<http://local15tv.com/news/local/baldwin-co-to-state-tear-down-this-wall>

<http://wkrq.com/2016/04/26/state-beach-house-renovations-hits-wall/>



Photo: Rick Nash

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~ April 2016

EMERGENCY: 911 ~ Report all potentially life-threatening and suspicious activities

Sheriff's Department—Administrative Office...972-6802

Sheriff's Office Website: www.sheriffofbaldwin.com

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies): <http://sheriffofbaldwin.com/contactRC.asp>

Spring Break Related Arrests on the Alabama Gulf Coast:

Gulf Shores=620

Orange Beach=679

Fort Morgan=[available June 1]

Adding to the number of arrests was Gulf Shores City Council’s decision to ban alcohol on their beach—but just through Spring Break. The majority of their arrests were attributed to underage drinking, public intoxication, or drug-related offenses.

Fort Morgan Crime Report ~ March 25-April 16, 2016:

3/25/16	700 Block Cape Ln.	Criminal Mischief	Window & Plumbing
3/31/16	925 Beach Club Trl.	Theft	Prescription Meds
4/2/16	925 Beach Club Trl.	Theft	32" Emerson Flat Screen
4/9/16	400 Block Dune Dr.	Criminal Mischief	Damaged Railing & Roofing
4/16/16	800 Block Surfside Dr.	Theft	TroyBuilt Pressure Washer

LAST NOTICE: New Garbage (“Solid Waste”) Policy for Fort Morgan Peninsula Home Owners

Baldwin County Solid Waste has begun delivery of the new (required) garbage bins to those who did not use them previously. You should be receiving a letter from them detailing new policies and rates. Please read the new guidelines to see how you might be affected. For more info, see the February Fort Morgan NEWS issue (available at our website www.fortmorgancivic.org or see the new policy at: <http://baldwincountyal.gov/departments/solid-waste/> New rates begin June 1st. If your Fort Morgan house is your primary residence and is not a rental and you desire the old rate for 1/week pickup, you MUST fill out the form for “Seasonal Rate.”

Baldwin County Commission Contacts

Commissioners:

Charles “Skip” Gruber
cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov
251-943-5061

Tucker Dorsey
tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov
251-972-8502

Chris Elliott
ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov
251-990-4606

Frank Burt, Jr.
fburt@baldwincountyal.gov
251-937-0395

To speak at a regular commission meeting, you must have signed up before the meeting. Check the dates, times and locations for all meetings at <http://www.baldwincountyal.gov>

FMCA Executive Board Contacts

If you have questions, need information or would like to volunteer, please contact one of the following board members:

Officers

President	Paul Barefield	540-7727	csbarefield@gmail.com
Vice President	Ernie Church	334-220-0851	ecaces4@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chan West	979-4932	granchan@earthlink.net
Secretary	Carol Kittrell	251-605-4134	ckittrell@southalabama.edu
Standing Committee Chairs			
District 25 Planning & Zoning	Ken Steiner	540-7223	kennethjsteiner@centurytel.net
Hospitality	Thelma Strong	540-7383	twstrong@gulftel.com
Incorporation	Paul Barefield	540-7727	csbarefield@gmail.com
Membership	Bonnie Lowry	540-9327	
NEWS & Website Editor	Sonja Sanders	543-1030	
	sunnisands@centurylink.net		
Sunshine	Vickie Matranga	543-1555	vpowers110@gmail.com

Mark Your Calendars:
FMCA Monthly Meeting ~ Monday, May 9th, 6:30pm

FMCA 2016 MEETINGS ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church:
May 9 ~ June 13 ~ July 11 ~ August 8 ~ September 12 ~ October 10 ~ November 14

Fort Morgan Civic Association
P. O. Box 5313 ~ Gulf Shores, AL 36547
www.fortmorgancivic.org