

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## August 2016 ~ Issue 114



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi folks,

We had a good turnout for the July meeting, with a presentation by a Montgomery lobbyist. The group consensus at this point is that we put incorporation on the back burner and push for a bill to protect our zoning and avoid annexations. We will secure the assistance of an attorney to draft a bill and then work it through the legislative research folks. Maybe some sort of combination environmental, historical, heritage, etc.

See you at the August meeting.

Paul

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### MEMBER NOTICES

**FMCA July Highlights:** Editor Sonja Sanders continues her recovery. We hope she will be ready to resume that job in August. Meanwhile Chan West continues to fill in as editor and Ernie Church as email distributor. Sonja's new email address is listed on the final page. She is still looking for a ground floor rental in Fort Morgan.

#### **Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department .....Chief Glenn Stevens**

The community suffered a huge loss on July 15 when firefighter John Bryan was involved in a fatal motorcycle accident. John, age 32, was the Department's Cadet Director, who worked with and trained our young firefighters. The Fire Department appreciates all the community support that we are receiving following this tragic event.

The Department has battled multiple grass fires as a result of the careless use of fireworks. Some of these fires were very intense and houses were in danger on a couple of them. Fast action by our fire crews saved any structures from catching fire. It is very difficult to inform the public about the dangers of fireworks since most of our fires were started by tourists.

There were 38 calls in June:

- 15 medical calls
- 7 false alarms
- 3 water rescues
- 2 public assists
- 1 retrieval of a boat adrift
- 1 dumpster fire
- 1 motor vehicle accident
- 1 fall down a chimney
- 1 boat fire
- 1 collapsed deck (2 injured)
- 1 illegal bonfire (burn ban violation)
- 1 assaulted
- 1 jellyfish sting
- 1 elevator entrapment
- 1 grass fire (followed by 4 in July)

Our recruitment drive continues as we are always looking for more members. On average, one (1) out of every three (3) volunteer firefighters will respond to a call. With a Department of only 15 firefighters, we are looking at an average of 5 members responding to every call. If you have interest in becoming a member, please join us at our training meetings which are held at 6:30 p.m. on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays every month at Fire Station No. 1.

**District 25 Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee.....Ken Steiner, Chairman**

A called meeting of the Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee was held at the Fort Morgan Volunteer Department Station #1 at 10:00 am on July 26, 2016 in response to a request from the applicant of rezoning case number Z-16019, John Caubauaton. The committee, as well as the Baldwin Count Planning and Zoning Commission had previously recommended denial of this request. At this time it is scheduled to be presented to the Baldwin County Commission on August 2, 2016.

Mr. Caubauaton presented additional documentation consisting of a survey, a wetlands delineation survey and depictions of possible duplex residential structures. He did not have a site plan for the residential units, parking, and accessory buildings. Each residential structure would consist of two 16' x 30' shipping containers (480 sq. ft. each), end to end, with a common deck, raised on 10' pilings. His offer to purchase the property is based on the rezoning and he did not discuss his options should the request be denied by the County Commission.

The Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee again voted unanimously for denial of Rezoning Request No. Z-16019. The primary reason for denial was the setting of a precedent for increased density.

**27 July Update:** Our committee received word this morning that John Caubauaton has withdrawn his request for rezoning.

**Turtle Tracks 2016**~~~~~

Fort Morgan Share the Beach group is at 71 nests as of July 27<sup>th</sup> and will patrol until the end of August. Our total for last year was 50, so we are far ahead and looking at a record year. With the tents, beach chairs and trash it is a real challenge for these mamas to nest, and for us to patrol.

We now add monitoring hatchings to our duties. Between July 27<sup>th</sup> and August 12<sup>th</sup> we will have 18 nests reach day 55, the day we start listening for signs of movement. **Help is needed!** If you would like to volunteer please email [fmseaturtles@mail.com](mailto:fmseaturtles@mail.com). Special training can be arranged.

The USGS turtle tagging team was here in June. Two Loggerheads from our Alabama coast, Bailey and Lolita, have satellite tags and may be tracked on [www.alabamaseaturtles.com](http://www.alabamaseaturtles.com).

**Food for Thought**

**Kicking off STRAWS - a new film. Making a sea of change, one plastic straw at a time**

Ahh, summer...margaritas and mojitos at your favorite beach bar, kids enjoying a yummy smoothie or shake, a drive-thru stop for an ice-cold soda. But did you ever stop to think about all the plastic straws in those drinks and where they end up? I have to confess I didn't until my colleague Steve Shor suggested I make a film about the problem of plastic straw litter.

[STRAWS](#) is a story that begins with something as small as a plastic straw, but with the power of individual activism, can create a sea of change. **Watch my video and learn more on the STRAWS [kickstarter campaign](#) page.**

Did you know that plastic straws (along with drink stirrers) have risen to the top five beach litter items? Plastic straws

can't be recycled and end up in landfills. They litter streets and shorelines adding to estimated 13 million metric tons of plastic debris dumped in the ocean each year.

- Plastic straws don't biodegrade and they are not recycled. Plastic straws photodegrade if exposed to the sun's UV rays, breaking them down into smaller, more harmful pieces in the ocean.
- Over 260 species have been reported to ingest or become entangled in plastic debris. In the last year interest in plastic straw litter has catapulted as a result of a [viral video](#) of sea turtle in Costa Rica with a plastic straw embedded in its nose. **It's now estimated that over half of the world's sea turtles have eaten plastic debris.** STRAWS includes interviews with the team of marine researchers who rescued the turtle, and a local 11-year old activist who started [#sinpajillaporfavor aka #nostrawchallenge](#) to bring straw litter awareness to his community in the Guanacaste region.

STRAWS also follows Santa Cruz, CA resident Jackie Nunez who founded [The Last Plastic Straw](#) (TLPS) in 2011. Her efforts and passion have influenced many [Monterey Bay area restaurants](#) to initiate a "straws by request" policy and to use sustainable straw alternatives. Jackie and I are hearing from people all over the globe excited to do similar campaigns and use the STRAWS film to educate their communities.

**Learn More:** Learn about our film by visiting our website <http://www.strawsfilm.com> and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [@strawsfilm](#) on twitter and instagram.

Linda Booker  
Director/Producer

### **Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge.....Chan West**

A luncheon will be held on July 29 to bid farewell to Ralph Gilges and his wife Cheryl. Ralph was instrumental in reviving the Friends of BSNWR and establishing the Share-the-Beach Program. They will be moving to Phoenix, AZ Ralph was also a dedicated worker for land acquisition and protection. Intern Liz Hall, who will be returning to her studies at Auburn, will also be recognized.

### **Fort Morgan State Historic Site.....Mike Bailey**

At Fort Morgan there has been a recent addition to Fort's staff. Dylan Tucker, who recently earned his Master's Degree in history from the University of North Alabama, joined the staff in June as the site's Cultural Resource Specialist. He will be responsible for guided tours and site interpretation. On Saturday August 6th, Fort Morgan will present a living history program to remember the anniversary of the Battle of Mobile Bay. Civil War living history interpreters will present artillery and infantry drill and will fire artillery and period weapons. There will also be special tours of the fort that will focus on the fort's role during this significant battle that lasted from August 5 to August 23, 1864. The Union victory in this battle provided a boost to Abraham Lincoln's faltering campaign for reelection.

### **Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report .....Sgt. Nathan Lusk**

June 28, 2016	Theft	2700 block Ponce de Leon
July 2, 2016	Breaking and entering vehicle	6000 block Sawgrass Cir.
July 12, 2016	Theft	300 block Plantation Rd.
July 23, 2016	Burglary residence	2300 block Hwy 180
July 23, 2016	Theft	500 block Beach Club Tr.

**Safety.** Please note in the Volunteer Fire Department section the report of grass fires caused by fireworks.

The recent alligator attack at Disney reminds us that we do have alligators in some of the wetland areas of Fort Morgan. Perhaps those who have rental units close to alligator habitat should post notices reminding guests of the danger of feeding our native wildlife.

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

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

Sheriff's Office Website: [www.sheriffalbaldwin.com](http://www.sheriffalbaldwin.com)

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies):

<http://sheriffalbaldwin.com/contactRC.asp>

**Baldwin County Commission Contacts**

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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:

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***Mark Your Calendars:***

***FMCA Monthly Meeting ~ Monday, August 8, 6:30pm***

FMCA 2016 MEETINGS ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church:

September 12 ~ October 10 ~ November 14

**Fort Morgan Civic Association**  
**P. O. Box 5313 ~ Gulf Shores, AL 36547**  
[www.fortmorgancivic.org](http://www.fortmorgancivic.org)

**A membership form can be found on our website**