

FORT MORGAN NEWS

April 2018~Issue 134



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,

Spring weather! I have invited David Whetstone to our April 9th meeting to tell us about his plan to form an organization designed to protect our Fort Morgan area. This is important. Plan to come hear what David has in mind. Traffic is still awful so drive defensively. See you at our meeting.

Paul

Paul Barefield



MEMBER NOTICES

April 9th Meeting ~ Important Topics You Should Not Miss

Join us to hear David Whetstone describe his plan to protect Fort Morgan. See Paul's message above.

FIRST PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS ON FORT MORGAN!

Have you heard the term "Indian Ditch" used to describe a feature along the Gulf Shores/Fort Morgan peninsula? For years, no one seemed to know exactly where or what it was. These days, there is a theory that the "ditch" was a canal dug by the early Native Americans of this area. Why would people dig a canal, nearly a mile long and thirty feet wide all the way from Oyster Bay to Little Lagoon?

Join us at the April 9th meeting for Harry King's presentation about the theories and, more recently, about the first professional archaeological digs along the peninsula.

6:30 p.m., Monday, April 9th, Shell Banks Church Fellowship Hall

Harry will share a slide presentation describing the early native history of the area as well as images from recent digs including 3rd century A.D. pottery.

Pieces of a bowl found during March 18th dig →



Membership Renewal ~ Do You Still Support the Civic Association???

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER.....CHAN WEST

Please read this. Our memberships are annual memberships – for each calendar year. At only \$15 per year there is no proration. The policy has been to begin reminding folks of dues renewal in the November newsletter. The response from those who receive it by email is poor, which leads me to believe that many only scan it and ignore the pleas for payment of dues. By the end of March we have mailed notices to those who have not paid, which usually numbers about 250 (out of 400). This is quite a chore. This year we decided to email the delinquent dues notice. The few who have received the newsletter by postal service do respond well. There are still about 150 email recipients who have not paid 2018 dues. Before the May newsletter all those who have not paid will be removed from the mailing list.

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire DepartmentChief Glenn Stevens

Thanks to everyone who attended our Ladies Auxiliary Annual Spaghetti Dinner fund-raiser, and to all who donated baked goods and raffle prizes. The event was a huge success—best attendance ever and the most money ever made!

Your Fire Department responded to 40 calls in February:

- ~ 19 medical calls
- ~ 15 false alarms
- ~ 5 public assists
- ~ 1 car accident with a fatality

We are currently experiencing a high number of tourists due to Spring Break. The Baldwin County Sheriff’s Office has deputies and equipment posted at our Fire Stations to assist us with calls. All the maintenance on our beach equipment has been completed.

Board Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday each month at 5:30 p.m., and our training meetings are on the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month at 6:30 p.m. Our meetings are held at Station 1 and are always open to the public.

**Monitor surf advisories before going into the Gulf
Obey any flag warnings posted**

**Post reminders in your home of the dangers of rip tides and storm currents,
for the safety of your family, visitors or tenants**

[NOTE: Already this Spring Break one young man has been lost to the riptide. Please pay attention!]

Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Committee..... Chan West

Our Fort Morgan Advisory Committee met on March 21 to consider a request (Z-180010) to rezone a 170’ X 390’ parcel at 4960 Hwy 180 from RSF-1 into 2 parcels 85’ X 390’ which would then be zoned RSF-2. This zoning is compatible with the adjacent parcels, which were platted before the zoning of District 25 was established. This would allow a single family residence to be built on each parcel. Our committee approved the request.

We will meet again on April 4 (9:00 am, Shell Banks Baptist Church), to consider a request (V-180011) to reduce setbacks for a lot at 8950 Bonita Lane, Cabana Beach, which has wetlands. A variance will be needed for the owner to construct a single family residence on the upland portion of the lot.

Keep Fort Morgan Beautiful ~ Help Wanted.....Chan West

This month the gold star goes to A J Andresen for coming with his tractor to move the chronic dump on the power line right-of-way near mile 13.5 out to the roadside where Solid Waste could pick it up. Silver stars to Avery Bird and her son Reese Schaible for answering the plea for help with this and to Carl Zander for moving piles to the fort.

Regarding the call for help with miles on the Keep Fort Morgan Beautiful program, welcome to our new volunteers: John Butterick, Bob Schmidt, Donna McKillip, Carol Blassingame, and Ron Meehan.

Miles 2, 8, 9, 13 and 14 are still not covered.

Contact chan@goefish.com to learn more about this community service or call her to volunteer: 251.979.4932.

Turtle Tracks 2018~~~~~ _____ ~~~~~Debbie Harbin, Fort Morgan Team Leader

Share The Beach annual kick-off meeting is Thursday, April 5th at 6pm at Erie Myer Civic Center in Gulf Shores. Anyone interested in the sea turtle program is encouraged to attend. There is a \$10 commitment fee to help pay for supplies. This is a great way to help an endangered species while seeing our beautiful beaches and making new friends. This is an educational program open free to the public. Come and learn more about the creatures we share our beaches with!

This program is now under the auspices of the Alabama Coastal Foundation, a non-profit entity dedicated to saving our coastal wild lands from habitat destruction. Last year, the Fort Morgan Turtle Team lost the use of the all-terrain vehicle so critical in monitoring and protecting turtle nests on the Peninsula’s *nine miles* of non-Refuge beach. Share the Beach Fort Morgan Team and the Foundation are requesting donations to help with funding a beach vehicle for our

team. Please send your tax-deductible donation, made out to "Alabama Coastal Foundation," and noted "For Fort Morgan UTV" to: Fort Morgan Share the Beach, C/O Debbie Harbin, 1929 Highway 180, Gulf Shores, AL 36542.

Thank you for your interest and support of the Fort Morgan Share the Beach Team. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact team leader, Debbie Harbin, at 251-391-8333 or Ken Lee at 410-610-3690.

Community History ~ Did You Know?.....Bonnie Lowry

ACHUSE INDIAN VILLAGE, EARLY BURIALS AT SHELL BANKS CHURCH

Geologically, the narrow strip of land on the Fort Morgan "spit" (a narrow strip of land running out into a body of water) is generally included in an 'upper creataceous' formation with indications of early Indian occupation. Shell banks and small mounds have been uncovered, especially on the protected side of the spit. Pottery, knives and tokens have also been found.

This brings us to the old Achuse Indian village which according to writings was visited by Admiral Maldonado, one of DeSoto's officers who scouted Florida and Alabama coasts from Tampa Bay around 1539 – eighty-one years before the colony of Jamestown. The village is shown on the official map made by the US DeSoto Expedition Commission created by Congress in 1936. The location is now occupied by Shell Banks Baptist Church. Stop by the church and read the marker. (Note: the name Shell Banks comes from the Indian middens of oyster and clam shells.)

The cemetery behind the church has some very early Fort Morgan headstones (e.g., Pvt John Nelson 1844-1861) and Henry Maygarden 3/19/1820 – 9/23/1894. According to records, the original church was organized by Brother AB Couch in 1859. He came to the church by horseback from Fairhope, AL. The first church building was of logs with a dirt floor and a pot-bellied iron stove. Some earlier records of 1823 show a missionary named Alexander Travis was paid 50 cents a day and Thomas Nelson sent the following report to the Baptist Association:

"Traveled 1350 miles, preached 72 sermons, baptized 16 persons, aided in the construction of one church (Shell Banks), ordained 2 deacons and had \$65 left over for domestic missions."

Records of 1875 also show a Hans Peter Hanson, native of Denmark, ordained as pastor of the Shell Banks church.

The church burned, was rebuilt by the people, destroyed during the hurricane of 1916, and rebuilt again. The church has been modernized but the original pulpit is still there! The property was owned by John Hurley who gave it to the church as a gift.

Fort Morgan Crime Report.....Donnie Payne, BCSO

For the month we saw an uptick in reported cases, mostly related to Spring Break. There was a Forgery/Fraud On Lakeshore Drive, an intoxicated person on Breakers Lane, a Domestic Violence on Plantation Road, several drug arrests (Spring Break) and four Breaking and Entering of Vehicles in different locations but mostly off of or near Ponce De Leon Court. The investigations of the B&Es is ongoing but we are hoping for good results in the cases. I would like to come down and meet with Association members to discuss ways we can better communicate to our citizens and visitors to hopefully prevent them from being victims of crime. I was assigned to the US Marshals Gulf Coast Regional Fugitive Task Force for three years before coming back in January and I am coming back up to speed here in CID. I hope to see you soon.

Loss of Member ~ Louis Roycraft Smith, Jr.

Louis Roycraft Smith, Jr., Ph.D., of Livingston, Ala., passed away Monday, March 12, 2018, in Tuscaloosa after a brief illness. Dr. Smith was born April 12, 1945 in Demopolis, Ala. to Trice Dryer Smith of Birmingham and Louis Roycraft Smith of Livingston. He was predeceased by his parents and an infant daughter. He is survived by his wife Carole Williams Smith, a native of Montgomery, and three sons, Louis Roycraft Smith, III "Pat" and wife, Amanda, of Demopolis, Cullen Holloway Smith and wife, Bethany, of Tuscaloosa and Dr. Jack Dryer Smith and wife, Klancie, of Starkville, Miss. Additionally, he is survived by nine grandchildren.

Dr. Smith received a BA Degree in History from Birmingham-Southern College, an MA Degree in History from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Alabama. He completed additional graduate work in Counselor Education at the University of Alabama.

Dr. Smith taught at the University of West Alabama for 28 years, rising to the rank of Professor and serving as the Dean of Online Programs. During his tenure at West Alabama, he received many awards for excellence in teaching, scholarship and leadership.

Dr. Smith was a life-long member of First Presbyterian Church in Livingston where he served as Sunday school teacher, Deacon, Elder and church treasurer. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, PO Drawer MM Livingston, AL 35470. Visit www.bumpersfuneralhome.com to sign the online register.

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge.....Brittany Petersen, Assistant Manager

Public bird banding returns to the Alabama Gulf Coast again this spring, courtesy of Birmingham Audubon and its partners (Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Alabama Historical Commission, Mississippi State University, Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism, Mobile Bay Audubon Society).

This year's banding event runs from Tuesday, April 17th to Saturday, 21st at Fort Morgan. Please note that while the Coastal Alabama Bird Banding Project is free, there is an admission fee to enter the park. For to-date pricing, visit <http://www.fort-morgan.org/plan-visit/>.)

Banding hours are:

Tuesday, April 17th through Friday, April 20th: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday, April 21st, 8 a.m. to noon



April
up-

Painted Bunting © HBSG

Reviving the bird banding program originally championed by the late Bob Sargent and his wife, Martha, this event provides an invaluable look at spring migrants traveling across the Coastal Alabama section of the Mississippi Flyway. Throughout the week, participants enjoy unparalleled access to the researchers and the work, with up-close-and-personal views of some amazing birds.

Remember to bring water, bug spray, sunscreen, and perhaps an outdoor chair; restrooms and concessions are available next to the ferry, and all ages are welcome to attend. For more information:

<https://birminghamaudubon.org/birdbanding/>

Brittany Petersen, CWB, Assistant Refuge Manager

[251-540-8524](tel:251-540-8524)

brittany_petersen@fws.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	chan@goefish.com
Secretary	Carol Kittrell	251-605-4134	ckittrell@southalabama.edu
Standing Committee Chairs			
District 25 Planning & Zoning	Chan West	979-4932	chan@goefish.com
Future Options	Ernie Church	334-220-0851	ecaces4@gmail.com
Membership	Bonnie Lowry	540-9327	
NEWS & Website Editor	Sonja Sanders	233-6208	
Sunshine	39sunnisands@gmail.com		
	Vickie Matranga	543-1555	vpowers110@gmail.com

FMCA 2018 MEETINGS

FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church

April 9 ~ May 14 ~ June 11 ~ July 9 ~ August 13 ~ September 10

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

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2018 MEMBERSHIP FORM – ANNUAL DUES \$15.00

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Mailing Address _____ Phone _____

City, State, Zip _____ Cell Ph _____

Fort Morgan Address _____ Phone _____

This property is west of mile 14.7: _____yes _____no -- See Article III, Section 1 below Associate Member? _____ yes

Registered Voter? Yes___ No___ Fort Morgan District 25___ Alabama-Other district/city___ State _____

Email (please provide for special alerts) _____

[Save trees, stamps, time, get your NEWS in color by e-mail] Send newsletter by email _____ by U.S. Postal _____

Your employment _____ Spouse's employment _____

Referred to FMCA by _____

Reason for joining the Association _____

NOTICE: We need volunteers to help the Association in the following areas. Where can you assist? (circle)

Program Planning: Identify & Arrange Speakers Phone/Survey Members for Interests

Zoning: Attend Meetings of Baldwin County/other Groups Write Brief Reports

Membership: Recruitment Phone Tree Greeter at Meetings Help with Pot-Lucks

Communications: Postal Mailings E-mail Writing for Newspaper, Publicity Releases, etc.

Newsletter: Desktop Graphics/Layout Gather/Submit News Items Write Brief Articles Photography

Computer: Set Up/Maintain Data Base Spreadsheets Excel Access Word PowerPoint

Financial: Bookkeeping Annual Audit

What other skills, experience or talents could you volunteer? _____

From the By-laws Adopted April 11, 2005

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Regular (voting) Membership in this association shall be open only to property owners and/or residents in the unincorporated area west of mile 14.7 of the Fort Morgan peninsula.

Section 2 Associate (non-voting) Membership shall be open to residents of areas outside the Fort Morgan Peninsula whose interests coincide with those of the Association including the preservation of the environment and quality of life of the Fort Morgan peninsula.

Section 3 Membership application shall be made by completion of a form provided by the Association and payment of the required dues. Dues for the following year shall be determined at the October general meeting and shall be for the following calendar year January 1st through December 31st.

Section 4 Payment of Regular (voting) Membership dues entitles a member household to one (1) vote. A member household is comprised of Association members living at one physical address. Past year member households paying dues after January 31st and new members joining the Association will have no voting rights until thirty (30) days after payment of dues.

Section 5 Payment of Associate (non-voting) Membership dues entitles the member to attend all member meetings and receive the monthly newsletter.

Make checks payable to: **Fort Morgan Civic Association or FMCA**

I would like to make a donation to the Legal Fund in the amount of \$ _____

2018 dues @ \$15/household _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Your donation to the Fort Morgan Civic Association is not tax deductible as we do not qualify because of our political activity attempting to prevent proliferation of large-scale high-rise development on Fort Morgan Peninsula.