

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## May 2018~Issue 135



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

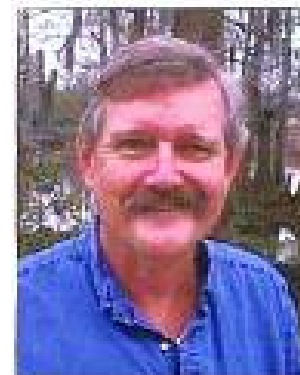
Hi, Folks,

We had a good turnout last month. If you missed it you really missed an interesting presentation by Harry King on the Indian ditch (trade canal).

David Whetstone got the date wrong and apologized for his absence and assured me he will be at the May 14th meeting to discuss his plan for the protection of our area. Plan to come hear his ideas. See you there.

**Paul**

Paul Barefield



### MEMBERSHIP

.....**CHAN WEST,**  
**TREASURER**

**PLEASE READ. WE HAVE DELAYED REMOVAL FROM THE MAILING LIST OF THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PAID 2018 DUES BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER. MY CONCLUSION IS THAT MANY OF YOU DO NOT READ THE EMAILED NEWSLETTER. I HOPE THE REMINDER SENT OUT LAST WEEK GOT YOUR ATTENTION AND THE MAILBOX WILL BE FULL OF CHECKS THIS WEEK.**

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

This year's Spring Break was relatively quiet until the end of March when offshore conditions turned hostile causing life-threatening rip currents to develop. During this period, your Fire Department responded to one drowning and 13 near drownings. We have met with our County Commissioners and EMA officials in an attempt to create a program that would publicize and educate visitors on the danger of rip currents. We will release details once the program is finalized.

Ashes Helps Lead the Search

The Fire Department responded to 42 calls in March:

- |                                      |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 drowning (victim never recovered)  | 13 near drownings |
| 7 days searching for drowning victim | 5 public assists  |
| 5 false alarms                       | 2 car wrecks      |
| 9 medical calls                      |                   |

The ADEM burn ban begins May 1 and ends October 31. This is an air quality measure that bans all open air burning except for cooking fires. If you need to burn before May 1, you must attend your fire at all times, have a water hose available to control the fire, and don't burn if wind conditions cause sparks to fly or cause smoke to move onto your neighbor's property.

Come join us at our training meetings held on the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month at 6:30 p.m. at Fire Station 1.



**For the safety of your family, visitors or tenants:  
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**

## Disturbing Trend of Dune Walkovers in Fort Morgan.....Jamie Strategier

There has been a trend on Fort Morgan for gulf-front properties building major structures on our beaches using up to 34 pilings weighing up to 700 lbs each to support an elevated walkway with even more lumber for decking. These "dune walkovers" begin not at ground level but from the raised level of a home [approximately 13 feet elevation] and extend seaward to the beach shoreline. Some include deck areas more than 6 feet wide, up to 15 feet above the beach, and up to 160 feet long. Two main problems exist with the out-dated criteria for Dune Walkovers which are supposed to be regulated as "Minor Structures": (1) Dune & Vegetation protection and (2) Public & Marine Wildlife Safety



### 1) Dune & Vegetation Protection

This major construction does not begin on the ground level; therefore, it is necessary for pedestrians to travel under the elevated walkway and through the area that is supposed to be protected for dune and vegetation growth. Some people use the structure to transport temporary beach equipment to and from the beach on a daily basis, hang hammocks under the structure, and use it as a sun shade where children play in the sand, disturbing the exact area that was meant to be preserved by the elevated walkway.

### 2) Public & Marine Wildlife Safety

Any structure constructed on the beaches (seaward of CCL) will be vulnerable to the forces of nature during storm events and therefore must be constructed so as to minimize the amount and type of debris that may be generated during and following a storm. The smaller the structure seaward of CCL, the less dangerous and damaging debris will be generated. This can be dangerous not only to the sea turtles and their nests, but also damaging to anything and anyone in its path once it becomes a flying or floating missile.



On April 10, 2018, at Baldwin County Commissioners' Work Session, Vince Jackson (Planning & Zoning) submitted the Dune Walkover issues pertaining to Fort Morgan Area. Baldwin County Commissioners voted to amend Baldwin County Coastal Area Program to include specific criteria for Dune Walkovers on beaches and dunes. At this point, Vince Jackson is drafting new language for review and comment.

Our objectives are to:

(a) minimize construction materials used on structures seaward of the CCL; (b) restrict development of "major" structures along the Gulf Coast Beaches; (c) minimize dangerous debris and the damages they can cause

Our goal is to have stricter regulations enforced on minor structures that are constructed seaward of the CCL. This will aid in preserving the natural state of Alabama's Gulf Coast and Fort Morgan's beaches and dunes.

**If you are concerned about these recent developments in so-called "dune walkovers," please send comments or recommendations by May 30 regarding new requirements to:** Jamie

Strategier at [samsplace41805@gmail.com](mailto:samsplace41805@gmail.com). Jamie will make sure your concerns for new Dune Walkover guidelines are presented. If you have questions, you may call Jamie at 504.616.3275.

From ADEM Regulations, the definition of Dune Walkover: "a raised walkway constructed for the purpose of protecting the beach and dune system between mean high tide and the CCL from damage that may result from anticipated pedestrian traffic to the beach and which is no more than six feet in width, constructed without roof or walls, elevated at least one foot above the dune, and extends seaward of the seaward vegetation line."

{References: Resolution #2015-011: dated October 7, 2014, Establishing Beach & Dune Protection and Management Regulations for Baldwin County, Alabama to enforce Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Code R, 335-8-2.08, amended effective date April 26, 1995 regarding Construction and other activities on Gulf Front Beaches and Dunes.}

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

Our 2018 sea turtle season started May 1st. We look forward to a great season. We have a lot of new volunteers and a number of faithful volunteers who have been watching out for our turtles for many years.

We would like to ask our neighbors and visitors to help make room for mama turtles to nest by taking your chairs and beach supplies in at night and by turning off bright outside lights. 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 ~ Indian Trade Canal.....Harry King**



Our last day at 1BA61 (Norman Lane and Fort Morgan Road), we cleaned the profile in Unit 2, photographed all once again, and drew all profiles in both units in detail. We collected column samples in the shell midden by layer, with everything (dirt, shell, artifacts) going into buckets for processing at the lab. At left you can see Lee Swetman and I testing a few more shovelfuls out toward the canal. We test dug to Little Lagoon parallel to the Indian Canal and filled the 3x12 X5 deep excavation pit.

We had four visitor volunteers from our Brewton presentation and they worked all day!

We will recommence next October at the Prehistoric Waterfront Park west of Laguna Dunes subdivision. Anyone finding artifacts, please send me pictures along with your exciting story and general location of the find. I will keep it on file and have it identified if you wish. Thanks

Harry King [Harryking1525@gmail.com](mailto:Harryking1525@gmail.com) 251-610-1565  
Lee Swetman and Harry King Shovel & Screen April 2018

**Fort Morgan Boat Ramp & Pier.....Ernie Church, Vice President**

Progress on the renovation of the Fort Morgan Boat Ramp has been slow due to various causes. The delivery of the steel sheet piling needed for the new bulkheads was unexpectedly delayed. Continued periods of rain and strong winds further extended delays. However, the installation of the new bulkhead, which had to be installed first, has been completed; progress on the launch is expected to increase substantially. The next steps will be to frame and pour the concrete push-in slabs to allow ample time for curing. While the push-in slabs are curing, construction of the new dock will be underway. Stay tuned for more updates.



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

NAVY COVE/PILOT TOWN, FIRST POST OFFICE IN GASQUE

The Navy Cove/Pilot Town original settlement is believed to have existed long before the Spanish controlled Mobile Bay and Mobile Point. Bar pilots assisted boats thru the channel and across the Mobile Bar.

Stories reveal almost all the families had boats and sailed whenever they waned into the bay waters thereby developing good skills. Capt. Joseph Norville, reared in Navy Cove, gives his account of his life there prior to the storm of 1906. "All were neighbors, no locks on doors, no bars on windows, and everyone without a place to stay was invited to one of the houses for overnight." During the storm (hurricane) of Sep. 27, 1906, over 150 lives were lost. The topography of Navy Cove Pilot Town changed drastically. Three miles east of the fort bogs and inlets took the place of homes and gardens. All the trees had been blown away and on the Gulf side sand dunes were flattened and Gulf waters rushed over to meet the Bay.

St. Andrews Bays was filled with oysters which could easily be gathered by hand at low tide. There were Mallards, Canvas Backs and wild ducks in the winter season.

Through Rain, Sleet, Wind & Snow, the postal motto, could also have included swamp, wetlands and bayous because when postal service finally came to Ft. Morgan that had to be the determination of the carriers. William Gasque, a retiree Probate Judge of Baldwin County, who lived in Daphne AL was of Huguenot descent, born on Dec. 6, 1811, in the old town of St. Stephens, Washington County, AL. Judge Gasque held many positions in both Mobile and Baldwin counties from 1832 thru 1892. He never married and was the last survivor of his family.

The Gasque post office was established in 1880. I believe perhaps the old post office was properly named because all the people who carried the mail like Mr. Grim, Mr. Graham, Mr. Galloway, Mrs. Violet Nelson (postmistress until 1950), and Mr. Galloway (who took over the water route) came from the same cut of cloth, serving their community. Oh yes, there was a store at Gasque and another at Terry's Landing. Soldiers would come from the fort on horseback knowing their fifteen mile ride would get them back to the fort well after dark.

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

We had a couple of B&E's to a vehicle on Ponce De Leon Court. The only other reports were Spring Break related which has now ended. We did make two arrests for several B&E's to a vehicle dating back to March.

**Fort Morgan State Historic Site.....See Website for Latest Calendar: [www.fort-morgan.org](http://www.fort-morgan.org)**

[March, April, May](#) 10:00am Tuesday and Thursday Only "Guided Tour and Small Arms Demonstration."  
[May 26, 2018](#) Living History Memorial Day Tribute : Living History staff will be dressed in uniforms from various periods of Fort Morgan's occupation. Demonstrations will interpret and remember the lives of those who served at Fort Morgan.

**FMCA Executive Board Contacts**

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**FMCA 2018 MEETINGS**

**FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church**  
**May 14 ~ June 11 ~ July 9 ~ August 13 ~ September 10 ~ October 8**

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