

FORT MORGAN NEWS

September 2018~Issue 139



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,

Not much to report. We had an excellent turnout for the August meeting. Traffic is finally easing off! Hope to see you at the September meeting.

Paul

Paul Barefield



Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department ~~~~~Chief Glenn Stevens

The busy summer season continues as your Fire Department responded to 58 calls in July. The variety of calls kept all our firefighters on their toes as they responded to:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ~ 27 medical | ~ 6 vehicle accidents | ~ 5 false alarms |
| ~ 4 mutual aids to Gulf Shores | ~ 3 elevator entrapments | ~ 3 public assists |
| ~ 2 helicopter transports | ~ 2 assaults | ~ 1 golf cart injury |
| ~ 1 jellyfish sting | ~ 1 boat propeller injury | ~ 1 deck collapse with 3 injuries |
| ~ 1 brush fire | ~ 1 structure fire | |

Take notice of one missing item on the above list. Hopefully, our Rip Current Awareness Program had something to do with ***no swimmers in distress for the month of July.***

In the past year our membership has increased from 17 to 27. Our newest member is EMILY, our remote controlled rescue buoy. =====> EMILY>>>>

August has shown no signs of slowing down as your Fire Department started off with a woods fire in the Bon Secour Wildlife Refuge, followed by a house fire in Morgantown, followed by a grass fire in Morgantown. All our new members experienced a lot of "on-the-job" training in the last couple of weeks, and I am pleased to report that we encountered no injuries. Our plans are to eventually have our own Live Fire Burn Facility so that our firefighters will be better trained when they are called on to fight an actual fire.



On September 15, Fire Station No 1 will be the headquarters for the annual beach cleanup. Organizers will be on site from 8 a.m. until noon on that Saturday.

As always, everyone is invited to join us at our training meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month at Fire Station No. 1.

Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Committee ~~~~~Chan West, Chair

Our Advisory Committee met on August 29 to consider a request for a variance to allow a swimming pool to be constructed in the front yard of a residence at 2134 Hwy 180. The USFWS had approved a site plan with a setback of 30' from 180. The pool could not be placed in the rear yard as it is Beach mouse habitat. We recommended approval of the request.

Turtle Tracks Fort Morgan 2018 ~~~~~Total: 18 Nests! ~~~~~Debbie Harbin, Team Leader

Even though we have had an extremely slow season with only 18 nests, we have put over 1,000 beautiful babies to the water so far. We still have a few nests to go; but if there is a good thing to say about this season, we will not be sitting out wrapped up in blankets this year as we nest-sit waiting for a hatching! We have great volunteers and met some amazing visitors. In addition to the thrill of seeing the babies going to the water, seeing the excitement of the visitors makes it all worth the many hours we put in. We have many visitors who schedule their vacations to Fort Morgan around turtle time.

Please take your chairs and beach supplies in at night and turn off bright outside lights.

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

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge Beach Clean-Up September 15

The 31st Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup will be Saturday, September 15th! Come out and join the Fort Morgan Zone that Saturday starting at 8:00 am to help cleanup the Fort Morgan peninsula. Check-in will take place at the Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Station #1, right across from Shell Banks Baptist Church off Highway 180. It is suggested that participants dress appropriately for the weather; work gloves, water, and sun block are also advised. Once participants turn in their data sheet that day they will receive a t-shirt and patch as a way of saying thank you for their help. For more information about Coastal Cleanup contact Brittany Petersen at brittany_petersen@fws.gov or 251-540-7720.

Identi-fly It! Bird Walks

Grab some binoculars and join us for some bird watching! No experience is necessary and all skill levels are welcome. With migration upon us, the refuge is filling up with a rainbow of feathers. This is a perfect time to add some birds to your list! These walks are free to the public but are limited to 15 people. Reservations are required. For further information or to sign-up for a walk, please contact the Refuge Office, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at (251) 540-7720.

Monday, September 17 8:00am; Saturday, September 22 8:00am; & Tuesday, October 9th 8:00am

Monarch Butterfly Walks

The tours are free to the public and reservations are required. Beginner and experienced lepidopterists, young and old, are welcome to come out and enjoy the beauty of butterflies. The tours are limited to 12 people per tour and each tour will consist of a 2 hour round trip walk down one of our trails. We request at least 24 hours notice for cancellations. We encourage you to bring binoculars but they are not required to enjoy the tours. Restroom facilities are available at the refuge office and Pine Beach Trail. For further information or to sign-up for a tour, please contact the Refuge Office, Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at (251) 540-7720.

Thursdays, at 9:30 am on September 20 & 27 and October 4, 11, 18 & 25 and November 1.

Fort Morgan Community History

TERRY'S TAVERN

By Chan West

This is an update on an article published earlier about Terry's Tavern, "Before The Pines." Recently John Terry's great grandson Michael Ludvigsen found a photo of the store when it was first moved up close to the



Fort Morgan Road (Dixie Graves Parkway) which was under construction by the CCC and WPA. He also found a photo of the huge rattlesnake captured by the road crew.

John Terry lived on the north side of the road. His property extended west of what is now Bay Breeze RV Park. Terry's Landing, on Bon Secour Bay, had an oyster house and a small store selling non-perishable basic items. Before the asphalt surface reached his property, he moved the store building to a location close to the road and installed a gas pump. The gas pump was the kind where you pumped the gas up into an elevated glass tank and drained that measured fuel into your

vehicle or can. However, he had to wait until the road was paved as far as the store to get gas supplied.

Terry's Tavern stocked soft drinks, beer, a few non-perishable food items. The Tom's Toasted Peanut truck made regular deliveries of peanuts, crackers and candy. Wonder of wonders: Mr. Terry got a Servel kerosene refrigerator and sold chilled beverages. There was no electric service. A lean-to room was added on the west side with tables and benches. This, with its cold beer, became the local gathering spot on Saturday evenings. I recall a juke box, but that was after electricity arrived.

That Servel refrigerator had a long life. It must have been the late '40s when electricity reached the Fort Morgan Road and Mr. Terry sold it to my father. It was even later that electric service reached us. We replaced it with an electric model and passed the Servel on to a friend.

I especially remember the candy for a penny or a nickel. When the black flies were bad our mother would pay us one sales tax token for every ten flies we killed. That meant a penny for every 100 flies. This kept us occupied when the flies were too bad to play outside. Of course, we also got into battles swatting each other with the fly swatters. It was going to Terry's to buy candy with our pennies that made it memorable.

Mr. Terry's son Bert would tong oysters from the reef in Bon Secour. I remember those as the biggest and best oysters.

The paving of the road opened this once remote area to visitors. Mr. Terry had cottages for rent: two rooms and a path (also pitcher pump and kerosene stove). My family leased one such from Capt. Ed Strong for \$100 a year.

Another memory dates from the road construction days. Someone managed to capture a huge Eastern Diamondback rattlesnake and get it into a cage there at Terry's. I remember the length as 8½ feet, which is also the maximum given in my Alabama reptile book, and bigger around than my thigh. Some 75 years later when I connected with Michael, his family story passed down had the same length! Although, in general, I am not afraid of snakes, that one made me break out in a cold sweat.

Fort Morgan History ~ Indian Canal ~~~~~~Harry King

We now have important documentation showing that President John Quincy Adams charged Brig. Gen. Thomas S. Jesup with the reconnaissance of the country between Mobile Bay and Pensacola Bay. This relates to our beliefs about the presence of the Indian trade canal.

The attached report from the US Army addressed to the House of Representatives in 1828 describes the Oyster Bay-Little Lagoon area that harbored the first intracoastal waterway in North America. In 566 AD, Native Americans engineered the excavation of a one-mile-long canal from Bay John/Oyster Bay to Little Lagoon as a trade route into much of the southeastern United States. This feat of ingenuity and social organization illustrates a public works project with no equal in that time period.

Dr. Greg Waselkov, archeologist and professor emeritus, University of South Alabama, and Howard Cyr, senior archeologist, University of Tennessee, are analyzing data from geoprobes recently obtained from the canal and Indian mound.

Many thanks to Curry Weber, a recent volunteer to our group, who researched and found the important document (see attached). Thank you also to the City of Gulf Shores and many volunteers who have contributed time, effort and funding for documentation of this significant historical project.

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

[ED. NOTE: PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO READ THE FOLLOWING CRIME REPORT. ONLY BY PURE LUCK DID THE HOUSE OCCUPANTS ESCAPE HARM (READ: INJURY OR DEATH) AS THEY SLEPT WITH THEIR DOORS UNLOCKED!]

Between 8-11-18 and 8-13-18 we had 3 Residential Burglaries and 2 Breaking & Entering to vehicles on Ponce De Leon Court. These crimes occurred between 10pm and 6am. During the Burglaries, the suspect entered occupied beach houses. Investigation is ongoing!

[If you have surveillance cameras in that area of Ponce de Leon, please check them for content during August 11 through 13. Also, please report any unusual circumstances observed during that time period to Donnie Payne, Baldwin County Sheriff's Office, (251)937-0202.

Reminder: **Thefts from unlocked** vehicles are preventable crimes. Remove valuables from your vehicles and lock your doors. Security cameras are encouraged. If you have video cameras and are near a reported crime, please check them and call the Sheriff's Office. As always, report suspicious activity.

FMCA Executive Board Contacts

Officers

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| President | Paul Barefield | 540-7727 | csbarefield@gmail.com |
| Vice President | Ernie Church | 334-220-0851 | ecaces4@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Greg Strategier | 337-849-6506 | samsplace41805@gmail.com |
| Secretary | Carol Kittrell | 251-605-4134 | ckittrell@southalabama.edu |

Standing Committee Chairs

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| District 25 Planning & Zoning | Chan West | 979-4932 | chan@goefish.com |
| Editor Fort Morgan NEWS | Sonja Sanders | 233-6208 | 39sunnisands@gmail.com |
| Future Fort Morgan Options | Ernie Church | 334-220-0851 | ecaces4@gmail.com |
| Membership | Bonnie Lowry | 540-9327 | |
| Sunshine | Vickie Matranga | 543-1555 | vpowers110@gmail.com |

FMCA 2018 MEETINGS

**FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church
September 10 ~ October 8 ~ November 12**

**Fort Morgan Civic Association
P. O. Box 5313 ~ Gulf Shores, AL 36547**

www.fortmorgancivic.org

NINETEENTH CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 3, 1827.

The Committee on Roads and Canals, who were instructed "to inquire into the expediency of making an appropriation for opening and improving the inland navigation from St. Mary's river to the Tortugas, and from Appalachicola river through St. Andrews bay, to Chactawhatchie, sufficient for steam navigation, the Territory of Florida," report, in part:

D.

Extract from the report of Captain Burch, of the United States army, who was charged with the reconnoissance of the country between Mobile and Pensacola bays by the Quartermaster General.

You will notice on my sketch the vestiges of a canal, marked as existing between Bay John and the Little Lagoon, near to Mobile point. This canal has never, to my knowledge, been spoken of before, or noticed by any one, and was shown to me by one of the old residents of the country, who informed me that there was no account or tradition whatever respecting it, among the oldest inhabitants: so that it must refer itself, for its history, to some former period, before the occupation of this continent by the present race of white inhabitants. The distance between the Bay John and Little Lagoon, where this canal or ditch connected them, is about half a mile. The timber has grown up in it as large as elsewhere; and, where it passed across the black-jack ridge, the sand has nearly filled it up, though it is very plain even there; in the marsh on the margin of the Bay John, it is more plain; and in the hammock, on the margin of the lagoon, it is some five or six feet in depth. There could have been no object in such a canal, unless to connect the waters of Bon Secour with Perdido bay, for boat navigation; and I found it to be the opinion of those persons who have their cattle in that range, and know the country, that the Little Lagoon connects itself with the Cross-trees creek, and so forms the communication with the Perdido; and from the Perdido to the Grand Lagoon, (which is connected with Pensacola bay at Barancas,) there is a low portage of two miles only.

It is almost inconceivable to those who are not personally acquainted with the country, how easily, and at how little expense, the waters of Mobile bay might be connected with those of Pensacola for all purposes of steamboat navigation, and even for schooners of respectable size and burden: and I think that the facilities which would be obtained to commerce by such a communication, will, before many years, cause its being carried into effect.

I am, sir, with perfect respect,

Your most obedient servant,

DANIEL E. BURCH,

Assistant Quartermaster.

To Brig. Gen. THOMAS S. JESUP,

Quartermaster General United States Army,

Washington City, D. C.