

FORT MORGAN NEWS

February 2020~Issue 156



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all FMCA members and an especially warm welcome to new members. As I said last month, big things are in store for our area for 2020!

To start, Mr. Ludvigsen and I have been working over the past month with Baldwin County Solid Waste, the Alabama Coastal Foundation, local beach equipment rental companies and the Surf Side Shores HOA to begin a pilot program for 2020 in the Surf Side community. This voluntary pilot program is focused at keeping our beaches clean by increasing trash pickups, volunteers sweeping the beach daily and educating our visitors on the importance of picking up equipment and toys after a day at the beach. Numerous incidents over the years have occurred that show us the need for this type of educational program. Injury to people walking beaches, injury and death of marine animals and beach equipment polluting the Gulf after weather or tidal changes. It's clear that our beaches should be treated better than they have been in the past few years. The goal is to educate and influence the culture so that hopefully visitors to Fort Morgan will respect our beach community as much as most of us residents do. You can expect to see a social media campaign starting in March as well as educational materials in local businesses.



I would like to take a moment to recognize a member of our community that was truly passionate about the Fort Morgan area, Mr. Al Sawyer. Al gave countless hours of his time to the Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department, serving as a member of its Board of Directors up until his passing earlier this month. Our deepest condolences to Ms. Diane and the rest of the Sawyer family. We will certainly remember Al and his dedication to the FMFR and this community.

This month's meeting of the FMCA will be on February 10th 2020 at 6:30pm. As always, I encourage each member of our association to help spread the word about the Fort Morgan Civic Association and its work to preserve and protect the Fort Morgan community. Come to the meetings, invite your neighbors and follow us on Facebook to help our visibility.

Joe
Joe Emerson

Agenda for this month's FMCA General Meeting

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance	Joe Emerson, President
Previous FMCA General Meeting 2019 Minutes	Carol Kittrell, Secretary
Treasurer's Report	Greg Strategier, Treasurer
Government Affairs Report	Michael Ludvigsen, FMCA Government Liaison
Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Advisory Cte.	Ernie Church, Chair
Fort Morgan Fire & Rescue Report	Jerry Ralston, Chief FMF&RD
Old Business	
-Updates on ongoing actions	
New Business	
-Fort Morgan Fire Dept Annual Meeting Update -Fort Morgan Mardi Gras Parade, 23 Feb -2 nd Annual Fort Morgan Cleanup	
Adjournment: Next Meeting, Mar 9	

FMCA Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Monday February 10th

FMCA 2019/2020 MEETINGS:

FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2nd Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
Mar 9~Apr 13~May 11~June 8~July 13~Aug 10

FMCA Membership Report~~~~~ Jennifer Noojin

Reminder: Annual Dues are due by Due December 31 annually. Additionally please contact FMCA Membership Chair at fmcamemberships@gmail.com or (205) 249-1025 for any changes to membership status (i.e. address / email update, death of a member)

Membership Application process by mail:

Fill out Membership Application (available online at <https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), complete, and print. Write check for \$15. Mail Membership Application and check to:

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

Membership Application process electronically:

NOTE: The fillable form online will not work on Chrome or Edge or Safari browsers. Internet Explorer and Firefox are currently the only browsers that will work with the fillable form.

On the Fort Morgan Civic Association Membership webpage (<https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), Click on Membership Application (fillable form) on the webpage and complete. Select "Submit Form". Email will open in your email window. Complete email and send.

To complete the electronic submission process, utilize the PayPal link at the bottom of the Membership webpage and follow prompts to pay Membership Dues.

NOTE: Membership Dues are \$15.00 and \$3.00 is the PayPal processing fee for a total electronic transaction of \$18.00. Any amount above \$18 will be accepted as a donation to the Fort Morgan Civic Association.

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department~~~~~Jerry Ralston, Fire Chief, FMFRD

Fort Morgan Fire Rescue ran 23 calls in January.

14 Medical Calls	1 Elevator Entrapment
6 Fire Alarms	1 Auto Accident
1 Public Assistance	

The Fire Dept. Annual Board of Directors Meeting has been rescheduled to continue on Feb. 11 @ 5:30 PM.

Stay Safe,
Jerry Ralston,
Fire Chief

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~~~~~Baldwin County Sheriff

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>

Upcoming Events/ Community Support Opportunities in Fort Morgan:

Fort Morgan State Historic Site~::~::~::~::Wendy Hyatt

Please visit Facebook (Fort Morgan State Historic Site) and website <http://www.fort-morgan.org> for information on events at Fort Morgan State Historic Site.

Bon Secour NWR~::~::~::~::Brittany Petersen

Free Winter Walks and Talks at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge

The Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge is pleased to announce their Winter 2020 Walks and Talks to be held in February. The guided walks will cover the topics of: Dynamic Dunes, Birds, Local Habitats, and Marine Ecosystems. The Winter Talks will cover a variety of topics including, the History of U-boats in the Gulf, Sharks and the History of the Sea Turtle Conservation Movement. The walks will take place on the Bon Secour NWR trails. The talks will be held at the Ft. Morgan Volunteer Fire Department at 12105 State Highway 180 (Ft. Morgan Rd.), Gulf Shores, AL 36542.

Winter Walks

Bird & Nature Walk

Have you ever wanted to know what that plant was? Or maybe that butterfly? Oh, wait I just saw a dragonfly! Oh, look at that bird! No experience is necessary just come with your curiosity. The walk will take place from the Pine Beach Trail. Binoculars are encouraged but not necessary to enjoy the walk.

Dates: Feb. 7th- 8:30 am, Feb. 14th- 8:30 am, Feb. 21st- 8:30 am.

Bird Walk

Beginner and experienced bird watchers of all ages are welcome to come out and enjoy the beauty of birds and nature itself. Walks will take place from the Jeff Friend Trail. Binoculars are encouraged but they are not necessary to enjoy the walk. **Dates:** Feb. 4th – 8:30 am, Feb. 11th – 8:30 am, Feb. 18th – 8:30 am.

Medicinal and Edible Plants Walk

Take a journey back to when native tribes and early colonizers needed to rely on the land around them to supply the medication and food they needed to live in this coastal habitat. This walk will begin at the Jeff Friend Trail. **Dates:** Feb 8th- 9:30 am (**Office will be closed**).

Dynamic Dunes Walk

Come join us for a walk along the Gulf shore and discover why this dune habitat is so important. The talk includes a bit of history, coastal ecology, and native plants. The guided walk will meet at the Mobile Street parking lot. **Dates:** Feb. 6th - 3:00 pm, Feb. 13th- 3:00 pm, Feb. 20th - 3:00 pm.

Guided Beach Walk

Marine ecosystems are fascinating, dynamic, and sensitive to impacts from thousands of miles away. Come learn about the different marine habitats, the creatures that live there and their complex interactions. The guided walk will meet at the Mobile Street parking lot on Feb. 13th- 10:00 am.

The guided walks are free to the public; however, space is limited to 12 people per walk. Therefore, a reservation is required. The walks last between 1-2 hours and will meet at the designated trailhead. We request at least 24 hours' notice for cancellations. Please be aware, there are no restroom facilities available on the trails

Winter Talks

Shark Spiel

This talk explores the diversity and complexity of our ocean's apex predator and the integral role they play in sustaining a healthy ecosystem. **Dates:** Feb. 11th 10:00 am.

Sea Turtle History and the Conservation Movement Talk

Have you ever been curious where the sea turtle story all began? Join us for this talk on the history of the conservation movement and the efforts to protect the sea turtles. **Dates:** Feb. 18th 10:00 am.

U-boats in the Gulf

This talk will introduce audiences to the history of World War II and the presence of German U-boats in the Gulf of Mexico. The speaker will regale audiences with stories of growing up on the beaches of Gulf Shores during the height of WW2 and share her firsthand experience of seeing U-boats in the Gulf.

Dates: Feb. 4th- 10:00 am.

The Shark Spiel, U-boats in the Gulf and Sea Turtle History and the Conservation Movement talks will be held at Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Station #1 located next to Shell Banks Baptist Church at 12105 State Highway 180, Gulf Shores, AL 36542. Attendees are asked to park their vehicles on the helicopter pad adjacent to the fire station. These talks are free to the public but are limited to 24 people. Reservations are required.

These are very popular events and reservations are required. The guided tours are limited to 12 people and the talks are limited to 24 people. A 24-hours' notice is asked if you must cancel.

Please call the Refuge office at 251-540-7720 to book a walk or a talk, or drop into the office at 12295 State Highway 180, Gulf Shore, AL 36542, between 9 am and 2 pm Monday through Friday. Dates and times will also be available on the Refuge's website www.fws.gov/bonsecour or their Facebook page.

Fort Morgan History:

Request for contributions – please contact FMCA newsletter editor if you are interested in researching Fort Morgan history or providing personal memories to share of Fort Morgan

Fort Morgan and WWII – What A Difference a Name Makes~~~~~Chan West

For several years I have presented a talk during the *Winter Walks and Talks* of the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, one which I titled *World War II*. I talked about life here in the Fort Morgan area during that time. The talks were usually filled to the 24-person limit. This year I suggested changing the title to *U-boats in the Gulf*. What a difference that has made. The calls for reservations have greatly exceed the openings.

Obviously, there is a lot of interest in that subject as there are few around who remember that era. I would like to recommend two books, available in the Baldwin County Library System. First, a novel by Andy Andrews, a south Baldwin County resident, *Island of Saints*. I am confident that he was the author who called me years ago asking about my family story of meeting Germans walking from the beach, who landed from a submarine. I was told that my story was an urban myth and that many coastal cities have similar tales. This novel is based on those urban myths as there are only two officially documented German landings during WWII, both on the east coast. Andy's novel is a great story with accurate details about the culture of the Fort Morgan peninsular back then. The second book is *Torpedoes in the Gulf* by Melanie Wiggins, available from the Foley Library. This a carefully researched fact-filled book about all the submarines which came into the Gulf during 1942 -43. She was able to study the logbooks of all the submarine captains.

Special thanks to Chan West, longtime Fort Morgan resident for her contribution to the Fort Morgan History segment this month.

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