

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## June 2016 ~ Issue 112



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Paul is away due to a family emergency. He asked that the following update regarding the Fort Morgan Incorporation issue replace his usual President's Message.*

On Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Incorporation Committee met with available members of the Baldwin County Legislative Delegation. They were: Rep. Steve McMillan, Rep. Joe Faust and Sen. Greg Albritton.

The result of the meeting was both disappointing and concerning. The net result was we were told our wish to have a bill passed to allow a vote on incorporation was not going to happen. The political power structure was said to be against this bill, meaning those with clout (money and lobbyists). It appeared that allowing people to vote on preserving the historical and environmentally sensitive area we call Fort Morgan was a foreign concept.

While we appreciate the members of the Baldwin Delegation taking time to meet, nothing productive was achieved. Hopefully future meetings and efforts will produce a more positive result.

### Sonny Farris

Incorporation Committee

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### MEMBER NOTICES

#### FMCA May Highlights

We now have 401 members including 60 that are either brand new or long-absent renewals.

**Welcome, new members and renewals!** If you wish to rejoin at any time, please visit our website: [www.fortmorgancivic.org](http://www.fortmorgancivic.org)

Photo: Janice Neitzel



The Alabama Highway Department stopped by Station#1 to advise that the welcome sign had to be moved to its originally intended spot that had been marked out by stakes. The sign has already been moved by one of our firefighters and all is well. It is closer to the highway and a tad west of the boundary line with the city.

Mosquito spraying will begin soon and individuals may request a spraying by contacting the Health Department. Also, tablets known as donuts can be picked up at the health department to place in standing water (e.g., all the new wetland-type bogs now among us that were for a while invisible). Residents are advised to monitor their property to ensure that any containers that might collect water are turned upside down to avoid mosquito breeding.

#### Update on Incorporation Bill

FMCA Member Robert DeWitt has written another article about our travails in getting the Incorporation bill into the legislature: <http://lagniappemobile.com/legislators-kick-can-fort-morgan-incorporation/>

You may contact **Rep. Steve McMillan:** [bcld07@gmail.com](mailto:bcld07@gmail.com) or **Senator Trip Pittman:** [trip.pittman@alenate.gov](mailto:trip.pittman@alenate.gov)

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

Your Fire Department responded to 21 calls in April. These calls included three motor vehicle accidents, two of which involved fatalities. The third MVA involved a tree falling across the highway in a blind curve where a vehicle struck the tree and swerved into a ditch. Our calls included:

- ~ 6 medical calls
- ~ 5 false alarms
- ~ 3 grass fires
- ~ 2 missing persons
- ~ 1 suicide attempt
- ~ 1 elevator entrapment
- ~ 3 motor vehicle accidents (2 fatalities)

Our latest acquisition, the high water rescue Army truck, is currently being scraped and sanded in preparation for a paint job. We are looking for someone who can paint the truck for a reasonable price, so if anyone has a recommendation of a painter, please let us know. ----->





Delivery of our new pumper is scheduled for July. A new bay is under construction at Station 1 for the new truck.

We are now under an ADEM burn ban until the end of October. This ban allows any open air cooking fires; however, all other open air burning is prohibited.

As always, our training meetings are open to the public. Lately, we have been practicing extinguishing car fires and the use of our "jaws-of-life," as well as surf rescue training [photo at left] in preparation for the summer season.

We meet at 6:30 p.m. at Station 1 on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month. Hope to see you there.

**Turtle Tracks 2016~~~~~Fort Morgan Site of Alabama's 1st Nest !!**

Alabama's first nest of the season was laid on a Fort Morgan beach by the extremely endangered Kemp's ridley mama shown below on lucky Friday May 13<sup>th</sup>. Her 30" wide track was spotted by the Dawn Patrol Saturday morning; but



since no body pit could be found, it was assumed to be a false crawl. Then a phone call was relayed to the Fort Morgan team from a Morgantown resident who had actually seen the turtle Friday morning about 11:30. Kemp's are known to nest in the morning, unlike our more familiar Loggerheads who usually nest in the evening hours and up until daylight. The eggs were found and the species was confirmed as a Kemp's. Even better news: Kemp's hatchlings prefer daylight hatchings, so get your cameras ready!

conditions such as density, moisture and temperature from top to bottom of the nest. He will check all nests every day, which will be a big help at hatching time. He seems undaunted by the threat that we usually have more than 40 nests each year on Fort Morgan peninsula.

We have a scientist here from Florida State University conducting research at our nests for his doctorate. Without disturbing the nest, he will put a temperature sensor and water gauge at each one. He also takes samples of sand to test for



Among many happy Fort Morgan Team volunteers, seen below are (left to right): Barb Nash, Rick Nash, Melanie Johnson (who spotted the Kemp's and called it in to the turtle hotline), Debbie Harbin (team leader), Debi Gholsen (team leader), and Ronnie Giles. Great big thanks to Melanie!

beach each evening so mama turtles have access to the safer upper beach to lay nests—away from flooding storm tides.

Mama Turtles are here, so be sure (1) exterior lights are off after dark; (2) blinds and curtains are closed at night if you are anywhere near the beach. Lights seen from the beach can prevent turtles from laying a nest and, later, lure hatchlings away from the water and into danger from traffic, predators, dehydration and death; (3) avoid digging giant holes in the sand, or cover them up before evening when you leave. Turtles have been known to become stuck in deep sand holes, unable to climb out. Deep holes are also a danger to morning patrol volunteers. (4) remove your tents, shelters, and chairs from the

To volunteer for Dawn Patrol to locate and mark nests or for later in the season, to monitor and sit at nests to see hatchlings emerge, contact team co-leader Debbie Harbin (251-391-8333) or Debi Gholson [digholson@hotmail.com](mailto:digholson@hotmail.com) or send an email to [fmseaturtles@hotmail.com](mailto:fmseaturtles@hotmail.com)

**Fort Morgan State Historic Site.....Mike Bailey, Site Director**

The Memorial Day Tribute will be held this Saturday May 28th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm and will include historical interpretations and artillery demonstrations. Daily tours begin Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 am. Tuesday Evening tours begin June 7th at 7:00 pm and continue each Tuesday through July.

The first new brochure in 30 years will be handed out this week-end! The brochure was designed by Mike Bailey and Paul Leonard. Dylan Tucker, M.A., will begin as the Fort's Cultural Resources Specialist on June 1st. He is a recent graduate of The University of North Alabama with a Master's in Public History and will be working primarily with interpretive and educational programs.

**Loss of Member ~ Nathan "Nate" Andrew Thomas Harris**

Nathan "Nate" Andrew Thomas Harris went home to be with his Savior on Saturday April 30, 2016. He died unexpectedly in a motorcycle accident on Fort Morgan Road at the age of 19.

Nathan attended elementary, middle and junior high school in Millbrook, Alabama, and his family moved to Fort Morgan peninsula in 2011. He graduated with honors from Gulf Shores High School in 2015.

Nathan was a three-sport, All-County athlete in football, baseball and track and a member of the National Honor Society and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He began in January 2016 at Troy University where he became a member of the Trojan football team.

Nathan is survived by his parents, Johnny and Carol Harris of Gulf Shores, Alabama; his sisters, Sarah Beth (Tony) Painter of Pike Road, Alabama and Rebekah (Brent) Harrison of Acworth, Georgia; his grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Andy Harris of Montgomery, Alabama and Mr. Don (Lois Masengale) Freeman of Montgomery, Alabama; as well as his nieces, Madison Painter and Avery Ann Harrison. He was preceded in death by his grandmother, Marilyn Elgin Freeman, and his great-grandmother, Mary Julia Harris of Birmingham, Alabama.

A service to celebrate Nathan's life was held at First Baptist Church of Gulf Shores on Thursday, May 5 at 3 p.m. after a two-hour visitation, which more than 300 people attended.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations in Nathan's honor to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, P.O. Box 1000, Dept. 142, Memphis, TN 38148-0142.

**"Governor's Mansion" Wall**

From Baldwin County online maps, it appears the wall extension might have been built over the right-of-way for Beach Shore Drive in addition to crossing the lot belonging to Surfside Shores community. According to an article by Eric Mann, Reporter for Lagniappe, County Commissioner Chris Elliott announced on May 6<sup>th</sup> that the Governor's office has agreed to remove the extension. <http://lagniappemobile.com/commissioner-state-will-remove-wall-beach-mansion/>

**Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~ May 2016**

**Crime Report ~ April 16-May 20, 2016:**

During this period, two separate burglaries with no forced entry were reported at the Beach Club, having occurred sometime over the previous two months.

Sgt. Lusk recommends that homeowners keep a record of all those who have access to their property (cleaners, maintenance, repair personnel, etc.) and make frequent checks on their personal belongings on the property.

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

**Sheriff's Department—Administrative Office.....972-6802**  
**Sheriff's Office Website: [www.sheriffobaldwin.com](http://www.sheriffobaldwin.com)**

Anonymous Tip Email Address (NOT for Emergencies): [http://  
sheriffobaldwin.com/contactRC.asp](http://sheriffobaldwin.com/contactRC.asp)

## Baldwin County Commission Contacts

### Commissioners:

**Charles "Skip" Gruber**

[cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov)

251-943-5061

**Tucker Dorsey**

[tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov)

251-972-8502

**Chris Elliott**

[ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov)

251-990-4606

**Frank Burt, Jr.**

[fburt@baldwincountyal.gov](mailto:fburt@baldwincountyal.gov)

251-937-0395

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:

### Officers

President

Paul Barefield

540-7727

[csbarefield@gmail.com](mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com)

Vice President

Ernie Church

334-220-0851

[ecaces4@gmail.com](mailto:ecaces4@gmail.com)

Treasurer

Chan West

979-4932

[granchan@earthlink.net](mailto:granchan@earthlink.net)

Secretary

Carol Kittrell

251-605-4134

[ckittrell@southalabama.edu](mailto:ckittrell@southalabama.edu)

### Standing Committee Chairs

District 25 Planning & Zoning

Ken Steiner

540-7223

[kennethjsteiner@centurytel.net](mailto:kennethjsteiner@centurytel.net)

Hospitality

Thelma Strong

540-7383

[twstrong@gulftel.com](mailto:twstrong@gulftel.com)

Incorporation

Paul Barefield

540-7727

[csbarefield@gmail.com](mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com)

Membership

Bonnie Lowry

540-9327

NEWS & Website Editor

Sonja Sanders

543-1030

[sunnisands@centurylink.net](mailto:sunnisands@centurylink.net)

Sunshine

Vickie Matranga

543-1555

[vpowers110@gmail.com](mailto:vpowers110@gmail.com)

### Mark Your Calendars:

**FMCA Monthly Meeting ~ Monday, June 13th, 6:30pm**

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

**July 11 ~ August 8 ~ September 12 ~ October 10 ~ November 14**

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW NATIONAL MAMMAL: AMERICAN BISON**



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