

FORT MORGAN NEWS

December 2016 ~ Issue 118



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,
Ken Steiner is making some improvement but still very ill and in rehab in Pensacola. Please send your thoughts and prayers to him and Emily.

Do join us for our annual Christmas party/potluck dinner on Monday, December 12th, 6:00pm, at Fire Station #1 (Gasque Lane, where Shell Banks Church is). Bring a side dish of your choice—ham and turkey will be provided.

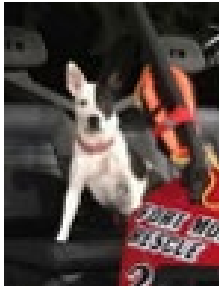
Paul

Paul Barefield



MEMBER NOTICES

Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire DepartmentChief Glenn Stevens



Conditions continue to stay dry as we head into the holiday season. **The Governor has issued a state-wide burn ban** which does not allow any type of open-air burning. Anyone caught burning could face a fine and jail time. We were recently paged out to a vehicle fire on Highway 180 near Navy Cove where the vehicle fire ignited the grass and the fire spread from Highway 180 to Ponce de Leon Court.

Your Fire Department responded to 28 emergency calls in October:

- 11 medical calls · 6 false alarms · 3 water rescues · 3 vehicle accidents
- 3 brush fires · 1 vehicle fire
- 1 public assist

With the burn ban in effect, even the Fire Department must delay the practice burns that we had scheduled. We will continue to practice operation of our new pumper and plan to hold a class on our air ambulance service. **Baldwin County now has access to air ambulance service with Medstar's new helicopter, Air Care-1.** We are planning for Air Care-1 and its crew to join us at one of our training meetings within the next couple of months.

Join the Auxiliary! Call either Kay Stevens at 540-7422 or Thelma Strong at 540-7383.

Come join us at our meetings on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Fire Station No. 1. Questions? Contact Chief Stevens at 251-540-7422 or email: sandune@gulftel.com or visit our Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department Facebook page.

This is the face you get when you yell "Girls can't be firefighters!" & thanks to Captain Alicia. Remember Volunteers needed, men and women!



Only 50 members have paid their dues for 2017!

2017 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE NOW!

Folks, PLEASE take care of this obligation now so we can continue to keep you up to date on important issues relevant to YOUR property and to Fort Morgan community.

Mail your check for the \$15 dues, plus any donation you might wish to send, with a membership form (last page, below). Better yet, bring them to the CHRISTMAS PARTY December 12th, 6pm, Fire Station #1!

We urge you to receive the newsletter and special notices by email. Also please notify our editor Sonja Sanders (39sunnisands@gmail.com) or treasurer Chan West (granchan@earthlink.net) of any changes in addresses, phone numbers, e-mails, etc.

Our policy is to remove from the distribution list anyone whose dues have not been received by March 31st. Should you need another copy of the membership form for yourself or to pass on to a prospective member, it can be found on our website: www.fortmorgancivic.org.

Turtle Tracks 2016~~~~~Fort Morgan Nests = 96!

Fort Morgan peninsula had a banner year for sea turtle nests with a total of 96—double the average of past seasons. Although a number of hatchlings were lost to the high storm surge, we still had great success in getting babies to the water.

Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Advisory Committee

The committee met November 19th to consider a request for rezoning of five lots on the south side of Highway 180 between Triple Tail and Gulf Wind Court. The owner was requesting a change from B2 (Neighborhood Business District) to RTF4 (Duplex Family Dwelling 4 units/acre). The committee sent a recommendation for approval to Baldwin County Commission, since the change would be compatible with surrounding properties and the committee saw no reason to deny.

**Alert! Membership Policy Changes
NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION**

The policy is now to send **one** newsletter per membership. That one recipient may then distribute it to whomever s/he chooses. If another family member wishes to receive it directly from FMCA, s/he needs to pay for an additional membership; submit a membership form and annual dues of \$15.

Again we urge all to sign up for email receipt of the newsletter. For you who have concerns about privacy, please note that we do not give out our email list. Recipients of the Fort Morgan NEWS are shown only as blind copies (not visible to other recipients). The only email address which can be gleaned from an email from FMCA is that of the sender.

Loss of Members

We are requesting that a family member notify us of any FMCA member's death, the date, and the website where an obituary and funeral arrangements can be found. With over 400 member families, we have no certain way of knowing of a member's death.

JEAN RUMPANOS DUNN ~ 3/14/41-11/19/16 ~ www.mobilememorialfunnerals.com

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~ November 2016

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

Sheriff's Department—Administrative Office...972-6802

Sheriff's Office Website: www.sheriffobaldwin.com

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

Fort Morgan Crime Report

.....Sgt.
Nathan Lusk, BCSO



We only had one case down there this edition. Someone spray painted graffiti on Battery Duportal inside Fort Morgan which was reported on November 5. At left is the only picture appropriate for release (I blacked out a depiction of male genitalia). The rest contained a lot of crude material all in black spray paint. Judging from the pictures it is apparently juveniles/teens.

REMINDERS: lights, alarms and video cameras are an invaluable tool. Thanks to some of the homeowners with cameras, we have been able to obtain some great evidence and information on problem areas. This time of year there is typically an increase in burglaries due to fewer people being at rental/vacation homes. Be vigilant in reporting suspicious behavior as well as checking your property regularly.

Fort Morgan History & Folklore

The following story is reprinted with permission of Harriet Outlaw. She commented that, like many of her works, this is a folklore story based on tales people have told her. Her stories have their roots in oral tradition.

Local Folklore: The Lady in Blue of Fort Morgan by Harriet Outlaw

Fact and Fable collide sometimes. That is when the best folklore comes to life. Such is the case of the Lady in Blue I saw one night under the full moon at Fort Morgan.

We were participating in a living history weekend at Fort Morgan, camping inside the fort, eating food cooked over the open fire, and conducting educational tours and reenactments for the public. Before turning in for the night, we shared stories of eerie events that many people have experienced – such as seeing a man hanging in the barracks, a man in uniform marching across the parade ground, and the sounds of gunshots and sobbing. Many people say that Fort Morgan is the most haunted fort in the south. Not surprisingly, sleep did not come easily and I got up to sit out under the stars and soak up the atmosphere. My eyes scanned the eerie outline of the walls of the fort against a sky lit by the full blue moon. A blue moon occurs when there are two full moons in one calendar month, and I was fortunate enough to be there on that magical night.

There she was – the Lady in Blue walking the north wall ramparts. I had heard of her, but did not fully believe until I saw her. Her face was a shadow, but the long flowing dress was luminescent and translucent, just like the blue moon. There was no doubt in my mind that this was the lady of lore, the tale told for almost 100 years.

I first heard about her a long time ago, when Mike Bailey, now Director of Fort Morgan, told me that several people claim to have seen the lady, although he had never had that privilege. As we chatted about the possible explanations for her supernatural presence, he related to me the story of a gentleman named Louis Pepin who came to visit the fort in his latter years. He wanted to see once again the place where he was born. He was born while his dad was stationed there when the fort was training young men for World War I. His father was then sent to Hawaii for duty, and returned to Fort Morgan as commanding officer when Louis was about eight years old. Louis and his brother loved living in the officer's quarters, attending the school right there on the grounds of the fort, and most of all, playing in the sugar white sand of the beach on the Gulf of Mexico, searching for treasures that washed up every day. But one discovery they made on the beach was heartbreaking, because it was the body of a lovely young lady, dressed in a long blue gown. Louis' father, for a reason unknown to his sons, had her body buried in the northwest corner of the fort, perhaps in the long lost cemetery of the fort. Louis remembered that among those at the graveside was one officer's wife, who was inconsolable. After the burial, it was not long before people began to see a lady walking along the ramparts on the highest walls of the fort.



Who was she and how did she get there? The mystery of the lady lies in the hold of another legend of Fort Morgan. The ruins of the beautiful Rachel, a three-masted schooner, are visible after the sands about five miles east of the fort are washed away from time to time by storms that hit the gulf beaches. The wreckage is sometimes called "The Mystery Ship," and many want to claim it dates back to the War Between the States, but Mike knows the truth behind the waterlogged remains of the ship. When it last arose from its sandy grave after Hurricane Ike in 2008, several media reports, including a national network, featured the mysterious ship. The fact is that the wreckage is actually the remains of one of the largest ships ever built in the DeAngelo Shipyard at Moss Point,

Mississippi. The Italian Shipyard on the east bank of the Escatawpa River was built by John De Angelo, who came from a family of shipbuilders in Italy. The Rachel was completed in the early 1920s, but met her fate in her first year, when she ran aground just off the shore of the peninsula in October. Her cargo of lumber and most of her outfitting hardware were saved, but she was later mysteriously burned. The reports say that no lives were lost. But is that a fact? The crew of eight survived, but were they the only ones on the Rachel?

Now, this is the point in the story where fact and fable merge to make the moving tale of the Lady in Blue. Lorna lived in Moss Point, married to a cruel and heartless husband. She wrote to her twin sister, Lois, who was the wife of an officer at Fort Morgan and told her that she would have to escape her tormentor before he took her life.

The Rachel at berth in Moss Point, Mississippi © Ken De Angelo

From her home, Lorna watched as a large new ship was being built at the shipyard across the river. An escape plan began to grow. She wrote to Lois that she would come to her sister aboard the new schooner *Rachel*, plotting a way to stow away in the hold of the ship. When Lois heard of the wreckage of the Rachel, her heart feared for her sister, but was bound to silence for fear of her sister's husband. She sensed that Lorna had been hiding in the hold of the ship, and stayed there even after the cargo was removed, somehow undetected. Lois walked the beach daily searching for her, praying she had made her way to shore and safety. However, when the ship was in flames, she had that feeling that close sisters can have. She knew her sister had been aboard when the ship was torched. Her body washed to the beach many days later and no one else made a connection with the Rachel. Until now as I read a journal hidden away for 100 years in my mother's trunk. It tells of fear of the sister's husband and the secret of her quiet burial under a blue moon in October.



I hope that one day I can see the wreckage and feel the hope that was hidden there in the hold. But at least, I know that I have seen the visage of that hope. In a blue dress on the ramparts of Fort Morgan.

Shipbuilders at De Angelo Shipyard, Moss Point, Mississippi



Thanks to Ken De Angelo, descendant of the original shipbuilder and author of *The Schooner Rachel*, and to the wonderful staff of Fort Morgan. Harriet Outlaw is a local folklorist and storyteller. Other tales of Fort Morgan are found in *Haunted Baldwin County* published by History Press.

Baldwin County Commission Contacts

Commissioners:

Charles "Skip" Gruber
cgruber@baldwincountyal.gov
251-943-5061

Tucker Dorsey
tdorsey@baldwincountyal.gov
251-972-8502

Chris Elliott
ctelliott@baldwincountyal.gov
251-990-4606

Frank Burt, Jr.
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 |
| Vice President | Ernie Church | 334-220-0851 | ecaces4@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Chan West | 979-4932 | granchan@earthlink.net |
| Secretary | Carol Kittrell | 251-605-4134 | ckittrell@southalabama.edu |
| Standing Committee Chairs | | | |
| District 25 Planning & Zoning | Chan West | 979-4932 | granchan@earthlink.net |
| Hospitality | Thelma Strong | 540-7383 | twstrong@gulftel.com |
| Incorporation | Paul Barefield | 540-7727 | csbarefield@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 |

CHRISTMAS PARTY POTLUCK DINNER
MONDAY, DECEMBER 12TH, 6:00PM
FMVFD FIRE STATION #1
BRING A SIDE DISH OF YOUR CHOICE
REMINDER: NO ALCOHOL ON PREMISES

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

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www.fortmorgancivic.org

2017 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 Newsletter Writing for Newspaper, Publicity Releases

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 \$ _____

2017 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.