

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## August 2018~Issue 138



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,

Hope all is well. Chan has turned over the treasurer's job to Greg Strategier. We all owe her a great debt of gratitude for all her years of service to our association. Thank you Mrs. West!

Hope to see a good crowd at the August meeting. Drive carefully, the loonies are loose on the road!

Paul

Paul Barefield



**Rip Current warning signs installed by Baldwin County at Gulf access points on Fort Morgan Peninsula**

**Warn family, friends, and visitors about deadly rip tide currents.**

***SAVE A LIFE: PRINT THE ATTACHED RIPTIDE NOTICE & POST IT IN YOUR HOME***

Photo by Ernie Church

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

Vacation time is booming in Fort Morgan and the visitors are keeping your Fire Department very busy as we responded to 55 calls in June:

- 21 medical
- 4 elevator entrapments
- 2 power pole fires
- 1 drowning (3-year-old in swimming pool)
- 9 false alarms
- 2 boaters in distress
- 1 dumpster fire
- 6 helicopter transports
- 2 swimmers in distress
- 1 missing person
- 4 car wrecks
- 2 public assists

Our new beach pickup truck is in, and we are currently getting the radio installed and applying the reflective striping and Fort Morgan VFD decals. The new truck should be in service by August 1.

Our fund drive is underway, and response has been excellent. Thanks to everyone for your support.

Come join us at our monthly meetings and watch us train. Meetings are at Station 1 on the 1st and 3rd Mondays at 6:30 p.m. Hope to see you there!

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

The Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee will meet at 8:30a.m. on Wednesday, August 1, at Shell Bank Baptist Church to consider Variance Request V-180024, to reduce the rear setback from 30' to 20' for construction of a single family dwelling on a beach front lot in Surfside Shores. The beachfront lots there were platted before the Coastal Construction Line was established. Without this variance, there is not space to build a house of average size, and it will be compatible with the adjacent properties.

## Turtle Tracks Fort Morgan 2018~~~~~Total: 16 Nests!~~~~~Debbie Harbin, Team Leader

Even though we are having a very slow season with just 16 nests, at the end of July, we had a really busy week. Nest A-1 hatched July 24th and was excavated on the 27th. The new protocol was implemented for the first time and worked well. It requires a lot of volunteers and we had enough to cover all the bases. It was a great hatch with the majority of them heading straight to the water. There were 8 unhatched, 5 of which were fertile.



Nest A-2 hatched July 27th, with a great boil right after a storm, and 94 went to the water. A-3 hatched in the early hours July 28th. A-4 has passed day 58 and is being monitored. A-5 reaches day 55 on August 8th.



Watch for our distinctive UTV on the beach at dawn and for those who walk their routes as well

Thanks to Kacie and Leslie for the graphics on our UTV!  
==>

Nest A-16 was a rare daytime nesting for this mama who is seen here just finishing her job by strewing sand

to hide signs of the nest.

**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.

## Fort Morgan Community History

### GUFFY'S GATOR STORY

This is a story from *The Child Who Rejected God* by Dana Stone (Guffy), a cousin of Chan West

#### PART 2

When we finally made it to shore, the two of them proudly carried the gator, now so exhausted it was moribund, up to the house to present to mother for her small fish aquarium. It still had my shirt pulled over its eyes, with the tip of the long snout sticking out the collar. They held it upside down on its back and were carrying it together side by side up the steps to the screen porch when mother emerged from the door above with my Uncle Dutch's hefty walking stick in her hand. "Auntie, see what we brung you for your aquarium," said Lou. They could scarcely contain their mirth. They thought it was the funniest prank ever pulled by teenage boys. Mother had a different opinion. "Don't you bring that nasty, smelly thing in here!" she said sternly. She thrust the tip of the walking stick at them, wielding it like



a cattle prod, and drove them back down the porch steps amid howls of laughter, "yu'all should save it for your mama and daddy when they get back from the store. They'll love it!" she added with angry sarcasm, using her native drawl to express her anger more vehemently. "And if ya'll expect to get fed tonight, you best take it back where it came from by dinner time." To emphasize her point, she gave them another powerful thrust with the walking stick but missed and hit the gator in the ribs instead. Instantly, it came back to life, spinning and wriggling so hard the boys, still convulsed with laughter, stumbled backward and dropped it. Off it scurried through the dunes back toward the swamp as fast as it could run; my tee-shirt with the neck ripped wide open now slid back behind its head, the boys whooping it up as they chased after it. Mother had had it. My ruined tee-shirt was the final straw.

Uncle Dutch and Aunt Frances, who was my mother's older sister, had gone to pick up groceries and supplies from the country store at the mouth of the lagoon in a small launch. When they got back late in the afternoon, mother demanded that they show the gator to their mother. Needless to say, my Aunt Frances was not amused either. Uncle Dutch, however, was not so put off. He was usually in his cups by that time of day anyway, which inclined him to see the more humorous side of things. Besides, he had a penchant for pranks himself, so long as he wasn't the butt of the joke. He made several wisecracks about what should be done with it. Then Lou suggested they put it in Mary Jo Barnes's sail locker at the Fairhope Yacht Club. But Mary Jo was one of Richard's high school girlfriends, so that idea was immediately nixed. In the end, and perhaps at my uncle's instigation, they tied it up to a scrub tree in the dunes next to the outhouse path, so that whenever anyone went to use the facility, they had to climb around it to get to the crapper. Both mother and Aunt Frances were livid when they were surprised by the gator on the path that night. They were seasoned southern ladies who were not cowed even by the most formidable of nature's predators. They thought nothing of shooing away large sharks that frequently appeared silhouetted through the face of steep waves in the Gulf when we went swimming. They would nonchalantly splash water at them as though they were shooing off a school of minnows, and fearlessly plunge where just moment before the sharks had been. Nor did they cower when venomous water moccasins swam up to them in the lagoon during night outings. On those occasions, the whole extended family would be out waist deep in the dark water, luminescent jack lights in hand, gigging blue crabs for a Creole gumbo feast. To fend off the deadly snakes, they would calmly stick the gig under the belly, and flick them aside with practiced ease as though it were just a common nuisance in their busy lives. These were not women who screamed when they saw a large spider or rat. But they drew the line with the gator on the outhouse path. It did not matter one whit that its mouth was tied shut. They were not going to tolerate stumbling over a five-foot crocodilian lizard in the dark. They hit the roof. The two ladies took all the booze they could find in the house and hid it behind the pump house under an old tarp. Then they shut down the kitchen. The next morning, the gator was back in the lake it came from. No questions asked.

*Note from Chan: For the most part, this story rings true; however, I must dispute the part about my mother, Aunt Frances, going to the outhouse and her lack of fear of snakes. Perhaps she had no fear of moccasins, but she refused to use the outhouse because of the Coachwhip which lived under the floor. In the bedroom she had the kind of indoor plumbing which had to be carried out, emptied and cleaned every morning. Well remembered, as that was usually my chore!*

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



**This 30-foot long ancient cedar dugout canoe was found along Fort Morgan Road near the Indian Canal at Little Lagoon while the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was building the Dixie Graves Parkway (Highway 180) in 1933.**

**The photo was taken at the Alabama State Museum Archives Building.**

## **Fort Morgan Crime Report~-----Donnie Payne, BCSO**

Earlier in the month there was a Burglary and Theft on Hwy 180. These cases are under investigation. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> there was a theft on Morgan Lakes Dr., a Burglary on Bluefish Dr. and a B&E to a vehicle on Plantation Dr. It seems reports have picked up somewhat as of late...too early to call it a trend! The recent cases will be assigned out today.

### **FMCA Executive Board Contacts**

#### **Officers**

President	Paul Barefield	540-7727	<a href="mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com">csbarefield@gmail.com</a>
Vice President	Ernie Church	334-220-0851	<a href="mailto:ecaces4@gmail.com">ecaces4@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Greg Strategier	337-849-6506	Gstrategier@cox.net
Secretary	Carol Kittrell	251-605-4134	<a href="mailto:ckittrell@southalabama.edu">ckittrell@southalabama.edu</a>

#### **Standing Committee Chairs**

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

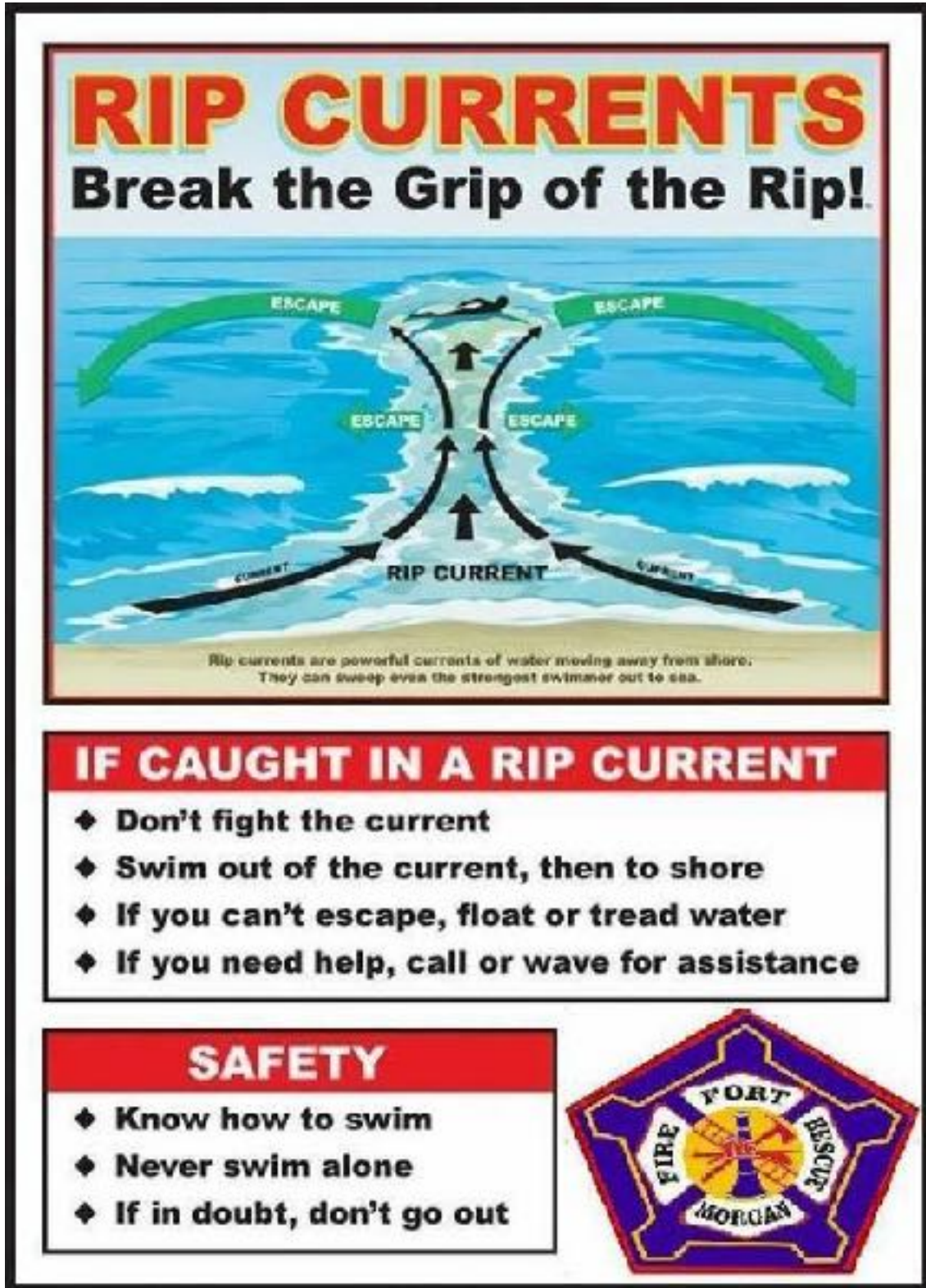
### **FMCA 2018 MEETINGS**

**FMCA Monthly Member Meetings ~ 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 6:30pm, Shell Banks Church  
August 13 ~ September 10 ~ October 8 ~ November 12**

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

[www.fortmorgancivic.org](http://www.fortmorgancivic.org)

Please post the Riptide Poster in your Fort Morgan home.  
Advise your family, friends and visitors of the dangers of this deadly phenomenon.



**RIP CURRENTS**  
**Break the Grip of the Rip!**

The diagram shows a swimmer caught in a rip current. Black arrows labeled 'CURRENT' and 'RIP CURRENT' point away from the shore. Green curved arrows labeled 'ESCAPE' point back towards the shore. A swimmer is shown in the center of the rip current, with arrows indicating the escape path.


Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore.  
They can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea.

**IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT**

- ◆ Don't fight the current
- ◆ Swim out of the current, then to shore
- ◆ If you can't escape, float or tread water
- ◆ If you need help, call or wave for assistance

**SAFETY**

- ◆ Know how to swim
- ◆ Never swim alone
- ◆ If in doubt, don't go out



The logo is a purple pentagon with a yellow border. Inside, it says 'FORT MORGAN' at the top and 'FIRE RESCUE' on the sides. In the center, there is a yellow circle with a red fire hydrant and a red fire extinguisher.