

# FORT MORGAN NEWS

## October 2018~Issue 140



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi, Folks,

Hope to see a good crowd at our meeting October 8th. Don't forget the fish fry on the 20th at station #1. Where oh where is our good October weather?

Paul

Paul Barefield



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

Your Fire Department responded to 35 calls in August:

- 15 medical
- 12 false alarms
- 2 vehicle accidents
- 1 elevator entrapment
- 1 lost child
- 1 runaway raft (2 persons aboard)
- 1 woods fire
- 1 grass fire
- 1 structure fire

In February of this year, the Department joined Loxley Fire and Magnolia Springs Fire to apply for a FEMA grant to purchase new state-of-the-art SCBA packs. These are the air cylinder packs that firefighters use for breathing when fighting structure fires. On September 14, we were notified by FEMA that the grant had been awarded to our group. These packs run over \$6000 apiece, and all our firefighters will be fitted for their own SCBA pack.



On Saturday, October 20, the Ladies' Auxiliary will be holding their annual Fish Fry fund-raiser that benefits first responders needing financial assistance. The event, running from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., will serve an \$8 plate that includes fried fish, hush puppies, baked beans, and cole slaw. There will also be a bake sale, raffle, cookbook sale, and tee shirt sale. Anyone who wants to contribute baked goods for the event can drop them off on Friday afternoon or any time before 11:00 a.m. on Saturday morning at Fire Station No. 1. We hope to see you at the Fish Fry.

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

### 2018 Beach Clean-Up

Many thanks to the volunteers who worked so hard to clean up the beach on September 15. As you can see from the photo, two of our most experienced volunteers turned out—John Butterick & Chan West—and the detritus included some interesting items. This message from Chan: "For the third year John and I picked up Mobile Point, where we

collected a piled high truckload of large lumber. After emptying that at the Fort, we continued along the beach as far as Surfside. We collected another truck load, mainly collapsed canopy frames, which can be seen in the photo. We would urge beachfront owners to remove them when they first fail and might be compacted."

Photo courtesy of Phillip Hinesley

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

Our Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee will hold a semi-annual meeting at 9:00 AM, Wednesday, October 17, at the Shell Bank Baptist Church Fellowship Hall. At this time there are no variance requests scheduled for consideration. Alabama legislators Steve McMillan and Vince Jackson have indicated that they will attend.

We did meet on September 19 and recommended approval of a Special Exception request (SE-18003) for the operation of a tourist home on Bonita Court (west of Navy Cove). This home is currently a vacation rental. The owners plan to move into the home and operate only two bedrooms for rental, without meal service.

## Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge ~ The Monarchs Are Here!

### 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, October 4, 11, 18 & 25 and November 1.**

**Bird Walk ~ October 9th @ 8:00am**

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 new 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.

## Fort Morgan History

### Indian Canal ~~~~~Harry King

We have another part of the story where the Canal berm was 566 AD. Then villagers lived on the Lagoon and collected trade item “tolls” for transport through the Indian Canal. Traders would offer copper trinkets, wooden figurines, pottery and flint for safe passage in quiet water versus the open Gulf of Mexico.

The following report from Dr. Greg Waselkov, lead investigator in our work on Fort Morgan’s “Indian Ditch,” confirms the age of the canal.

The results of the AMS radiocarbon analyses have come in. We have one odd result (a calibrated date range of 4330 to 4450 BC), which is far older than our shell midden at site 1BA61. I can only guess that an ancient charred nutshell came in with mud attached to shellfish. The other two dates are identical to each other and to the wood charcoal sample we dated previously from the canal berm, all calibrated date ranges of **AD 580 to 650**. All of this certainly suggests that the canal dates to the early seventh century AD. Hopefully we can now run some samples from the canal cores and see how they turn out. I still plan to do our cross section of the canal in a couple of weeks.

Thank you, Grant, for allocating city resources to obtain these radiocarbon dates. This is an essential part of the entire project to determine the origin of the “Indian ditch.”

Gregory A. Waselkov, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology, USA, Mobile, AL 36688

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## Alabama Gulf Coast 1933-1939

### 1934 Plan for Fort Morgan: Convert to State Park & Aviation Field

**From 1933 to 1939 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) occupied what is now Gulf State Park.**

The CCC was designed to build national and state parks all over the U.S. and gave many young men jobs to help them and their families make it through the Depression. They made \$1.00 a day, five days a week. At the end of the month they were paid \$25, most of which went home to their families. A CCC camp consisted of a barracks, a sawmill, resident houses for management to live in, and a maid’s quarters. Until the permanent structures were complete, the CCC “boys” lived in large tents.

In 1934 plans were announced to convert "Old Fort Morgan" into a public state park and airfield—**see the attached final pages of this newsletter**. Shortly thereafter, word went out that a paved road was planned, to reach from the Florida state line to the west end of Fort Morgan peninsula. The Civilian Conservation Corps, who provided the labor to develop Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores, would be a central component of the project. As plans developed, the itinerant participants of the homeless program based in Foley were moved to Fort Morgan and also would be part of the highway construction.

Watch future issues of the Fort Morgan NEWS for additional information on this historically significant period.

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

During the month of September there were no reports of theft or breaking and entering—probably a first in several years for that month! However, the following disturbances were reported:

- A runaway juvenile report on Savane Park. Child was later found and returned home.
- A Domestic Incident report taken in the 1500 block of Hwy. 180.
- A female adult (vacationer from Cullman, AL) drowned and reported on Gulf Wind Ct.
- A juvenile sex crime investigation was reported on Beach Shore Dr. (vacationers from out of state)
- A Domestic Incident report was taken on Martinique Blvd.

[Ed. Note: the August report is repeated below due to the dangerous situation. PLEASE warn your families, guests and visitors!]

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

Reminder: **Thefts from unlocked** vehicles and homes are preventable crimes. Remove valuables from your vehicles and keep doors to home and vehicles locked. 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	<a href="mailto:csbarefield@gmail.com">csbarefield@gmail.com</a>
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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>
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Sunshine	Vickie Matrangola	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**  
**October 8 ~ November 12 ~ December 10**

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

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





# Plan To Turn Fort Morgan Into Park, Aviation Field

Emergency Relief Administration To Ask War Department For Title To Property, Which Lies  
Adjacent To Mobile

FORT MORGAN, Ala., March 10 (AP)—Plans for transforming this historic site of many of the South's history-making dramas into a public recreation park and aviation field went forward today with the announcement that Washington officials of the federal Emergency Relief Administration had been asked to negotiate with the War department for a title to the property.

If the War department agrees to a transfer of the land, 2,000 transients, selected from the thousands in the South, will begin the task of changing the narrow strip of land, which juts out into Mobile bay, into a haven for pleasure-seeking tourists.

Only two families live here now, where once the booming guns of Major William Lawrence's artillery repulsed the British fleet and sent General Pakenham's veterans on to New Orleans, to meet their Waterloo at the hands of Andrew Jackson in the battle of New Orleans, in January, 1815.

The fort itself, still frowning on the channel which separates it from Fort Gaines, on Dauphin island, was rebuilt and given its present name in 1821. It had been called Fort Bowyer previously.

Plans of the state aviation advisor and the transient bureau, under whose supervision the recreation project is being advanced, provide for preserving the fort itself as a museum.

The project, as outlined, also calls for the building of a 30-mile highway along the narrow peninsula which joins Fort Morgan to the mainland of Baldwin county. It will traverse a region first seen by white men in 1528, when the De Narvaez expedition touched on the peninsula for water.

Several excellent beaches, on the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico, will be touched by the highway. Facilities for bathing will be built as a part of the recreation project.

Elsworth Woodward of New Orleans, president of the Southern Art League, will be asked to assign artists employed on government relief to paint and sketch interesting scenes to be placed in the fort-museum.

It was at Fort Morgan that Admiral David Farragut, in the battle of Mobile bay in 1864, gave his famous command, "Damn the torpedoes. Full speed ahead." The commander of the federal fleet had just succeeded, after three years of futile effort, in running the guns of the twin forts of Gaines and Morgan, which guarded the en-

trance to Mobile, one of the prin-

incipal cities and ports of the Confederacy.

In its earlier history, Fort Morgan was the landing place of the ill-fated Spanish colony planted in Alabama by the Spanish government under Tristan de Luna, in 1560.

Fort Morgan was garrisoned until after the World War. Now the only inhabitants of the 84 buildings here are a caretaker and a radio operator for a tropical fruit company.

*Huntsville Times. January 3, 1934*