

FORT MORGAN NEWS

September 2020~Issue 163



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all FMCA members!

September is always one of my favorite times of the year and this year, in spite all the obstacles 2020 has sent our way, is no different. We have some exciting stuff coming up for this month!

The 33rd Annual Alabama Coastal Cleanup is happening September 19-27th. Get your crews together and join us to "Get the Trash out of the Splash"! For more information visit: <https://alabamacoastalcleanup.com/>

Also happening this month is our monthly meeting of the FMCA on September 14th. We are happy to have a guest speaker, State Representative Steve McMillan. This meeting will take place at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall at Shell Banks Church. As you may know, there is limited seating available. Per ADPH guidelines, we encourage folks to wear masks and practice social distancing while in attendance.

I would like to remind everyone that we are still looking for a member of the community/membership to fill the Executive Board Secretary chair. If you have interest in joining the executive board, please send a brief resume to fortmorgancivic@gmail.com.

Thank you for your continued support of the FMCA.

Joe
Joe Emerson

FMCA Membership ~~~~~

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)

For membership application by mail or online, access Fort Morgan Civic Association website (<https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/>), click on membership tab, and select desired process (online or mail), then follow the prompts.

Agenda for this month's FMCA General Meeting:

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance	Joe Emerson, President
Previous FMCA General Meeting Minutes	
Treasurer's Report	Greg Strategier, Treasurer
Government Affairs Report	Michael Ludvigsen, FMCA Government Liaison
Fort Morgan Planning & Zoning Advisory Cte.	Ernie Church, Chair
Old Business	
- BCSO Letter	
- Landmark District	
- Community Yard Sale	
New Business	
- Open Floor	
Adjournment: Next Meeting, 12 October	



Fort Morgan Volunteer Fire Department ~~~~~

Fort Morgan Fire Rescue ran 44 calls in August.

24 Medical Calls	2 Public Assistance
6 Swimmers in Distress	2 Grass Fires
3 Fire Alarms	1 Grill Fire
2 Elevator Entrapment	1 Motor Vehicle Accident

Hurricane Season is still with us. Please stay weather aware and have your emergency plan in place. Please head all emergency advisories before, during and after a storm.

COVID 19 is also still with us. Please wear your Mask and Practice Social Distancing.

Stay Safe,
Jerry Ralston, Chief FMVFD

Fort Morgan Peninsula Neighborhood Safety & Crime Report ~~~~~

“If you see something, Say something”. It is so important, for the Sheriff’s Office to know what you know.

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 Planning & Zoning Committee ~~~~~ **Ernie Church**

At their meeting on Sep 3rd, the Baldwin County Planning and Zoning Commission approved our conditional use application to construct a new fire station #2 on a vacant lot two lots east of the current station.

Future Fort Morgan Planning and Zoning Committee meetings will be noted on <https://www.fortmorgancivic.org/> as well as associated case files if a meeting is scheduled.

USF&WS Public Comment Period for SeaGlades at St. Andrews Bay ~~~~~

United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has posted the deadline September. 21, 2020 for public comment regarding an application for Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the planned project of 27 new homes titled “SeaGlades at St. Andrew’s Bay”. USFWS request public comment on the application, which includes the applicant's proposed habitat conservation plan (HCP), and the Service's preliminary determination that this HCP qualifies as “low-effect,” categorically excluded, under the National Environmental Policy Act.

SeaGlades at St. Andrews Bay is a 27 new home subdivision being proposed for 10.53 Acres between Pontoon Street & Triple Tail Street bordered by Hwy. 180 and Ponce de Leon Court. The habitat conservation plan addresses only the Endangered Alabama Beach Mouse and Sea Turtles. Addition of 27 new home subdivision will impact the area significantly in many other ways.

On September 21, 2020, the public comment period will end regarding the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s consideration of an application from SeaGlades at St. Andrew Bay for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act. The applicant is requesting the ITP to take the federally

listed Alabama beach mouse incidental to construction of twenty-seven single family homes and amenities in Baldwin County, Alabama on a 10.53-acre parcel in Baldwin County, Alabama. The application has included a proposed habitat conservation plan and FWS' preliminary determination that this HCP qualifies as "low-effect," categorically excluded, under the National Environmental Policy Act. The applicant is requesting a 50-year ITP to take Alabama beach mice through the conversion of approximately 2.58 acres of occupied Alabama beach mouse habitat incidental to the proposed construction of 27 single-family homes with amenities located on a 10.53-acre parcel in Baldwin County, Alabama. The applicant proposes to minimize and mitigate for take of the Alabama beach mouse through standard minimization, mitigation measures, and monitoring onsite population of the species with fall and spring trapping surveys (twice a year) for the next 50 years.

For further Information about this application, you may contact: Mr. William Lynn by telephone at (251) 441-5868 or via email at William.Lynn@fws.gov.

If you wish to submit a comment, you may do so in writing by any of the following methods:

- *Online:* <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2020-0089.
- *U.S. Mail:* Public Comments Processing, Attn: Docket No. FWS-R4-ES-2020-0089; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MS: PRB/3W, 5275 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803.

Hurricane Season Started 1 June ~~~~~

A reminder that the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane season runs from 1 June through November 30. The following National Weather Service link, <https://www.weather.gov/safety/hurricane-plan> , has useful preparedness information and links to help you prepare your family and property in advance of Tropical Storm / Hurricanes. Another good resource is The Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency Disaster Guide which is located at <http://www.mirabelsmagazinecentral.com/digitaledition/index.html?id=54d983ab-e579-4484-b408-3e1cfcbb7a34> . Preparedness is the key to limit loss of life and property.

Upcoming Events/ Community Support Opportunities in Fort Morgan:

Fort Morgan Parkway Bike Trail Extension ~~~~~

The State has contracted Volker to build the Bike Trail Extension. A Public Meeting is being scheduled by Volkert in the near future. The purpose for the meeting is for Volkert to gather input on design and location. More information will be disseminated to FMCA members as information on the date and location become available.

Share the Beach ~~~~~

Turtle nesting season started May 1st. Please be aware that outside lights hinder the nesting process of female turtles. If you own directly on the beach please consider checking into turtle friendly lights. Contact Alabama Coastal Foundation or US Fish and Wildlife for details. Make sure to fill in holes and take up beach equipment at night to prevent disruption or harm to nesting sea turtles.

Fort Morgan State Historic Site ~~~~~

Please check for current updates on daily operations / park entry procedures at Facebook (Fort Morgan State Historic Site) and website <http://www.fort-morgan.org> .

The trails at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge are currently open to the public. Although Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge's Visitor Center is closed to the public, the office can be reached by calling 251-540-7720 or emailing bonsecour@fws.gov, messages will be returned as soon as possible. For a new way to explore the trails at Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge print out the Discovery Journal booklet at the Refuge's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/BonSecourNWR/>) . Please tag us with your journal discoveries, we would love to see what you are uncovering!

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

**Diary of the Storm – September 26-17, 1906 – Continued from August newsletter
Maude M. Midgette, November 1st 1912**

While Papa was out on the porch watching the changes in the wind, he saw someone coming down the beach with a light and this soon proved to be Pilot Alex Johnston coming from the Ladnier house (where he had brought his family in the early part of the night) for he thought it more safe in that part of the Cove as the land was much wider. He was trying to make his way down to his father's house (which was the next house below us) but even then (his Father and family) they were cut off from us entirely, and he came back the second time and called to Papa to bring us all out of the house (we now occupied) as quickly as he (Papa) could, for we were being washed away and knew nothing whatever of it.

When we came out of the house and stepped off the gallery, we were in water waist deep. It was then about 2 a.m. so we made our way through salt water from the Gulf, blinding rain, and fiercely blowing wind. Oh! Shall I ever forget the roaring and howling wind as it swept past us, threatening every moment to hurl us into eternity. The night was one of intense darkness which made it appear all the worse. We started out with a lighted lantern to guide us on our short but perilous journey to the next house, but we had not gone more than a dozen steps when a heavy gust of wind came and extinguished the light, then waist deep in water we were left in total darkness, and from there on we had to grope our way catching hold of fences, bushes or in fact anything with which our hands came in contact.

Finally, we reached the Ladnier home, and Oh! What joy to see so many familiar faces once more. One of the boys who had been on the front porch watching the storm came in the room and said: I think we had all better kneel and offer up some prayers to God to spare our lives, as I am almost sure we have only a few short hours on this earth. That (I am sure) was not very encouraging to be told we were facing death, tho he voiced our thoughts and was the only one to bravely stand there and tell to the rest of the crowd what we each and all feared. While we were all kneeling in prayer, we could hear the logs and drift from the Gulf as it rushed past under the house on its mad way to the Bay. That night is one to be remembered and it is a miracle how we were all saved, and a great wonder why some one of us had not lost our mind in such a terrible time, but everyone was composed, even the "wee babies" did not make an attempt to cry.

We heard the kitchen when it was parted from the house, and sounded just as though someone were chopping it away; not until the house began to tremble and shake did someone say: Let's leave the house and go to the hill near-by, all the while praying God to spare us our lives. Had we remained in the house but a few moments longer we would all of us have been crushed to death. The house had settled in the middle, thus causing the doors to jamb, and the men had to beat them down or else we would have perished in the house.

The shrieks of everyone as we left the now fast falling house was heartrending to hear. We ran out of the front door and down the length of the gallery and jumped the balusters, then found ourselves in the water. The men removed a panel of the fence (which was still standing) as we could reach the hill, that being the only dry piece of land left in sight. We did not have but a short distance to go after the fence was broken down; still we could scarcely retain our feet. When we reached the hill, we all sat

down in a heap and held on to one another, for fear the wind would blow us away. The wind was blowing so hard until we had to raise our voices to the very highest pitch, so as to be heard by one another.

The wind was deafening, and the sand almost blinded us as we sat there in utter darkness expecting every moment to be our last; although we were earnestly praying God to spare us our lives. Just imagine: with scarcely enough wraps to keep us warm, and each and all bare-headed we sat there on that awful, awful night, the memory of which is still fresh as tho it had happened yesterday; and Oh! how we prayed for daylight to appear so we could see our surroundings, tho we almost knew what they would be. If only the moon had appeared, what a welcome sight it would have been. Almost anything would have been welcomed to dispel this awful darkness on such a night.

When daylight did appear, it was then five-thirty, and it was welcomed by us as it had never been before. The piece of ground to which we went for safety was about twenty feet square and we had to remain there from four o'clock Thursday morning (that being the time when we came out of the house) until Friday evening, with the Gulf water not more than three feet back of us, and the waters of the bay almost washing our feet, it was that close. Such a time!! I for one do not care to experience again.

We could almost feel ourselves struggling in the water, and we were so cold and numb from sitting so long in one position, in fact we were almost afraid to move until someone suggested that we should all get up out of our uncomfortable positions and get some exercise; and we were a happy and joyful crowd when we found that we could stand without clinging to something for support, as the wind had subsided a great deal.

Next came the question of something to eat (the smallest children, in fact everyone was getting real hungry). We could not as much as get a fresh drink of water; it being mixed with the brine from the Gulf and bay but we had to drink it. The first thing that we had to eat being some oranges that had blown from the trees onto our little island, next we found some Irish potatoes and they were roasted and eaten; then someone found an egg (just think of it "one egg") and it was soon cooked and given to the smallest children.

Finally, someone ventured back into the half-fallen house, and when they appeared again, they had with them twenty-one jars of preserves which he had fished out of the water (which now covered half of the house) and oh! They were surely nice, and as we had to use our fingers as forks, they tasted all the nicer.

To be continued in the October FMCA newsletter. *Thanks to Chan West, long time Fort Morgan resident and FMCA member for this submission.*

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