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G A L V E S T O N C O U N T Y

The Daily News.

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GOVERNMENT | CITY HALL DRAMA

La Marque plans next steps after city manager controversy



KEITH BELL



J.B. PRITCHETT

By LAUREN FRICK  
The Daily News  
» LA MARQUE  
The city council Monday night discussed its next steps after two city manager resignations in the first half of the year. The council discussed the mat-

ter in executive session at its Monday meeting, unanimously voting to authorize Mayor Keith Bell and Mayor Pro Tem Joe Compian to engage third party firms to find an interim city manager. "I think the sentiment on the dais after executive session was the idea that we should definitely

move toward an interim city manager for the foreseeable future because the city is in need of a reset in our city manager position, and the staff is in need of healing, and this is going to be a process," Bell said. "One of the most important parts of that process, in my

understanding of what the council is asking, is to recruit a seasoned city manager who understands that they will serve the people of La Marque for a specified time, and that they would also have the understanding that their primary

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GALVESTON LIFE | SHRIMPING IN THE GALVESTON SHIP CHANNEL



Birds flock to the Santana in search of a free meal Monday as the shrimp boat turns into the Galveston Ship Channel.

JENNIFER REYNOLDS/The Daily News

POLICE | COLLISION FATALITY

Off-duty officer dies in Dickinson motorcycle crash

By SAGE SCOTT  
The Daily News  
» DICKINSON

Larry Blacksmith, a Lakeview police officer, died at 2:11 p.m. Tuesday after he was hit by a car at about noon Tuesday while

riding his motorcycle to work on FM 517. "He was a part of our family, a protector of our community, and a kind soul who brought light to those around him," Lakeview police said in a post on Facebook. "Officer Black-

smith will never be forgotten." The driver of the car was trying to catch up and join a funeral procession when it hit Blacksmith's motorcycle near the FM 517 ramp onto Interstate

See OFFICER » A7

GOVERNMENT | RECALL

Recall effort against La Marque councilman falls short

By LAUREN FRICK  
The Daily News  
» LA MARQUE

City Secretary Kierra Nance on Tuesday declared a recall effort against Councilman Joseph Lowry dead after the effort fell eight signatures short of initiating a recall. In a letter to city council and the petitioner, Hayley Winkelmann, Nance said only 183 signatures submitted were identified and verified as registered District C voters, falling short of the 191 valid signatures required for the recall.



JOSEPH LOWRY



HAYLEY WINKELMANN

The Galveston County Elections Division conducted the verification of the signatures, Nance said. "I want to thank the voters of District C for standing with me and rejecting the false narratives

See RECALL » A7

POLICE | SEARCH WARRANT

La Marque police seize phones from Texas City staffer

By LAUREN FRICK  
The Daily News  
» TEXAS CITY

The La Marque Police Department on Monday executed a search warrant at City Hall, 1801 Ninth Ave. N., in connection to the investigation of a city employee for the online impersonation of La Marque City Councilman Joseph Lowry.

The department confiscated two cellphones belonging to one city employee while executing the warrant, Deputy Chief Chad Waggoner said. Waggoner wouldn't say what city employee the phones belonged to, but did say it's possible more charges in the online impersonation investigation will be

See WARRANT » A7

TECHNOLOGY | MEDICAL RESEARCH

China-sponsored hacker accused of targeting UTMB

By LAURA ELDER  
The Daily News  
» GALVESTON

The University of Texas Medical Branch confirms it was among U.S. universities targeted by a hacker who stole crucial Covid-19 research at the behest of the Chinese government. "The University of Texas Medical Branch is grateful to the FBI and all involved law enforcement agencies for their diligence in pursuing this investi-

gation," the medical branch said in a statement. "We can confirm that UTMB was among the universities targeted; however, because this matter remains an active, ongoing investigation by the FBI and other authorities, we are unable to provide further comment at this time." Xu Zewei, 33, and alleged co-conspirator Zhang Yu, 44, were directed by China's

See HACKER » A7

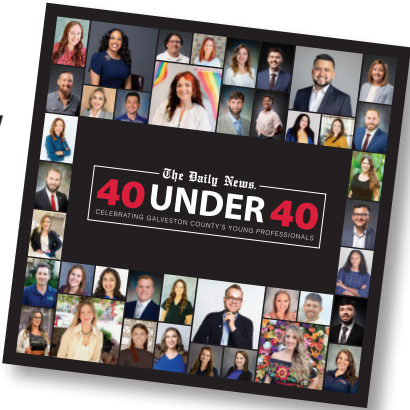
INSIDE TODAY



LIVING: Creamy burrata, BLT fixins' and spicy peanut sauce star in easy summer meals » B1

INSIDE TODAY

Meet the Galveston County movers and shakers selected for recognition in The Daily News' 40 Under 40.



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