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Coast Monthly celebrates warm, cozy atmospheres and simple pleasures by the sea.



AVIATION | DEADLY PLANE CRASH

Fishing trip turns into rescue at plane crash site

By DAVID MERCADO
The Daily News

» GALVESTON

A Monday fishing trip for brothers Todd and Thad Donalson, who live in Cypress, turned into a rescue in Galveston Bay as they raced through fog to pull survivors from an airplane wreck just 100 yards from the causeway. Todd, Thad, Todd Donalson's 14-year-old daughter Ava, and Thad's 9-year-old son Maxwell

had set out on Thad's 18-foot boat about noon. The day already was foggy but it soon thickened, cutting visibility to barely 20 yards, Todd Donalson said. Maxwell was the first to notice something was wrong when a plane appeared unusually low over the water about 3 p.m., Todd Donalson said. "Why is that plane so low?" Maxwell asked, as the aircraft

See CRASH » A5



SKY VON DECKER/Courtesy Todd Donalson, front left, his daughter, Ava, and nephew, Maxwell, watch emergency personnel work to recover victims of a medical transport plane after it crashed into Galveston Bay on Tuesday, from aboard his brother Thad Donalson's boat. Donalson and his brother were among the boaters that assisted in the initial rescue and recovery effort after the crash.

LAW ENFORCEMENT | PUBLIC SAFETY

Fireworks rules vary by city across Galveston County



STUART VILLANUEVA/The Daily News

Curtis Richardson hangs a flag from an awning while setting up his fireworks stand along state Highway 3 in Dickinson on Friday.

By COREY GREINEISEN
The Daily News

As residents prepare to ring in the New Year, officials across Galveston County are reminding the public that fireworks regulations differ sharply by city, with most municipalities continuing to prohibit consumer fireworks and only a handful allowing limited use during specific holiday windows. Under Texas law, consumer fireworks may be sold statewide through New Year's Day, but cities are authorized to impose stricter rules on their use. As a result, what is legal in one part of the county may be illegal just a short distance away. League City remains one of the few cities in Galveston County that allows limited fireworks use for New Year's. The city permits the discharge of consumer fireworks from sunset New Year's Eve until 1 a.m. New Year's Day, subject to multiple conditions. Only standard consumer fireworks are allowed, operators must be at least 18 years old,



STUART VILLANUEVA/The Daily News

Curtis Richardson prices fireworks while setting up his stand along state Highway 3 in Dickinson on Friday.

and fireworks may not be discharged near schools, churches, hospitals or other restricted facilities. Fireworks sales aren't allowed within League City limits. The city of Dickinson allows fireworks use during expanded New Year's holiday hours. According to the Dickinson Fire

Marshal's Office, fireworks are permitted from 9 a.m. to 1 a.m. on New Year's Eve and from 9 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. on New Year's Day. Officials emphasized that fireworks outside those times remain prohibited. In contrast, the city of Galveston maintains a year-round ban

See FIREWORKS » A8

MARITIME | DILAPIDATED YACHT

Yacht grounded in Galveston troubling nearby businesses

By MASON H. LERNER
The Daily News

» GALVESTON

For well more than a year, a dilapidated 30-foot yacht has been aground just north of Interstate 45 near 61st Street. It sits right in the city's gateway, rotting into

Offatts Bayou and greeting thousands of drivers each day. The boat — Acta from Houston, according to its stern paint — washed ashore during Hurricane Beryl in July 2024, but the mystery of who owns it and

See YACHT » A5



STUART VILLANUEVA/The Daily News file photo

A derelict cabin cruiser, the Acta, rests on the rocks on the shore of Offatts Bayou in Galveston in August 2024.

ECONOMY | US GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Resilient US consumers drive strongest economic expansion in 2 years

By MATT OTT
Associated Press

» WASHINGTON

The U.S. economy grew at a surprisingly strong 4.3 percent annual rate in the third quarter, the most rapid expansion in two years, driven by consumers who continue to spend in the face of ongoing inflation. U.S. gross domestic product from July through September — the economy's total output of goods and services — rose from its 3.8 percent growth rate in the April-June quarter, the



MATT ROURKE/AP file photo People shop at the Christmas Village in Philadelphia, in Philadelphia on Dec. 10.

Commerce Department said

See CONSUMERS » A5