By JOHN WAYNE FERGUSON
The Daily News

Bruce LePard was among the first people to arrive at the American National Tower in downtown Galveston on the morning of May 4. He and some of the company’s maintenance staff were among the first to see the carnage that had happened the night before.

A spring storm had forced a flock of birds down from their normal migrating altitude. Either because of whipping winds or a decaying light, about 400 birds had slammed into the side of the building. They fell dead into the plaza below. They were found the next morning, and the story quickly spread beyond Galveston. Photos taken by Galveston Animal Control officers appeared in The Washington Post and other major news outlets. American National Insurance Co., normally a quiet presence on the island, found itself in the center of attention, said LePard, a senior vice president at the company.

“We started receiving calls from all around the world,” he said. People wanted American National to do something in response to the incident, the first of its kind at the 45-year-old building, as far as anyone could remember.

The company wanted to help, he said. “Birds have always been in our history,” LePard said. The company’s logo is an eagle, he pointed out.

The may incident has left local Galveston gathering ideas to protect birds
See BIRDS » A6