REMEMBERING A LEGEND:

Marilyn Monroe

BY KALI GELDIS
The Herald-Dispatch
kaligeldis@herald-dispatch.com

HUNTINGTON — She made the beauty mark beautiful, subway grate sexy and diamonds a girl's best friend.

The iconic Marilyn Monroe is undeniably a part of American pop culture, starting in today's acclaimed movies like "Some Like It Hot" and "The Seven Year Itch." Monroe's appeal, however, reaches far beyond the silver screen, affecting art, music and even merchandise.

Huntington will be a part of that cultural experience, following the opening of the Huntington Museum of Art's "Life as a Legend: Marilyn Monroe," an exhibit that will run through Sept. 5. The collection of artwork inspired by the blonde bombshell "traces the art of her celebrity." Please see EXHIBIT/4A

Gallery done in typical Marilyn Monroe fashion

BY ANTHONY PINKSTON
The Herald-Dispatch
anpinkston@herald-dispatch.com

HUNTINGTON — An event hosted by the Huntington Museum of Art was done in what many would say is typical Marilyn Monroe fashion.

Before attending the museum, guests walked a red carpet, complete with the media taking pictures and television coverage. Along with a woman asking for every guest's autograph, those in front of the carpet were three BMW convertibles with a size Marilyn Monroe figure in one of the back seats.

About 200 guests, both young and old dressed in tuxedos and gowns, attended the premiere party of "Life as a Legend: Marilyn Monroe" Friday evening. The exhibit displays 240 paintings, prints and photographs of the sad, tragic and happy times of Monroe's life. It takes a look at one of America's pop icons through the eyes of dozens of famous artists such as Andy Warhol, Peter Blake, Richard Avedon and Henri Cartier-Bresson. The museum is hosting the show from International Arts and Artists, a touring company located in Washington, D.C. The exhibit is based out of Artesa, an art museum in Hamburg. Please see GALLERY/4A

Cross-medium crash backs up Interstate 64

BY ROBERT JOHNSON
The Herald-Dispatch
robertjohnson@herald-dispatch.com

A cross-medium accident seriously injured a U.S. Navy sailor Friday morning on a mile stretch of Interstate 64 where no cable barriers have been installed.

The crash, which happened near the Rutland-Cabell County line, forced officials to close the interstate for almost two hours. That caused significant congestion and contributed to two secondary-accident accidents.

The first accident occurred at 6:07 a.m., when Thomas Michael Noonan, 21, was traveling home to Loganville, Ga., when the accident occurred. He was on a five-day leave and was scheduled for 60 days at sea. The U.S. Navy lists him as a boatswain's mate seaman recruit.

Noonan was airlifted to St. Mary's Medical Center. Officials listed him in fair condition Friday evening.

Milford Police Chief George Mulline said Noonan's crash was the Milford area's most serious interstate accident since cable barriers were installed west of the Milford exit. A recent cross-medium accident 2001 and 2002 prompted state to install the cable barriers along sections of I-64 but some areas still don't have the barriers.

He said investigators believe Noonan fell asleep at the wheel, about a quarter mile east of the intersection.

The child said he then traveled a short distance in the median, before the vehicle struck the media guardrail embankment.

That impact sent Noonan airborne and into an embankment, which was driven Charles Thomas, 30, of Altona. The truck driver said he swerved his rig into the right lane to avoid serious impact.

"I did what I could," Thomas said. "I was just scared. I was more worried about him than I was myself." Noonan's vehicle had a damaged impact with Thomas' vehicle, and then hit a tree that struck the left rear of the truck. That flattened one of the bars.
Exhibit
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said Associate Curator Cate Hammond. "The exhibition deal with issues be- one particular movie star. It talks about how we as Amer- cians food off of celebrities. It has to do with how people look for Cinemedia stories."

The obsession with this star runs deep within American pop culture, starting with her film career and expanding after her untimely death.

Some of the most recogniz- able depictions of Monroe are Andy Warhol's famous screen prints that were pro- duced shortly after the star- ler's death from an overdose on barbiturates in 1962. It wasn't until after her death that the real fascination sur- rounding Monroe began, according to Robert Thompson, founding director of the Bleier Center for Television and Popular Culture at Syracuse University.

Thompson said Monroe's ties, both rumored and docu- mented, with Robert and John F. Kennedy make her life, and her death, fascinating to many.

"She died very young under very mysterious circum- stances. There's a certain kind of martyrdom that gets attached to her, especially with the schmaltzy (Elton John) song 'Candle in the Wind' that would have been enough, but on top of that she's tied into the big- gest conspiracy of all time, the Kennedy, "Thompson said.

The public's infatuation with Monroe is what sparked the exhibition at the museum, but that's not the only place in Huntington to see Mon- roe's influence on American culture.

Denene Chafin, the owner of the accessory shop in Pullman Square, she said, sells many items, including purses, watches, touching bags, vanity trays and even wine decanters, that depict the famous blonde. Chafin attributes Monroe's popularity to her ability to stand out in a crowd.

"I think she's probably better on her looks. She was always the most of a rebel, always more different," Chafin said.

Chafin said the customers who shop at her store for Monroe items are of all different, displaying the movie star's wide appeal. "Sharri Botter, a former Huntington resident, said she sees Monroe's iconic figure reaching younger generations. Her daughter hung a poster of the screen icon in her room in college and saw an original of Monroe's movies.

"She became the stereotype and the prototype of Hollywood glamour and beauty," Thompson said.

Monroe's beauty mark, blue eyes and red lips have become such a cliche, "Thompson said, that her predecessors have become parodies of the legend.

"Annie Nicole Smith was Marilyn's what a 'Saturday Night Live' sketch is to what we are putting on," Thompson says.

Chafin, however, said she takes Monroe's influence on her business very seri- ously. The best-sellers of Monroe's store in Chafin's store have always been items that depict other Monroe or another icon, Elvis Presley.

"She's a very commercial person," Chafin said. "You just couldn't do a celebrity store without Marilyn."

Gallery
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Germany.

John Gillispie, public relations director for the museum, said he was ready about the exhibition coming to Huntington because it is only touring eight U.S. venues.

"It's received a lot of positive feed- back from the community and I think this will also draw some tourists to our city as well," he said.

Courtney Dedea moved to Hunt- ington from North Carolina about a year ago. She said that having such a big exhibit come to Huntington is great because there hasn't been anything like this before.

"I also love to live in Florida and they have huge exhibits like this one," she said. "So when I heard about the Monroe exhibit coming to Huntington, I became very excited."

Aside from the allure of Monroe, Dedea said she enjoys Warhol's prints and that's what drew her to the event.

Huntington native Lee Huffman said he can remember watching his first Monroe movie 12 years ago. "Around that time, there was still a lot of speculation on how she (Mon- roe) died, who politically she was tied to and her affairs," he said.

Huffman added that Monroe represented a critical era in television and at the same time, had government official ties as well. Delighted by the exhibit's arrival, Ann Wheeler said her connection to Monroe is that her daughter's birth- day, June 1, is the same day as the famous icon's birthday.

"This is great because people don't realize sometimes what Huntington has to offer," she said. "I think under- stood all of the media coverage she received, she was a very intelligent woman."

The exhibit will open to the public today. The museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The museum also will show three Monroe movies in the Grace Radda Auditorium.

England appointed to recreation board

Mixed match great styles starting at

2 great chairs