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DECEMBER 18-19, 2010

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THE BEST BURGERS IN SANTA MONICA
 SEE PAGE 7

Santa Monica Daily Press

We have you covered

THE CONTINUE TO DRIVE SAFELY ISSUE



IT'S A WRAP

The Santa Monica Place Community Room was filled Thursday as volunteers wrapped gifts donated by community members for the annual Police Activities League (PAL) Christmas Breakfast to be held Saturday, Dec. 18.

Brandon Wise brandonw@smdp.com

SMPD: A year without a deadly traffic accident

BY KEVIN HERRERA
 Editor in Chief

CITYWIDE For the first time in a long time, Santa Monica experienced no fatal traffic accidents over the last 12 months, a remarkable statistic given the volume of vehicle trips that take place in this bustling city by the sea, authorities said.

Santa Monica Police Department Investigator Chris Dawson, who handles

traffic accidents, said the last fatal traffic accident occurred on Dec. 15 of last year when an 82-year-old pedestrian was struck by a truck while crossing the street at the intersection of 18th Street and California Avenue. The driver, a resident from Torrance, was traveling west on California Avenue when he made a left turn and struck the pedestrian. No charges were filed in the incident.

"This is very rare," Dawson said of the absence of a fatal traffic accident. "The last

time we came close was the year of the Farmer's Market crash. If that wouldn't have happened we wouldn't have had any fatalities."

The July 2003 Farmer's Market crash involving an elderly man who killed 10 people and injured more than 70 others was one of the deadliest traffic accidents in state history.

Dawson credits the drop in fatal accidents to educational campaigns about driv-

SEE ACCIDENTS PAGE 8

State recognizes Olympic High as 'model' campus

BY NICK TABOREK
 Daily Press Staff Writer

LINCOLN BLVD Olympic High School, which offers programs designed for students who have struggled to stay in school, has been named a 2011 Model Continuation High School by State Superintendent Jack O'Connell, making it one of 27 schools to receive the honor.

"We at Olympic are delighted to have our school and staff recognized for the instruction and support provided to students on our small campus," said Olympic Principal Janie Yuguchi Gates.

The school's Academic Performance Index score has increased from 256 during the 2005-2006 school year to 657 last year, according to Gates.

SEE SCHOOL PAGE 10

State regulators OK incentives to cut greenhouse gases

BY JASON DEAREN
 Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. Hoping other states will follow suit, California regulators overwhelmingly approved the nation's most extensive system giving owners of power plants, refineries and other major polluters financial incentives to emit fewer greenhouse gases.

The Air Resources Board voted 9-1 Thursday to pass the key piece of California's 2006 climate law — called AB32.

"We're inventing this," said Mary Nichols, chairwoman of the state's air quality board. "There is still going to be quite a bit of action needed before it becomes operational."

Officials said they hope that other states will follow the lead of the world's eighth largest economy. State officials also are dis-

SEE GREEN PAGE 12

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DEATH

FROM PAGE 3

stemmed from cultural differences between the U.S. and Korea.

Lee recently turned 19, and the teen who was arrested was the only Korean boy who attended a birthday party, Stark said. Lee was described as a gifted singer and drummer, while the 17-year-old was a good athlete.

Both teens, who were sophomores, were expected to finish their high school education in the U.S.

On Friday, students at the school in Sylmar, an area of the San Fernando Valley, attended a worship service in memory of Lee — the same day as the school's annual Christmas party, before they begin a two-week holiday break. Several students declined to comment as they left the campus.

Lee's locker was adorned with notes and a necklace bearing a cross. Students also posted messages on Facebook and Twitter, expressing their sorrow over what had happened.

"We are just trying to protect our kids right now," said Stark.

SCHOOL

FROM PAGE 1

"The situations our students are in where they need to come to a school like ours isn't always the student's fault," she said. "We really benefit from a community that is supportive of these students and doesn't just condemn them and say that they have made mistakes. It really is a perfect environment for us and for our kids."

From the Santa Monica Police Department, which co-teaches a criminal justice class, to St. John's Hospital, which, along with the city of Santa Monica, provides counseling services, to the Santa Monica-Malibu Education Foundation, which pays for a music instructor, Gates said the broader community plays a big role in helping provide opportunities for Olympic students.

"We are thrilled that Olympic High School has been recognized as an outstanding continuation high school," said Sally Chou, the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District's chief academic officer. "Olympic provides opportunities for students who need a smaller environment, more individualized attention and a myriad of electives to keep them engaged and challenged."

Continuation education is aimed at

teenagers who are deemed at risk of not completing their education.

In a press release, O'Connell said the selected continuation campuses offer programs that should be emulated at the hundreds of other similar schools around the state.

"They help young people realize that getting a good education and earning a high school diploma is their chance toward leading a better and more prosperous life," he said of the 2011 model campuses.

The Model Continuation High School Recognition Program is a partnership of the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Continuation Education Association (CCEA).

To be eligible for the recognition, applicants must be accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges — a designation Olympic achieved in June. They also must demonstrate exemplary program effectiveness in school management, curriculum, instructional strategies, educational climate, and guidance and counseling. As part of the application for recognition, parents, students, and community members were required to submit written statements supporting their respective schools by September. Site validation visits occurred in October and November

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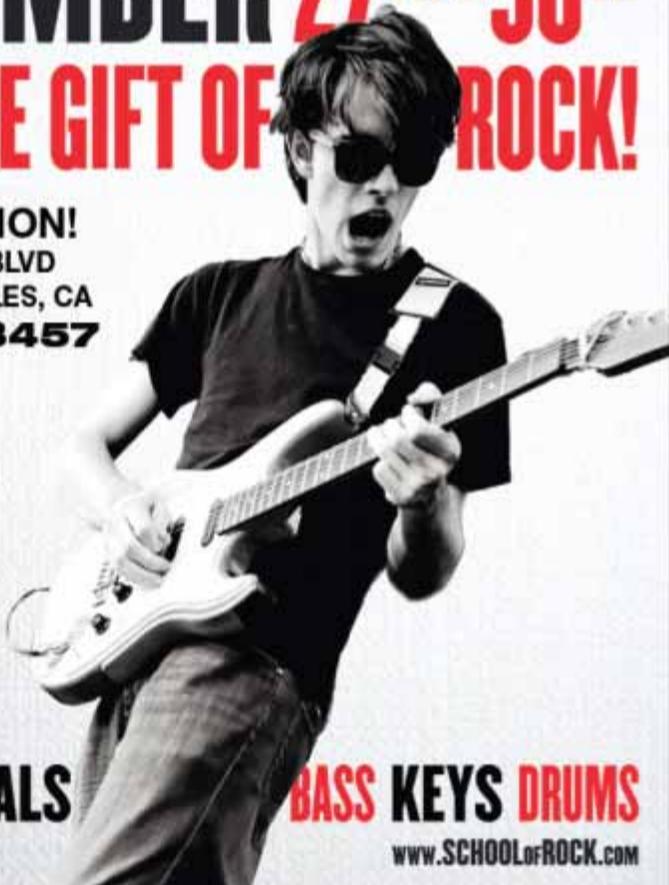
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