

# Peak of holiday enjoyment



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Morgan Wallace, 7, of Corralitos, whose parents drove him up to Summit Road for a White Christmas, hurls a snowball.

## Rare snowfall brings hills White Christmas

From staff and wire reports

A rare midday snowfall brought a White Christmas to the Santa Cruz Mountains, dusting county summits with up to 4 inches of the white stuff and blanketing the hillsides as low as Boulder Creek.

The wet snow brought carloads of Christmas sightseers journeying up the highways to build snowmen and throw snowballs. A few of the drivers added to their Christmas bills by getting stuck in the snow and having

to call tow trucks.

Most of the snow melted by the afternoon, though a few patches remained at the higher elevations.

The snow was part of a cold front that filled the sky with majestic clouds billowing from black bellies to rose-tipped crowns, contrasting against the ragged patches of blue sky.

Christmas was also one of the coldest days in the past several years, according to weatherman Ronald MacDonald, as the temperature reached only 46 degrees. About

a quarter inch of rain also fell in Santa Cruz, bringing the season total to 11.27 inches. Normal for this date is 9.71 inches.

Elsewhere in the state, the steep Grapevine stretch of Interstate 5 was closed by snowfall in the Cajon Pass, snarling holiday traffic until officers began escorting groups of motorists through the treacherous pass Sunday night, said California Highway Patrol Officer Bob Weaver.

"The snow is really coming down," Weaver said. "It makes for especially hazardous conditions at night when visibility drops down to almost nothing. Whether it has to be closed again depends totally on Mother Nature."

Highway 58 over Tehachapi Pass was also closed because of heavy snowfall and a snow advisory was posted for Owens Valley and north-

ern deserts.

Light snow briefly fell on mountaintops overlooking San Francisco, but most was gone by Christmas morning. Snow was reported on Twin Peaks, which stand 910 feet above sea level, and several other similar-sized urban mountains.

Today was expected to bring mostly sunny skies although temperatures were forecast to remain cool.

Area rainfall reports for 24 hours ending at 6 p.m. Sunday and including the season's totals (since July 1) and those of last year at this time, are as follows:

	24 hr.	Sea.	'87 to date
Aptos	.24	9.71	8.42
Bonny Doon	.53	19.92	17.85
Capitola	.28	18.62	12.85
Santa Cruz	.21	11.27	9.63
Soquel	.21	11.97	10.7
Swanton	.50	11.93	11.9
Watsonville	na	7.28	5.9

### REFERENCE





# Winter wonderland



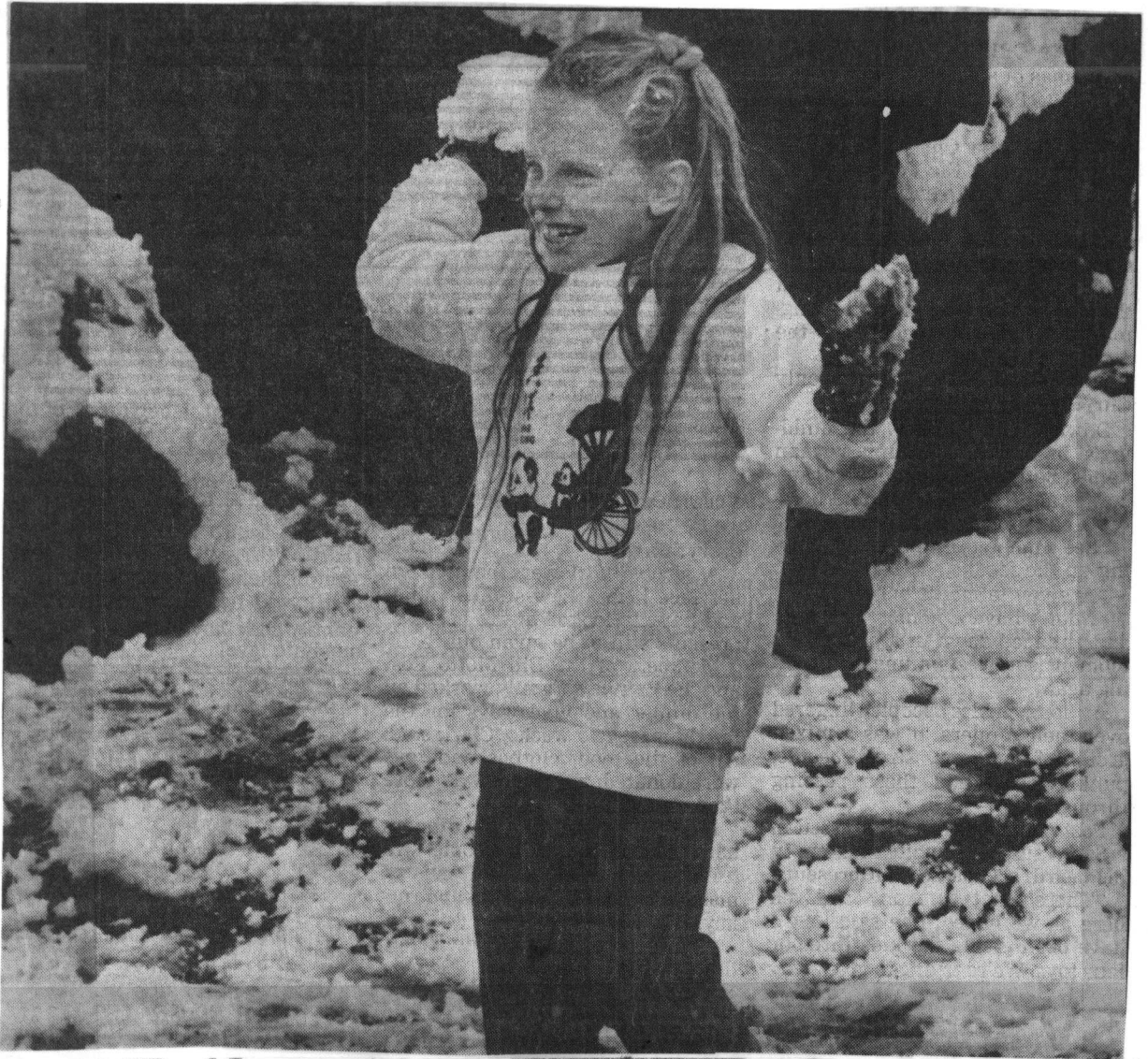
Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

A fading greeting of "Merry Christmas" is scrawled onto a car's windshield near Loma Prieta.



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

The Summit Road area had the hint of a winter wonderland.



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

Michell Yeo, 8, of Los Gatos celebrates Christmas by throwing a Santa Cruz Mountains snowbal