

# White Christmas?

## *Weather* Icy temperatures bring snow flurries

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SANTA CRUZ — Shiver

For the second straight day the Santa Cruz county area — like most other parts of Northern California — was subjected to the chilling effects of a cold mass of Alaskan air that kept temperatures in the 40s.

Sporadic snow flurries were reported during the night and early morning hours, mainly in the mountain areas.

But there were other isolated reports of snow falling briefly in Santa Cruz, Soquel and Live Oak.

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Santa Cruz weatherman Ronald MacDonald said the reports did not strain the bounds of credibility.

"In this current cold air flow you can have unstable showers," he said. "A cloud could go over one piece of land, go over somebody's house or block and miss a couple of blocks over."

MacDonald said the part of the weather system that is passing through does not contain much moisture, which means the temperature can drop much more quickly. In addition, frost is less likely with the lack of moisture, he said.

According to MacDonald, the cold air mass is due to leave the area by Tuesday. As for today, the forecast is for mostly sunny skies, but, you guessed it, continued cold.

Temperatures were expected to hit the 20s by 6 a.m., the coldest part of the day during the winter. The low Thursday morning was 29.

The record low temperature for this date is 24 degrees, reached on this day in 1968, MacDonald said.

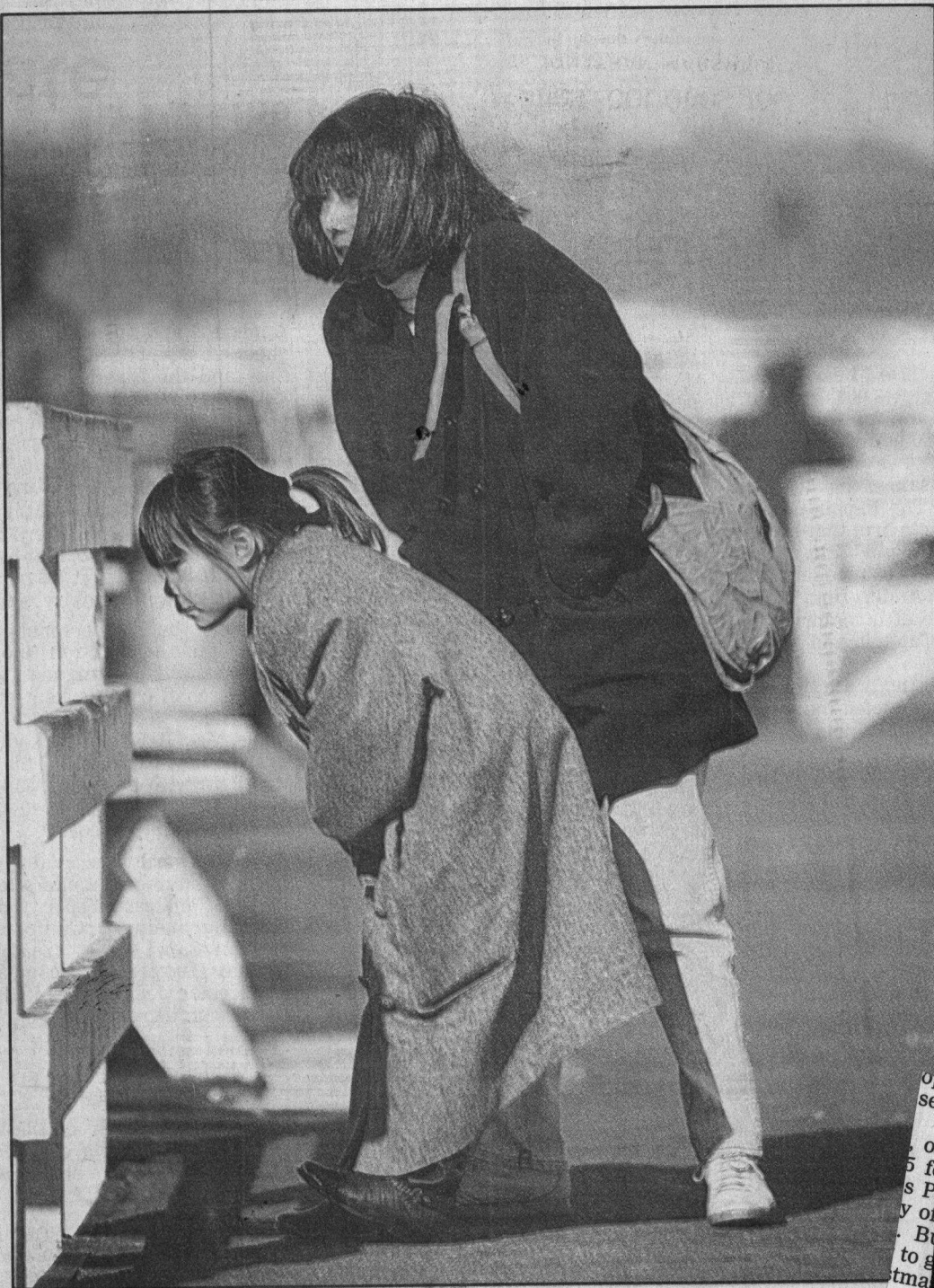
The all-time low temperature for Santa Cruz is 20 degrees, reached Jan. 20, 1922.

The streets of Santa Cruz were nearly deserted by early Thursday evening and those few who braved the elements walked swiftly and purposefully to their destinations.

Shelters for the homeless were reportedly jammed.

The River Street Shelter, always full, even during good weather, housed 30 people. There is a three-page waiting list to get inside.

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With the high only in the 40s, April and Tammy Liu of Saratoga had to bundle up to view the seals off the Municipal Wharf.

Bill Lovejoy/S