

Yes, that really was snow in Watsonville

By LARAMIE TREVINO
STAFF WRITER

Excitement levels ranged from high to low as a brief snow flurry surprised people in areas of southern Santa Cruz County and the Santa Cruz Mountains yesterday afternoon.

Yes, it really was snow that began falling just before 4 p.m. yesterday.

Watsonville airport manager Kim Wirht, who grew up in Maryland, was getting in her car as snow flakes dropped on her windshield. Wirht recognized the lazy drizzles as snow immediately.

"It was just kind of sprinkling," she said. Business went on as usual at the airport except for a quick change in runways, a routine occurrence whenever there are weather concerns, she said.

"The only thing we had to do was switch runways because of the winds," she said.

At Spa Fitness Center on Penny Lane, toddlers leaving the gym with their mothers frolicked amid falling flakes, manager Linda Barmann said.

"They didn't know what was — they thought it was great," she said.

Meanwhile at Watsonville City Hall, a maintenance worker coming in from the chilly outdoors announced the snow's arrival to office-bound workers, prompting a teenage worker in the finance department to run out and relish it.

"It was even settling in her hair," said Tana Roberts, a secretary in the city clerk's office.

Roberts, who was on the telephone at the time, said she was

See SNOW page 7 ▶

SNOW

▶ From page 1

among the many city workers, most of whom don't have sweeping vistas of the outdoors, who missed the snow show.

However, Roberts's daughter, Tristan, trying out for track at Aptos High School, got to see it, Roberts said. By the time she picked up her daughter at 6 p.m., "she was frozen," Roberts said.

While a high temperature of 60 and a low of 34 were recorded by the Watsonville Fire Department for yesterday, official agencies reported no snowfall figures. No documentation of the event was available from California Highway Patrol office in Aptos, and no rash of public or employee excitement was noted.

"Everything went on as normal," said Sgt. Ward Schuyler.

The National Weather Service reported that snowflakes and tiny bits of hail hit San Francisco yesterday for the first time in 14 years.

Bitter cold temperatures moved south along the Pacific Coast from Washington, pushing the unusually frigid winter conditions as far down as Los Angeles, which also received a light dusting of snow.

REFER