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**Local:** 'Star Wars' fans survive 22-hour, nine-movie marathon. B1

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The newspaper of Silicon Valley

# The Mercury News

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## BAY AREA WEATHER



DOUGLAS ZIMMERMAN — MARIN INDEPENDENT JOURNAL

Dealing with rain and chilly conditions, spectators watch the girls 1,600-meter race during the MCAL Track & Field Championship at San Rafael High School in San Rafael on Saturday. Moisture this time of year is generally unexpected.

# 'Classic winter storm' springs damp surprise

'Unusual' for this time of year, meteorologist says about weekend dousing that broke records — including a century-old one in San Jose — for May precipitation

By Paul Rogers

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It wasn't just your imagination. It rained a lot over the weekend in the Bay Area for this time of year. An awful lot.

Soaked by an unusually strong storm, San Jose recorded its wettest day Saturday of any day in the month of May in more than 100 years. The city received 0.67 inches — the most on any May date since 1915, and the third wettest May day since records began in 1897.

Even more fell in the East Bay.

At the Oakland Airport, the 0.73 inches Saturday ranked as the wettest day of any in May since May 20, 1957, when 1.11 inches fell, Dwight Eisenhower was president and most homes still had black-and-white TV sets.

In the Sierra Nevada, two feet of snow blanketed the mountains near Lake Tahoe over the weekend. The UC Central Sierra Snow Lab said the 26 inches that fell Sunday ranked as the snowiest day of this winter. Dozens of cars spun out, and the CHP put chain controls on Interstate 80 until the blizzard passed.

What happened?

"This was a good old-fashioned Gulf of Alaska cold front," said Jan Null, a meteorologist with Golden Gate



PETER MORNING — MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN SKI AREA VIA AP

Snow falls in Mammoth Lakes as a weekend spring storm that drenched the San Francisco Bay area and closed Northern California mountain highways also set a single-day snowfall record for the season on Sunday in the Sierra Nevada.

Weather Services in Half Moon Bay. "It was a classic winter storm. You could take the map and put a February date on it and say, 'oh that looks right.' It was not an unusual storm. But for this time of year it was unusual."

Wet weather in May is not totally unheard of in the Bay Area.

May ranks as the eighth wettest

month of the year, providing 0.7 inches on average for the month in San Francisco — about 3% of the Bay Area's yearly precipitation. More than half of the Bay Area's annual rainfall comes in December, January, and February. The only drier months than May are June, July, August and September.

STORM » PAGE 5

## 'DETERMINED' TO CLOSE THE GAP

# Department of Education hoping \$50 million grant gets student applications back on track

California families and others in U.S. have been plagued by glitches in federal system

By Molly Gibbs

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As the number of completed federal financial aid applications remains at a record low, the U.S. Department of Education has launched a \$50 million grant program to encourage more students to complete their problem-plagued forms.

"We are determined to close the FAFSA completion gap," said Cindy

Marten, deputy secretary of education. "The funding we're announcing today will support states, districts and community-based groups build capacity and leverage their power to ensure that every student who needs help paying for college turns in their FAFSA form."

For the first time in more than 40 years, the Department of Education released an overhaul of the FAFSA — the Free Application for Student Aid.

FAFSA » PAGE 5



DAI SUGANO — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Bellarmine College Preparatory senior Joshua Hernandez-Alvarado holds letters of acceptance that he received without full financial aid offers due to the delay in FAFSA processing.

## WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

# Israelis launch assault on Rafah

The attack on Gaza Strip town comes after Hamas accepts a diplomatic cease-fire proposal

By Sam Mednick, Josef Federman and Bassem Mroue

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM » Hamas announced its acceptance Monday of an Egyptian-Qatari cease-fire proposal, but Israel said the deal did not meet its "core demands" and that it was pushing ahead with an assault on the southern Gaza town of Rafah. Still, Israel said it would continue negotiations.

The high-stakes diplomatic moves and military brinkmanship left a glimmer of hope alive — but only barely — for an accord that could bring at least a pause in the 7-month-old war that has devastated the Gaza Strip. Hanging over the wrangling was the threat of an all-out Israeli assault on Rafah, a move the United States strongly opposes and that aid groups warn will be disastrous for some 1.4 million Palestinians taking refuge there.

Hamas's abrupt acceptance of the cease-fire deal came hours after Israel ordered an evacuation of some 100,000 Palestinians from eastern neighborhoods of Rafah, signaling an invasion was imminent.

Israel's War Cabinet decided to continue the Rafah operation, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said. At the same time, it said that while the proposal Hamas agreed to "is far from meeting Israel's core demands," it would send negotiators to Egypt to work on a deal.

The Israeli military said it was conducting "targeted strikes" against Hamas in eastern Rafah. Soon after, Israeli tanks entered Rafah, reaching as close as 200 meters (yards) from Rafah's crossing with neighboring Egypt, a Palestinian security official and an Egyptian official said. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press.

The Egyptian official said the operation appeared to be limited in scope. He and Hamas' Al-Aqsa TV said Israeli officials informed the Egyptians that the troops would withdraw after completing the operation. The Associated Press could

GAZA » PAGE 5

INSIDE: Protesters retake MIT encampment; Columbia cancels commencement. A4

## CALIFORNIA

# Travelers is raising its rates by 15.3% as major insurers keep citing wildfire risks

By Ethan Varian

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One of California's largest home insurers is raising rates for hundreds of thousands of state policyholders by an average of 15.3%, the latest move by a major insurer to boost homeowners' premiums in the face of growing wildfire risk.

Travelers Insurance, the state's sixth-largest home insurer as of 2022, plans to raise rates for roughly 320,320 homeowners, with some seeing hikes of more than 25% annually, according to filings with the California Insurance Department.

It was not immediately clear where in the state homeowners will see the largest increases, which could take effect as soon as June 24. On average, California homeowners pay \$1,452 a year for coverage, according to Bankrate.com, a personal finance website. The rate hikes could raise annual premiums by a few hundred dollars.

California's insurance rates are tightly regulated and, as a result, far lower than in many

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