

SNOW

place like home



Students share their experience of having snow in Palo Alto for the first time since 1976.

Photos courtesy of interviewees Story by Hannah Huang

Everyone was shocked when they heard there was snow in Palo Alto. The last time it snowed in Palo Alto was 1976, almost 50 years ago. Senior Finley Craig remembers her mom telling her about it.

"I heard stories from my mom when she grew up here saying that one time they got a couple inches up Page Mill," Craig said.

The shock quickly changed to excitement as friends, such as Ben Levav ('25) and his group, drove up to Skyline Boulevard over the weekend.

This rare snowfall allowed people to do their favorite snowy activities close to home that they would usually only be able to do in places such as Lake Tahoe.

"I was so excited, because I hadn't gone to Tahoe the whole season yet," Levav said.

Levav and his friends arrive at Russian Ridge after a fairly short drive.

"We could ski 15 minutes away from our house, but we continued driving to the top of Skyline which took an hour," Levav said.

Senior Finley Craig and her friends also went up to Russian Ridge, where they sledded, had snowball fights, and made snowmen.

What was even more surprising for students was the amount of snow. Katie Dorogusker ('23) and friends were not expecting much snow when they drove up on Alpine Road.

"But when we saw how much snow there was and that there were other people there, we used some people's sleds and ended up sledding down a big hill, which was super fun," Dorogusker said.

Craig expressed similar feelings. "Seeing the snow in person was crazy," Craig said. "Just the whole hill that is usually brown was covered in snow."

Due to climate change, of course, there may be even more snowy days in

the future.

(cutout) **POSING WITH HIS** snowboard, Ben Levav ('25) is happy he got to use his board so close to home. (left) **WALKING DOWN THE** snow covered hill, Paige Henry ('23) and Katie Dorogusker ('23) enjoy the beautiful sunset scenery in front of them. (top left) **ALL BUNDLED UP**, Hunter Aronson ('23) and friend stand on the snowy hill, looking down on something on the slope. (top right) **HIGHER UP ON** the hill, Finley Craig ('23) waits for Eoin O'Connell ('23) to make his way up. (bottom left) **CLIMBING UP THE** steep hill, Cameron Toland ('23) and Paige Henry ('23) prepare to go sledding. (bottom right) **SNOW BOARDS IN** hand, seniors Philip Santiago and Hunter Aronson pose for a quick photo before they hit the slopes.

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FINLEY CRAIG ('23)

snow
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Science teacher Nicole Loomis explains how climate change played a role in this year's snow.

Why did we experience snow in Palo Alto?

There seems to have been some arctic air that was coming down from the north. And that's probably due to an increased variability in the jet stream, which has just gotten really wavy. Instead of just sort of blowing straight around. It's starting to get really variable and so it allows for cold air to come down into places where it wouldn't normally be and it causes warm air to go up north into places where it wouldn't normally be. So you're seeing warmer temperatures in places that aren't used to that."

What does this mean for future winters and other seasons?

Well, it's hard to say. People were expecting a La Nina this year and that didn't happen really. But they're now saying the movement have a super El Nino next year, which could mean a lot more precipitation again next year if that happens, but these things are hard to predict. Climate and weather are not exactly the same thing. So climate is like 30 years worth of weather. It's an average running average over time so it's very hard to attribute one weather events to climate change, but overall if you started seeing increasing frequency of weather events then that might be attributable to climate change."



last time it snowed...

Stats from the last time it snowed in Palo Alto in 1976.

47 years ago

1-2 inches