

JAE C. HONG Associated Pres

SANTA BARBARA Police Det. Bryce Ford helps a woman out of her car on a flooded street. Fire officials in Ventura County reported that 911 dispatchers received more than 275 calls for help over a five-hour period.

# Record rain in Ventura County

Experts are stunned by the downpour, which brings flooding to many areas

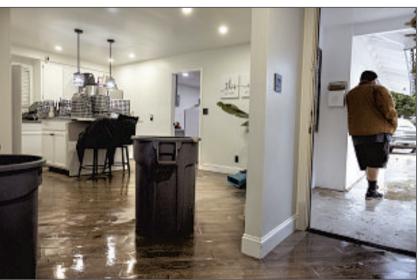
By NATHAN SOLIS. CHRISTIAN MARTINEZ AND HAYLEY SMITH

Ventura County was inundated Thursday with what forecasters described as a once-in-a-millennium rainfall that stunned experts and brought flooding to roadways and homes in several communities.

Preliminary data suggest that Oxnard experienced one of the heaviest downpours ever seen in the area, with rainfall rates of 3 inches an hour sustained for over an hour.

That amounts to a month's worth of rain in less than an hour, officials said.

"The frequency of this kind of event is on the order of once in every thousand years," meteorologist Mike Wofford with the National Weather Service in Oxnard said of the storm. In addition to the deluge in Oxnard, more than [See **Downpour**, A7]



MYUNG J. CHUN Los Angeles Times

CARLOS FLORES said about 10 inches of water entered his home on Hemlock Street in Oxnard. Wet Christmas gifts sit on a counter, left.

# California's clout at risk as population drops again

Decline has slowed in its third year, but still portends loss of funds and political power.

By Terry Castleman

For the third year in a row, California saw its population drop, raising new concerns about how the muchdiscussed exodus could hurt the state's political influ-

The state's population declined by around 37,000 people from July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2023, or 0.1%. The loss is minuscule compared with the more than 500,000 people the state lost from April 2020 to July 2022. But it still represents the sixth-largest rate of loss of any state during that time span.

Before the fiscal year from July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2021, California had never seen even one year of population decline since 1900, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

The numbers suggest California's latest exodus is slowing as the COVID-19 pandemic eases, but it still remains a concern.

Only New York, Louisiana, Hawaii, Illinois and West Virginia lost a larger share of their population over the year.

California remains the nation's most populous state by far (39.1 million), but since April 2020, its population has dropped by a total of 1.5% — the fourth most of

any state. Idaho, South Carolina and Florida have gained the most people in this period, each experiencing growth of 5% or more.

The Golden State added about 107,000 people by natural increase — the difference between births and deaths — between July 1, 2022, and July 1, 2023, according to the census data.

Additionally, foreign immigration recovered to prepandemic levels, with a net gain of more than 115,000 people. Immigration had been of concern to demographers as the state and country recorded plummeting immigration levels earlier in the pandemic.

Net domestic out-migration continued, as 260,000 more people left California for other states than moved into California from elsewhere. This number was lower than in the previous two years, when 360,000 and 295,000 more people left than arrived, respectively.

The population dip has generated much attention too much, according to some state boosters. The reasons for it vary, including remote work options made possible during the pandemic as well California's high housing costs, particularly in coastal regions. California's urban areas are still reeling as places such as downtown Los Angeles and San Francisco struggle with far fewer office workers.

And with these demographic changes, California risks losing its national [See Population, A5]

# on new California gun control law

Ban on licensed carry of firearms in many public places won't go into effect on Jan. l.

By Kevin Rector

A new California law that would bar licensed gun holders from carrying their firearms into an array of public places will not go into full effect on Jan. 1 as scheduled, after a federal judge blocked major parts of it as unconstitutional Wednes-

The law, Senate Bill 2, was part of a slate of new gun control measures passed this year by California

Democrats in response to two things: a sweeping U.S. Supreme Court ruling that reined in gun control measures nationally last year, and several high-profile mass shootings in the state this year — including in Half Moon Bay and Monterey

In his decision to block the law Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Cormac J. Carney wrote that the law's "coverage is sweeping, repugnant to the 2nd Amendment, and openly defiant of the Supreme Court."

Gov. Gavin Newsom, who signed the bill into law and has called for tougher gun restrictions in the state and at the national level, im-

[See Ruling, A7]

# Ruling puts limits | Supporting those who speak out

UC faculty members organize to defend pro-Palestinian advocates



Luis Sinco Los Angeles Times A RALLY on the UCLA campus. Faculty across the UC system are organizing to defend campus advocates for Palestinian rights who feel unsupported.

By Teresa Watanabe

University of California faculty members across the system have launched an unprecedented organizing effort to defend campus advocates for Palestinian rights who feel unsupported after reporting widespread harassment and threats triggered by the Israel-Hamas war.

The effort to form Faculty for Justice in Palestine groups is part of a national movement that has taken off at nine of the 10 UC campuses, along with Princeton, New York University and Rutgers, among others. Faculty organizers said they were propelled to act by what many described as a singularly dangerous time for academic freedom and

[See Faculty, A10]

#### Prague gunman kills at least 14

Czech Republic's worst shooting injures 25 at a university. The attacker, reportedly a student, also died. world, A3

#### Giuliani files for bankruptcy

Ex-New York mayor feeling financial strain after huge defamation verdict. NATION, A4

Weather Morning rain.

L.A. Basin: 66/54. **B6** 

#### Thieves darken 6th Street Bridge

The lights are out across a third of the photogenic viaduct after copper wiring is ripped out. CALIFORNIA, B1

#### Package stolen from your porch?

Sellers and others may be able to help. Here's what to do. **BUSINESS**, **A6** 



### Hopes for the post-'Barbenheimer' future

By J. Clara Chan AND CHRISTI CARRAS

During a theatrical decade best defined by its franchises and interconnected superhero epics, 2023 offered some hope for (semi-) original filmmaking — and was the year that "Barbenheimer" entered the lexicon.

But enthusiasm for the ongoing box office rebound was dampened by dual strikes in Hollywood that delayed a handful of highprofile movies and hobbled studios' promotional efforts, delivering a blow to overall

Thanks in part to strong showings over the summer (hi, Barbie!), the domestic box office continued its gradual recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Ticket sales in the U.S. and Canada are expected to near \$9 billion for 2023, according to studio and analyst estimates. Year-end totals are

estimated to be up 22% from total sales in 2022.

However, revenue remains down 21% from the levels reached in the prepandemic year of 2019.

Yes, several megabudget franchise installments faltered, including "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," "The Flash" and "The Marvels." But much of the broader revenue shortfall is explained by a lower total number of major theatrical movies compared with 2019,

when studios put out 105 films in wide release, according to Comscore. This year's total of 86 wide releases is down about 18% from 2019.

Multiple planned 2023 releases (Warner Bros.' "Dune: Part Two," MGM's "Challengers," Sony Pictures' "Kraven the Hunter" and the next "Ghostbusters" entry) were delayed as writers and actors hit the picket lines in pursuit of increased pay, benefits and job protec-[See Box office, A5]



Don't miss L.A.'s next big story. Download the app for breaking news notifications.



