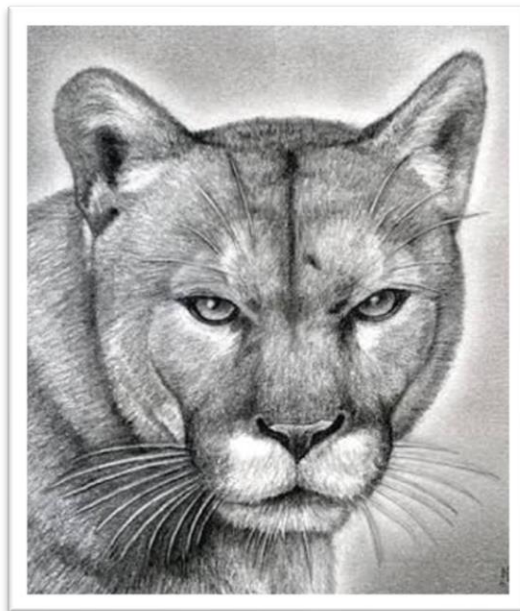




Silver Panther Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2022 | Vol 13 Issue 1



Executive Board Members

Patty Bausch, David Peck, John Balisciano Jr., Martha Leland, Susan Bilansky, Anthony Gesnaldo, Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez,

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Hello and thank you for taking the time to read this edition of the “Silver Panther”, a newsletter brought to you by the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils (SCPRC) and The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP).

This Newsletter is designed to keep you abreast of the current issues that affect you, the residents of Connecticut nursing facilities.

We invite you to contact us with suggestions of articles you would like to see in future issues, or best practices your facility is using. You may contact us through Email at LTCOP@CT.GOV or by telephone at [1-866-388-1888](tel:1-866-388-1888).



Letter from the State Ombudsman

Hello Residents,

Change is in the air and life as we know it is getting back to a more normal pace. This time last year there was a more ominous feeling of WINTER IS COMING! However, this year I am looking forward to brighter days and the sun glistening off any snow we may get. Most individuals in our long-term care communities have been vaccinated and even received boosters of the vaccination. My Office is strongly suggesting that you speak to your medical provider about your vaccination needs and access to booster.

With the overwhelming response to the vaccine and boosters, on November 11, 2021, CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) released revised guidance that allows for visitation for ALL residents at ALL times. There are still infection prevention measures in place to help support residents living in long term care, but we see this as a move in the direction of fully restoring residents' rights.

I also wanted to have an opportunity to give you all an update on what is happening at a state and federal level. Since the beginning of the pandemic there has been an increased level of energy and attention regarding nursing homes throughout the country. I believe this is one of the tarnished "silver linings" of the pandemic. Previously, many of the issues and concerns that we advocated for did not get the attention we feel they deserved. We now have that attention and the opportunity to move forward with some incredibly important initiatives.

My legislative focus this year will be on the Federal Essential Caregivers bill, staffing, quality care, transparency, and accountability. I believe that focusing our legislative agenda on these items will improve the overall quality of life for the individuals we serve. My hope is that you will take an opportunity to reach out and let us know about your individual experience and why is it necessary that we see improvements in these areas. We will be working to connect you with your local legislative members so that they can hear directly from you about issues and concerns.

I look forward to what we can continue to accomplish together. You have all been so incredibly strong through this very challenging time and I applaud you for work tenacity.

Wishing you all the best for a happy and healthy 2022!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Mairead Painter'.

Mairead Painter, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman



THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS WHO JOINED THE TEAM IN 2021

Andre Pope joined the Ombudsman team as an administrative secretary to the State Ombudsman. Subsequent, to the Ombudsman program, Andre was at the Bureau Rehabilitation Services for seven years. The department helps individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, maintain or with advance employment. He came to the program eager to learn and jump right into the advocacy world. He has been a great addition to the program.

Anthony Gesnaldo joined The Executive Board of the Statewide Coalition of the President of Resident Councils (SCPRC). He's a former state senator and president of the Resident Council at Glastonbury Healthcare Center. He brings a great deal of experience that will help with the advocacy in his home and statewide.

The program trained seven volunteer advocates that wanted to give their time to help the residents. The advocates were placed in nursing homes where they will assist residents with conflict resolution, educate the residents on their rights and advocate to improve the resident's quality of life. The program is delighted to be working with each of these volunteers:

- Jennifer Glick
- Margaret (Meg) Dee
- Auline Kong
- Margit Rosenberger
- Colleen McDermott
- Sarah Caratasios
- Deb Ciofi
- Lorrie Seely



LETTER FROM THE NEW E-BOARD PRESIDENT

Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils also known as the Executive Board or "E-Board"

January 10, 2022

Dear Silver Panther Members:

Hello. My name is David Peck. I am the newly elected president of the Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils. We are more easily known as the E-Board or Executive Board. As of now, we are a Board of seven members. We are all currently, or in the past, have been a President of the Resident Council in a skilled nursing facility. Five members are living in a skilled nursing home, one is living independently in the community, and our past president, Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez is a member emeritus. Jeanette has been with the Coalition for the past seven years. She has spread the word of our mission and led us into many victories. She has been more than generous with her time, is always positive and her eloquent speaking is an attribute. I am personally very grateful that she has decided to stay on as an emeritus member.

One of the goals of the E-Board is to support specific legislation by giving oral and written testimony and sharing our personal views as residents as to how proposed laws can and will change our lives for the better.

We are open to answer any questions anyone may have and if we can be of assistance, we are always willing to listen. Please feel free to contact me, my Vice President, Patty Bausch, or Jeanette Martinez, our esteemed member emeritus. You can direct e-mails at this time to LTCOP@ct.gov.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David E. Peck'.

David Peck
President,
Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils

BEST PRACTICES

Avalon at Stoneridge Best Practices

The fantastic holiday season was celebrated all month long at Avalon health Center at Stoneridge in Mystic, CT. We have enjoyed many great programs beginning with a performance by the Coast Guard band. Out bus trips included selecting the facility resident Christmas tree and a tour of holiday lights. Residents hosted a popup store for our community shoppers along with volunteer gift wrappers. The culinary club baked cookies and our creative arts group painted cork keychains for the Stonington Lobster Trap Tree lighting. The volunteer council has been working hard to help the Humane society this season with the Pet Paper Program. To celebrate the close of 2021 they celebrated with a party on the 31st complete with a live band, hors d'oeuvres and champagne.



The Connecticut Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is now on Facebook!



www.Facebook.com/ctltcop

Please visit our page and click **“Like”**

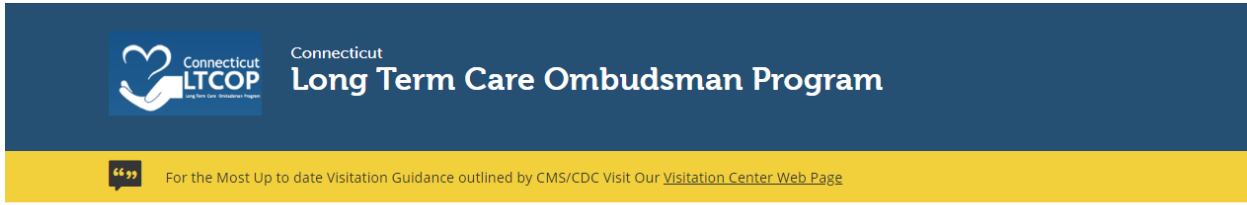


**** Facebook Live Schedule Update****

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program has updated it's frequency for live events and they will now take place on the third Wednesday of every month at 5:30 pm. Please tune in to have your questions answered in real time!

www.Facebook.com/ctltcop/live

Get Updates from Long Term Care Ombudsman Program and E-Board straight to your inbox!



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<https://portal.ct.gov/LTCOP>

Please visit the CTLTCOP web page and click **“Subscribe”** to stay informed on topics that you care about most:

- Legislative News
- Local and State Wide Resident Council Resources
 - Silver Panther Newsletter
- Local and State Wide Family Council Resources
 - Visitation / COVID-19 Updates
 - Educational Opportunities / Webinars



The Resident Volunteer Advocates Annual Training Wrap-up

The resident advocates had a meet and greet with Commissioner, Amy Porter, in person. She thanked them for their invaluable work and for being a voice for residents in nursing homes in our state. The state ombudsman, Mairead Painter, also thanked the volunteer advocates for their time and commitment to the program and the residents. She is committed to growing the advocate program through outreach. The volunteer advocates shared part of this educational day with the Commissioner, State Ombudsman, and the Regional Ombudsman staff.

As part of the federal requirement annual in-service trainings are required to maintain certification as a representative of the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

This year's training was provided by Laurene Gomez, Behavior Health Program Manager from Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) with Kathy O'Connor and Tom Shane nurses from the Nursing Home Diversion and Transition Program on December 14, 2021. The topic was on Staying Calm in a Crisis: How to De-Escalate the Escalating Resident. They talked about strategies of What to Do and What not to Do if encountered with an agitated resident and safety steps to take. This training will help the volunteers on how to manage a crisis situation with a resident during a nursing home visit.

The Nursing Home Diversion and Transition Program provides interventions that include:

- Diverting individuals from emergency rooms and avoiding unnecessary acute care hospitalizations for psychiatric reasons
- Transitioning individuals living in nursing facilities back into the community
- Providing outreach, education, and engagement regarding community-based options to individuals residing in nursing facilities with serious and persistent mental illness
- Providing consultation to professional staff regarding Behavioral Health options to nursing facility discharge teams
- Liaison support to DMHAS LMHAs and individuals who are in the process of diversion/transition as well with DSS Money Follows the Person and Mental Health Waiver staff
- Assessment for Level of care needs and determining the most appropriate community-based option i.e. skilled nursing facility or State Hospital bed



- Maintaining an updated, working knowledge of community-based resources for individuals living with mental illness and substance use issues
- Diabetes education regarding self-administration and healthy lifestyle choices
- Crisis intervention and consultation with other providers and local police
- Education regarding Mindfulness-Based alternative interventions to reduce psychiatric symptoms and cravings for substances
- Substance abuse counseling and resource education and connection
- Assistance with linkage and support for MAT

DMHAS also offers the COACH Program that provide individuals with ongoing support with connection to mental health community resources and supportive services.

For additional information or a referral, you can contact:

Laurene Gomez, Clinical Manager Diversion Nurse Program, (860) 262-6953 Laurene.Gomez@ct.gov

Mary Ives, Administrative Assistant, (860) 262-6957, Mary.ives@ct.gov



The 25th Annual Voices Forum Your Care, Your Rights, Your Voice

The annual Voices Forum was held as virtual event on October 8, 2021.

The State Ombudsman, Mairead Painter, thanked the volunteer resident advocates for their continual support to the program and the work that they do to help the residents. She would like to increase the advocates in the program and their work will also be to educate new advocates coming into the program. She remembered long time advocate, Bob Raynor, that served the program for 20 years. According to his family, being an advocate for the program meant a great deal to him.

Today's program was to continue to find ways to connect virtually and in person and ways to still be involved through Podcasts and resident councils. Mairead has been working on Podcast's and recently released a Podcast on Medicare and long term care with more releases to come on topics on how to talk to your doctor, special guests and covering many other different topics. These can be heard through different devices such as Spotify, EcoDocs and Amazon among other devices of choice. The program is promoting the statewide family council to support the resident councils and work with the facilities to improve quality of life.

The Commissioner of the Department of Aging and Disability Services, Amy Porter, made opening remarks. She highlighted the work of the Ombudsman program in the past year on Resident Rights and the need for people to get connected in different ways and find new ways even through this forum that connections still happen until we can meet again in person to continue the critical conversations. That this year's theme keeps the focus on the acknowledgement of individual care, celebration of resident's voice and the recognition of resident rights.

Representative, Michelle Cook, presented on how to reach out and connect with your legislative representatives by telling your personal story. She shared her family story and how this story helped her in understanding the need for individuals to advocate for what's important to them.

The executive board of the Statewide Coalition of the President of Resident Councils also submitted questions to Governor Lamont. The questions submitted were on:

- The development of the work force in Connecticut.
- What can be done in developing an interest as a profession to work in nursing homes.
- Is there a plan to hold the nursing homes accountable to ensure that the pandemic funds went to the staff for wage increase.
- Any ideas on how to fix the problem of isolation and depression.
- How to fix problems with low staffing that affect the quality of life of residents.
- The nursing homes hiring pool staff from agencies that don't know the residents and the impact of this practice.

The recipient of this year's program award, Carol Rosenwald was given to Mairead Painter the State Ombudsman. The Executive Board of Resident Council nominated her for the award for her hard work in the spirit of advocacy. The national recognition award of Brian Capshaw nominee was Liz Stern. She's been advocating at a state and federal level for the Essential Caregiver Bill. It passed at a state level but not at a federal level which she continues to push as well for residents to have two essential support caregivers of their choosing. She's also working on the statewide family council which is on a Zoom platform providing monthly information to nursing homes.

Ingraham Manor in Bristol was watching Voices live. 😊

You can watch the Voices Forum at <https://portal.ct.gov/LTCOP/Voices2021>



Statewide Coalition of Presidents of Resident Councils (SCPRC)



Executive Board Members

<u>E-Board Member</u>	<u>Location</u>
<i>John Balisciano Jr.</i>	<i>Hewitt Health and Rehab</i>
<i>Patty Bausch</i> Vice President	<i>Newtown Rehabilitation and Health Care Center</i>
<i>Susan Bilansky</i>	<i>Hebrew Home</i>
<i>Anthony Gesaldo</i>	<i>Glastonbury Health Care Center</i>
<i>Martha Leland</i>	<i>Touchpoints of Manchester</i>
<i>Jeanette Sullivan-Martinez</i> Emeritus Member	<i>Pendleton Healthcare</i>
<i>David Peck</i> President	<i>Community Setting - Hamden</i>



The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program



TOLL FREE NUMBER

[1-866-388-1888](tel:1-866-388-1888)

Email: ltcop@ct.gov

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CTLTCOP

State Website: <https://portal.ct.gov/ltcop>



MAIREAD PAINTER

STATE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

860- 424-5200

Andre Pope - Administrative Assistant

860-424-5239

REGIONAL ASSIGNMENTS
<p><u>WESTERN REGION</u></p> <p>INTAKE NUMBER 203-597-4181 Deborah Robinson - Intake Coordinator Regional Ombudsmen Sylvia Crespo, Tasha Erskine-Jackson</p>
<p><u>SOUTHERN REGION</u></p> <p>INTAKE NUMBER 860-823-3366 Stephanie Booth/Andre Pope - Intake Coordinator Regional Ombudsmen Dan Lerman, Patricia Calderone, Daniel Beem</p>
<p><u>NORTHERN REGION</u></p> <p>INTAKE NUMBER 860-424-5221 Stephanie Booth/Andre Pope - Intake Coordinator Regional Ombudsmen Brenda Texidor, Brenda Foreman, Lindsay Jesshop</p>



MedicareAdvocacy.org

The Center for Medicare Advocacy

The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization which provides education, advocacy, and legal assistance to help elders and people with disabilities obtain necessary healthcare. We focus on the needs of Medicare beneficiaries, people with chronic conditions, and those in need of long-term care. The organization is involved in education, training and litigation activities of importance to Medicare beneficiaries nationwide.

TOLL FREE NUMBER

Telephone: [860-456-7790](tel:860-456-7790) | Toll Free: [1-800-262-4414](tel:1-800-262-4414)

Email: info@medicareadvocacy.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MedicareAdvocacy.org>

Website: <https://medicareadvocacy.org/>

Winter Wonderland

This monster word search includes more than 50 winter words going in every possible direction. Can you find them all?



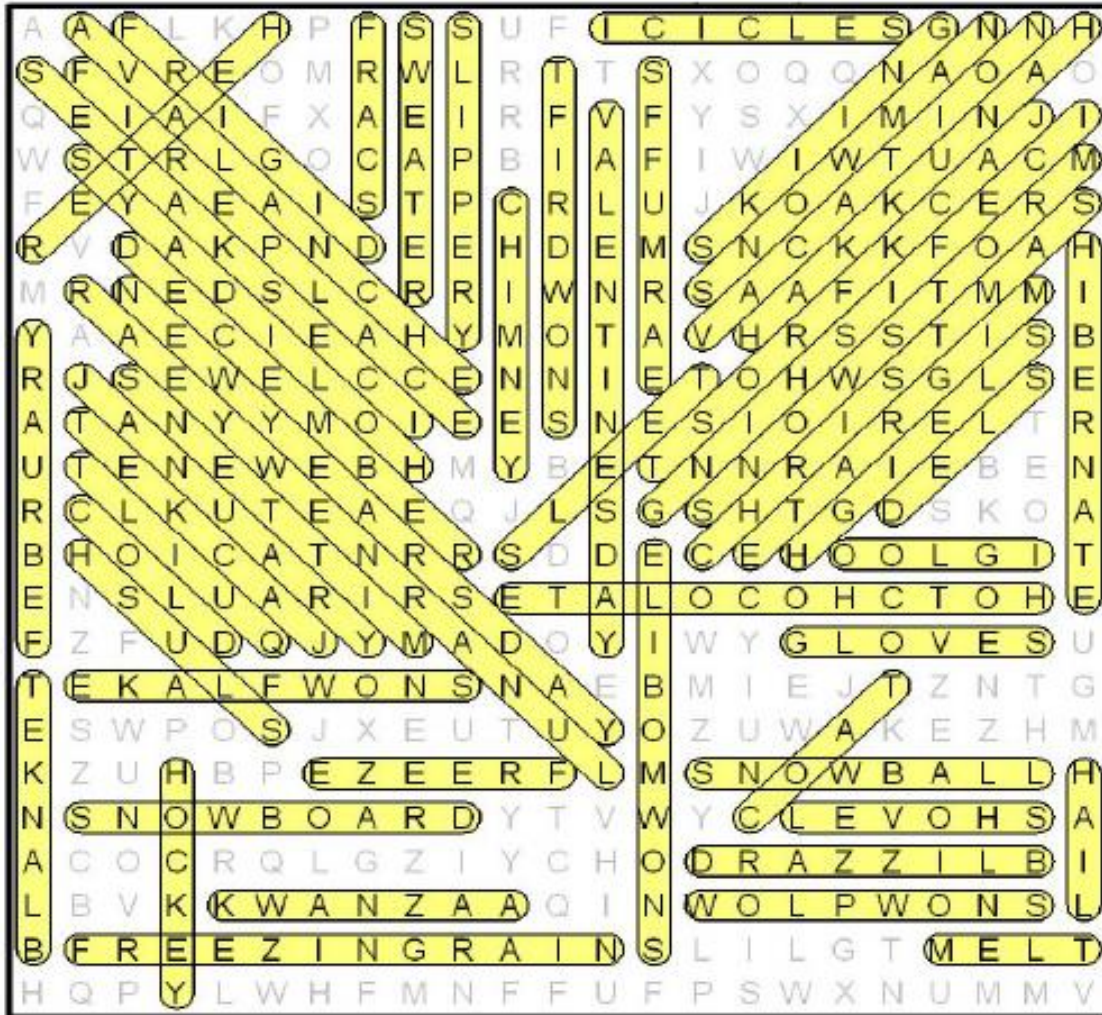
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blanket
blizzard
chimney
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coat
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earmuffs
February
fireplace
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hockey
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ice fishing
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Jack Frost
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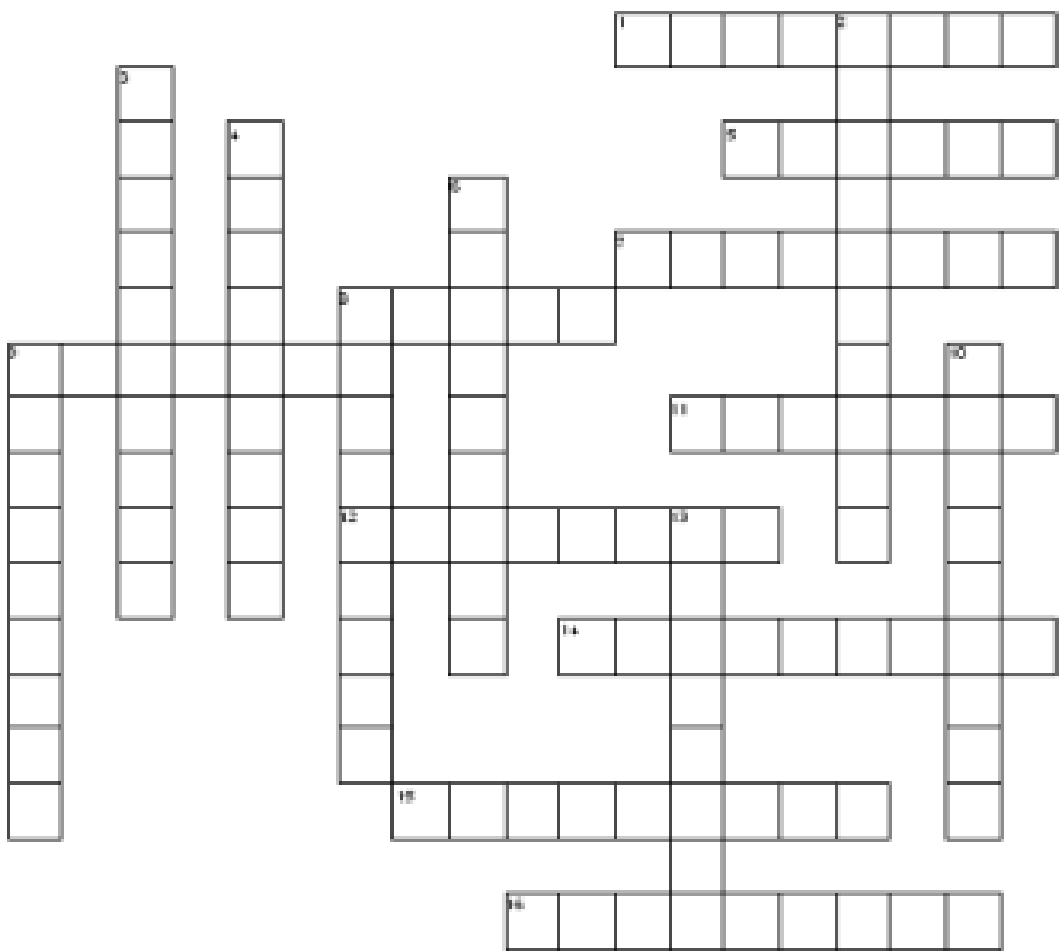
January
Kwanzaa
lunar new year
melt
migrate
mittens
New Year's Day
quilt
scarf
shovel
skiing
sled
sleet
sleigh

slippery
slush
snowball
snowboard
snowdrift
snowflake
snowman
snowmobile
snowplow
snowstorm
sweater
vacation
Valentine's Day

Answer Key



Snow, Snow, Snow



ACROSS

- 1. A piece of winter clothing that keeps children warm and dry as they play in the snow.
- 5. It _____ last night.
- 7. A rounded handful of snow that may be thrown.
- 8. The adjective form of snow (as in "Stopping by the Woods on a _____ Evening")
- 9. A person made of snow.
- 11. Look outside! It's _____.
- 12. The absence of snow. ("It's been a _____ winter.")
- 14. A flat object that people use to travel in surf-like position down hills of snow.

- 15. A single piece of snow.
- 16. A type of winter storm.

DOWN

- 2. A tool people use to remove snow from sidewalks.
- 3. A vehicle that may be driven across snow.
- 4. A machine that creates artificial snow.
- 6. Something people use to help them walk across snow.
- 8. A landscape covered with snow.
- 9. An avalanche of snow.
- 10. A large bank of snow.
- 13. A machine used to remove snow from roads.

Answer Key

