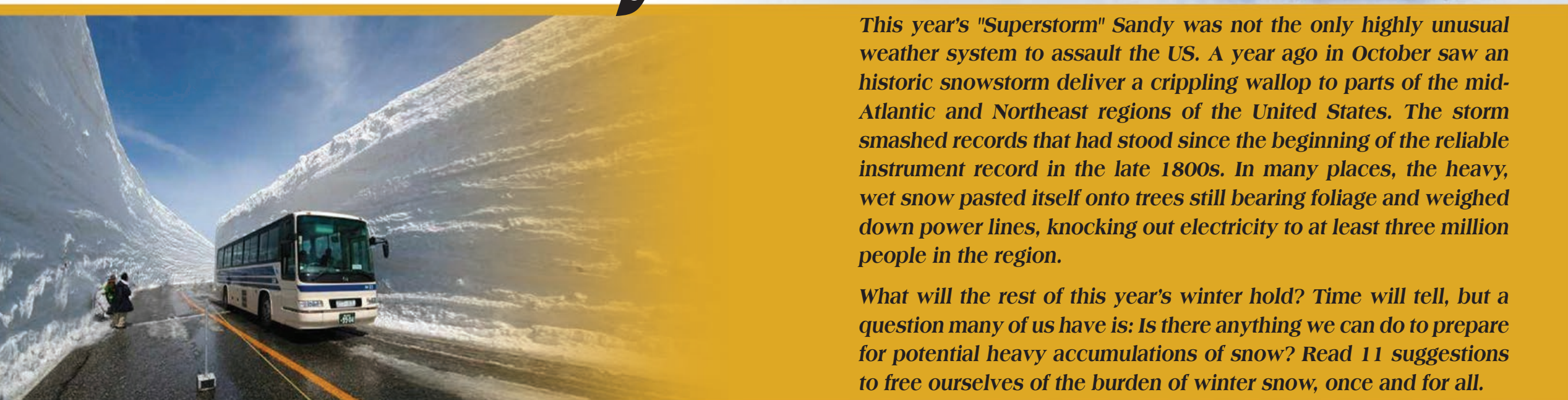


# Ideas For A Snow Day



*This year's "Superstorm" Sandy was not the only highly unusual weather system to assault the US. A year ago in October saw an historic snowstorm deliver a crippling wallop to parts of the mid-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the United States. The storm smashed records that had stood since the beginning of the reliable instrument record in the late 1800s. In many places, the heavy, wet snow pasted itself onto trees still bearing foliage and weighed down power lines, knocking out electricity to at least three million people in the region.*

*What will the rest of this year's winter hold? Time will tell, but a question many of us have is: Is there anything we can do to prepare for potential heavy accumulations of snow? Read 11 suggestions to free ourselves of the burden of winter snow, once and for all.*



In December 2010, numerous consecutive snowstorms blanketed the Northeast in an unprecedented layer of crystalline white snow. The heavy blizzard paralyzed New York City's streets for many days. Old-timers insisted that they had never before seen such helplessness. Even during the record blizzard of 1969, the streets of Brooklyn were cleared in a timely fashion.

Mayor Bloomberg won a third term on the basis of his claims to be the most outstanding organizer and leader in the free world. Yet when it came to clearing the snow, his leadership talents seemed to be buried... under the snow. Besides lacking the foresight to invest properly in heavy snow removal equipment, New York's large snowplows and salt trucks were old and not particularly well maintained. When the heavy snows blanketed the city, many of the trucks proved non-functional. Compounding matters, the mayor had just fired hundreds of city workers whose task, among others, was to clear away snow.

It did not help the mayor's popularity that all this was transpiring as he vacationed



New York City during the blizzard of 2011.

blissfully on the sandy beaches of the Bahamas.

So, given the recent history of crippling snowstorms, people naturally wonder: What can we do to deal with all the snow? Somebody must be working on a strategy to free us of this abundance of cold, white flakes that slow us down, block our cars in and keep our kids home from school.

*Zman* decided to do a bit of research and we discovered that there are indeed a number of tricks that the ingenious human mind has drummed up to free people from their snowy imprisonment and allow them to gain control over the weather instead of the weather having control over them... at least to a limited extent.

## 1. Control the Weather Before the Snow Begins

This idea is so presumptuous that only the Soviets and Chinese could have concocted it.

Communist China and Russia decided long ago that they no longer wanted to remain at the mercy of the winter weather. Therefore, they sought ways to free themselves of the snow burden *by preventing it from falling in the first place.*

After years of studying a slew of tricks and strategies, the Russians came up with the idea of cloud-seeding. In layman's terms, that means sending airplanes into the sky

to spray the clouds with one of several substances (the Chinese prefer silver iodide while the Russians use a mix of dust, dry ice and silver iodide). These act as "seeds" around which the moisture condenses until it becomes heavy drops that fall to the ground. Using seeding methods, they can ensure that precipitation falls even when temperatures or other conditions are not favorable.

What is interesting about this technology is that Russia and China both use it, but for opposite purposes. The Russians seek to divert snow to areas *away from* their population centers, while the Chinese, who often suffer from drought conditions, use seeding to direct the precipitation *toward* areas where it is most needed.

Beijing residents are not very excited about the thought of heavy snowfalls in their city in response to government cloud-seeding programs. But there is little need to worry (and little they could do about it even if they wanted to). In practice, seeding is only effective 20% of the time.

Perhaps that is the reason that, at least for the time being, the Russians and Chinese remain the only countries actively pursuing this tactic....

## 2. Clearing Snow with Explosives

You've probably heard the expression "battling heavy snows." Well, in this case, that term is meant literally: There are places where bombs are actually used to remove snow!

This is not a novel approach. Explosives have been used to fight snow for years, though with varying success. It depends on which method is applied.

The popular resort area of Lake Tahoe, California, is high in the mountains and attracts thousands of visitors each winter. Avalanches are a common event, particularly after heavy snowfall, and they often come without prior warning. Huge amounts



Airplane seeds clouds not far from Moscow to encourage snow to fall before arriving over the capital city.



Moscow is used to heavy snows.



Photo of an avalanche.



Russian snow blowers / dryers are armed with jet engines to blow away the snow and de-ice planes and runways.