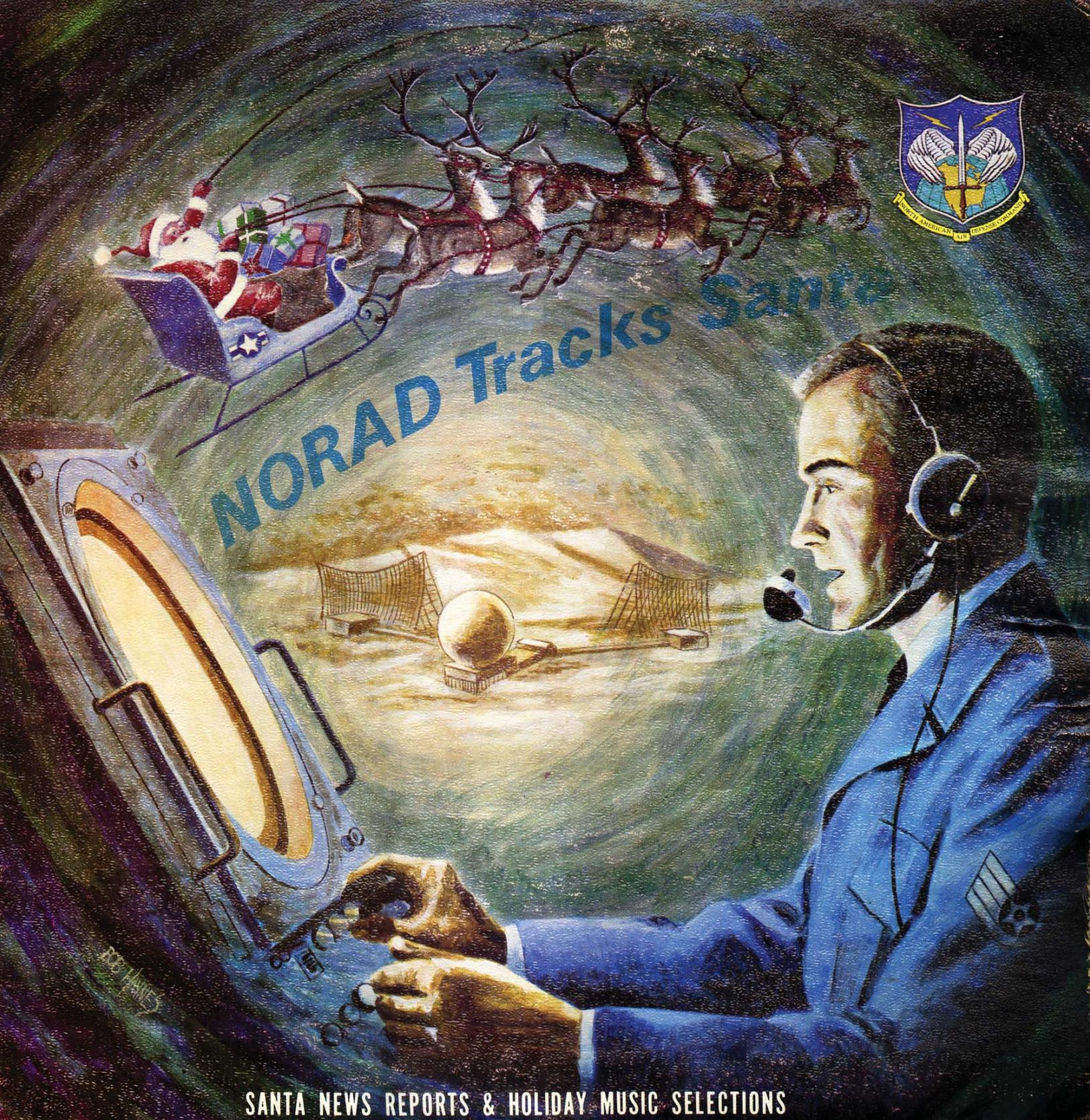




NORAD Tracks Santa



SANTA NEWS REPORTS & HOLIDAY MUSIC SELECTIONS



DMAVA HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER 24, 2014

In 1964, the North American Aerospace Defense Command's ability to follow Santa Claus' path was featured as the cover art for an Air Force holiday record. Santa even had a call sign - "Big Red One" and an Air Force aircraft insignia is painted on the rear of his sleigh. Turn to page two for the story of NORAD's involvement in tracking Santa. (U.S. Air Force illustration by Bob Haynes/Released)





NORAD TRACKS SANTA

Tonight, the North American Aerospace Defense Command's NORAD Tracks Santa website, www.noradsanta.org will be on duty as Santa Claus makes his way around the world.

The website, which was launched on Dec. 1, features a mobile version, a holiday countdown, new games, daily activities and is available in eight languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese and Chinese.

The origins of NORAD's Santa tracking system go back to 1955.

The Cold War was 10 years old. Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) – the forerunner to NORAD – had been established with the mission of “defending the United States against air attack” and was part of President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s “New Look” strategy to contain the Soviet threat.

At the CONAD operations center in Colorado Springs, Colo., a phone, red as a matter of fact, connected the center and Strategic Air Command: Its purpose was to inform CONAD operations that United States was at war.

In December 1955, a call was made to the center. On duty was director of operations Col. Harry Shoup. The call was not from the president or a general, it was from a little girl in Colorado Springs. The child, who was following the directions in a Sears Roebuck & Co. advertisement printed in a local newspaper, asked if he was Santa Claus.



NORAD's Santa Tracker website.



It began with this ad.

The ad, which read: “Hey, Kiddies! Call me direct and be sure and dial the correct number.” The number was one digit off and instead of getting the local Sears store, it went to the CONAD operations center.

After Shoup realized that his troops were not pranking him, he replied, “Yes, I am.”

More calls started rolling in. Shoup answered and



Col Harry Shoup

eventually assigned the duty to his Airmen telling them to be Santa.

Thus began the tradition, which NORAD has carried on since it was created in 1958.

Official NORAD Tracks Santa apps are also available in the Windows, Apple and Google Play stores, so parents and children can countdown the days until Santa's launch on their smart phones and tablets. Tracking opportunities are also offered on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Google+. Santa followers can go to any of these sites and search for “@noradsanta” to get started.

Also new this year, the website features Santa's elves in the North Pole Village. NORAD Tracks Santa is introducing the newest elf and asking the public to help choose the perfect name for him. Details can be found via NORAD Tracks Santa social media or in the “Name the Elf” video in Santa's North Pole Movie Theater.

Starting at 12:01 a.m. MST on Dec. 24, website visitors can watch Santa make preparations for his flight. NORAD's “Santa Cams” will stream videos on the website as Santa makes his way over various locations.

Then, at 4 a.m. Mountain Standard Time – 6 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, trackers worldwide can speak with a live phone operator to inquire as to Santa's whereabouts by dialing the toll-free number 1-877-Hi-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) or by sending an email to noradtrackssanta@outlook.com. Any time on Dec. 24, Windows Phone users can ask Cortana for Santa's location, and OnStar subscribers can press the OnStar button in their vehicles to find Santa.

This story is from an Air Force News Service release with additional historical research.

Theft brings new meaning to Christmas spirit

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, DMAVA Public Affairs

I have a Christmas story to tell you.

It began when the Rev. Delwood Williams, the pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Weymouth and members of his congregation decided after Thanksgiving to gather gifts for the residents of the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland.

“This was something that was laid on my heart for the veterans,” said Williams, who served as a sergeant with 11th Army Cavalry in Vietnam from 1967-68.

All went well, parishioners brought in gifts.

Then on Dec. 3, someone broke into the church and stole all the gifts.

“It hurt me, but it made me stronger,” said Williams.

The police detectives made little headway in the case so they asked Williams if they could tell the media about the theft and maybe some information would come in that could help them solve the case.

Williams agreed and the story was carried on the local TV stations and in the newspapers.

The story was picked up by national media and word spread.



Jewel Williams of the Mount Zion Baptist Church of Weymouth, N.J., holds a selection of blankets for New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland resident Louise Ferla to pick from.



Mount Zion Baptist Church of Weymouth, N.J., parishioner Heather Alexander, right, presents residents at the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Vineland with gifts.

Then the donations came in, more than \$1,000 from across the United States.

“It came from their hearts,” said Williams.

So instead of getting a few gifts for the residents, the church parishioners were able to get gifts for all 300 of the residents. They went out and bought blankets, hats, pajamas, scarves and toiletries.

On Dec. 23, all the gifts were bagged and set up on three rows of tables in the Home’s auditorium.

“Every penny we received – here it is,” said Williams.

After the residents and staff arrived, Williams, along with members of his congregation led them in singing Christmas carols. Then the gifts were distributed.

“We don’t want to forget the veterans,” said Jewel Williams, the pastor’s wife.

AT THE HOMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS



Left: The Bergen County Police Chiefs Association donated a 55" TV to the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Paramus Dec. 22, 2014. From left to right: Trudi Dial, left to right, Chief Donald Rossi; Glulla V. Kirsch, home's recreation supervisor and Chiefs Joseph Rutigliano and Frank Reglino. Above: Menlo Park veterans took a trip to Lakewood Elks for a holiday dinner Nov. 22, 2014. Below: The staff of the New Jersey Veterans Memorial Home at Menlo Park donated dozens of holiday gift for the Toys For Tots campaign Dec. 21, 2014. (DMAVA courtesy photos)





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- Raymond Zawacki – Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs
- Chief Warrant Officer 3 Patrick Daugherty – Public Affairs Officer
- Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen – Layout, photographer
- Staff Sgt. Wayne Woolley – Writer, photographer

DMAVA VETERANS OUTREACH CAMPAIGN



Jan. 13 & 14
DMAVA “Veterans Outreach Campaign” Quaker Bridge Mall (10 a.m. – 8 p.m.)
150 Quaker Bridge Mall,
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

Feb. 11
DMAVA Medal Ceremony
Williamstown VFW POST #1616
11 a.m.
1940 North Blackhorse Pike, Williamstown, NJ 08094

DMAVA WILL HAVE A VSO PRESENT AT EACH EVENT TO HELP AND ASSIST ANY VETERAN

Strong Bonds
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STRONG BONDS

When: January 30 – February 1, 2015

What: Active Military Life and Resiliency Skills

Where: The Hotel ML
 915 Route 73
 Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

Water Park is included for the entire family.

to find out more on Strong Bonds, contact Sgt. John Schwartz (609) 324-7039 or visit www.strongbonds.org
 ALL DEPENDENTS MUST BE REGISTERED IN DEERS

MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT

RIDER BASKETBALL

CANISIUS COLLEGE

RIDER MEN'S BASKETBALL

SAT., JAN. 24 vs. CANISIUS at 7 p.m.

ALUMNI GYM - LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ

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*A Free Hiring Fair for Veterans,
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The Timmerman Conference Center
5441 8th Street, Fort Dix, NJ 08640
Wednesday, January 21, 2015

EMPLOYMENT WORKSHOP: 11:00 A.M.

HIRING FAIR: 10:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

A **Workshop** for job seekers that focuses on resume writing, tips for successfully navigating hiring fairs, military skill translation, and interviewing will start at 11:00AM.

EMPLOYERS	JOB SEEKERS
Must register for FREE at HiringOurHeroes.org/events	Register for FREE at HiringOurHeroes.org/events

Thanks to our local partners:

- United States Army Reserve
- Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst
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- New Jersey American Legion
- New Jersey Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service (NJ DOL VETS)
- Suiting Warriors
- And all of our other local partners

For registration questions, please email hiringourheroes@uschamber.com or call 202-463-5807.



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E-mail your Highlights submissions to: mark.olsen@dmava.nj.gov