
Holiday Greetings from Post 201 - - A Marine's "Christmas Poem;" Track Santa with NORAD

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Alpharetta Post 201

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Thursday, December 23, 2021

Christmas Poem

(Editor's Note: Every once-in-a-while an e-mail crosses the desk that just cannot be ignored. Last year, Post 201 Adjutant Tom Billings sent us "Christmas Poem". We share it with you today. -- hdh.)

**Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.**

**I had come down the chimney with presents to give,
And to see just who in this home did live.**

**I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.**

**No stocking by the mantle, just boots filled with sand,
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.**

**With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
A sober thought came through my mind.**

**For this house was different, it was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.**

**The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.**

**The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
Not how I pictured a United States soldier.**

**Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?**

**I realized the families that I saw this night,
Owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.**

**Soon round the world, the children would play,
And grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day.**

**They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
Because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.**

**I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.**

**The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.**

**The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;**

**I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my country, my corps."**

**The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.**

**I wept for hours, so silent and still
And we both shivered from the cold night's chill.**

**I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night,
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.**

**Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
Whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure."**

**One look at my watch...and I knew he was right.
"Merry Christmas my friend. And to all a good night."**

Here's the accompanying note. "This poem was written by a Marine. The following is his request. Would you do me the kind favor of sending this to as many people as you can? Christmas will be coming soon and some credit is due to our U.S. service men and women for our being able to celebrate these festivities. Let's try in this small way to pay a tiny bit of what we owe. Make people stop and think of our heroes, living and dead, who sacrificed themselves for us. Please, do your small part to plant this seed."

~ ~ ~

NORAD Has Tracked Santa's Travels Every Christmas Eve Since 1955

(Editor's Note: You and the little ones in your family can watch Santa make his way around the world on Christmas Eve by visiting <https://www.noradsanta.org>-- hdh.)

Every day of the year, NORAD (North American Aerospace Defense Command) defends North America using an all-domain and globally integrated approach to track everything that flies in and around Canada and the United States. On Dec. 24 of each year, NORAD adds a special mission: tracking Santa.

NORAD's mission to track Santa began by accident. In 1955 a young child, trying to reach Santa, dialed the misprinted phone number from a department store ad in the local newspaper. Instead of calling Santa, the child called the Continental Air Defense Command (CONAD) Operations Center in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Air Force Col. Harry Shoup, the commander on duty that night who answered the child's phone call, was quick to realize a mistake had been made and assured the child he was Santa. After more incoming calls, Shoup assigned a duty officer to continue answering calls and a tradition was born, that continued when NORAD was formed in 1958.

Click on the headline below to read NPR's interview with Shoup's family.

NORAD's Santa Tracker Began With A Typo And A Good Sport

Every year since, NORAD has dutifully reported Santa's location on Dec. 24 to millions of children and families across the world. Because of the support, services and resources generously provided by volunteers, the U.S. Government and corporate contributors, NORAD Tracks Santa has persevered for more than 65 years.

In fact, what started because of a typo has flourished and is recognized as one of the Department of Defense's largest community outreach programs.

Each year, the NORAD Tracks Santa Web Site receives several million unique visitors from more than 200 countries and territories around the world. Volunteers typically answer more than 130,000 calls to the NORAD Tracks Santa hotline from children across the globe.

In addition to the phone line, +1 (877) HI-NORAD, and website, www.noradsanta.org, children and the young-at-heart can track Santa through NORAD's mobile apps and social media platforms:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/noradsanta>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NoradSanta>
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/NORADTracksSanta>
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/noradtrackssanta_official

Several contributors such as OnStar and Amazon Alexa also provide convenient ways to keep tabs of Santa's location.

Source: www.noradsanta.org/en/

Technical Data on Santa's Sleigh Developed Over the Years by NORAD

- Designer & Builder: K. Kringle & Elves, Inc.
- Probable First Flight: Dec. 24, 343 A.D.
- Home Base: North Pole
- Length: 75 cc (candy canes) / 150 lp (lollipops)
- Width: 40 cc / 80 lp
- Height: 55 cc / 110 lp
- *Note: Length, width and height are without reindeer*
- Weight at takeoff: 75,000 gd (gumdrops)
- Passenger weight at takeoff: Santa Claus @ 260 pounds
- Weight of gifts at takeoff: 60,000 tons
- Weight at landing: 80,000 gd (ice & snow accumulation)
- Passenger weight at landing: 1,260 pounds
- Propulsion: Nine (9) rp (reindeer power)
- Armament: Antlers (purely defensive)
- Fuel: Hay, oats and carrots (for reindeer)
- Emissions: Classified
- Climbing speed: One "T" (Twinkle of an eye)
- Max speed: Faster than starlight

Source: www.noradsanta.org/en/noradhq#PressRoom

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Upcoming Post Meetings, Other Veterans Related Activities (as of publication deadline)

Thursday, Dec. 23. Clubroom/Bar opens at 2 p.m. Complimentary Christmas dinner provided by Olive Garden Restaurant Company begins at 3 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 23. Deadline to purchase New Year's Eve Dance Tickets if they are still available. See details in Club 201 Dance Schedule section below.

Friday, Dec.24, Christmas Eve. Clubroom/Bar will maintain normal operating hours. Be sure to visit <https://www.noradsanta.org/> to track Santa's travels on Christmas Eve.

Saturday, Dec. 25. Post Closed for Christmas Day.

Monday, Dec. 27, 7 p.m., VFW Post 12002 Meeting, Post Ballroom (4th Monday of every month.)

Friday, Dec. 31, 7 p.m. to 1. a.m. New Year's Eve Dance. [Click here](#) for details.

Monday, Jan. 3, 6:30 p.m., House Committee Meeting.

Friday, Jan. 7, 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. Veterans Day at the Post. Open to all veterans whether they are members of the Post or not to visit with fellow veterans, and enjoy the facilities of the Post - - including member prices for drinks at the bar. For more information about Vets Day at the Post contact Jeff Rahn, phone 479-340-6308 or email jrahn@sheepdogia.org.

Tuesday, Jan. 11, 7 p.m. Executive Committee Meeting.

Sunday, Jan. 16, 2 p.m. 8-Ball Pool Tournament.

Tuesday, Jan. 18, 7 p.m. General Membership Meeting.

Thursday, Jan. 20, 7 p.m., Order of the Purple Heart Meeting. (3rd Thursday of every month.)

Thursday, Jan. 27, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. SAVE THE DATE for another special night 'Flight of Bourbon and a Cigar', along heavy hors d'oeuvres. \$50 per person.

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Club 201 Dance Schedule

For dance schedule details and other dance activities, visit the following:

www.club201dance.com

<https://www.legion201.org/events.html>

[Club 201 Dance FaceBook Page](#)

Sale of New Year's Eve Dance Tickets Ends Today

Today is final day to purchase tickets for the Friday night, Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Party. A table for six, if available, is \$200. Individual tickets are \$45 per person. No tickets will be sold at the door. DJ Rich Kopels will be playing the best mix of dance music on New Year's Eve.

To make reservations, leave your name and contact number at the bar, and a member of the dance committee will contact you. To download an event flyer, [click here](#). Doors will open at 7 p.m. New Year's Eve for the dance.

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Honor a veteran with a memorial brick at the

Post 201 Walk of Memories

[or donate to support the memorial by clicking here.](#)

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COVID Notification Policy

If you visit Post 201 and subsequently test positive for COVID-19, you or a direct relative of yours can utilize the email address, Post201cvd@gmail.com, to inform the Post of such an incident. This email address can only be accessed and read by the Post Adjutant. If the Post receives such a notice it will implement appropriate disinfecting and employee screening/testing processes that may be indicated per CDC and State of Georgia guidelines. [Click here for more COVID-related information.](#)

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**"It's not the price you pay to be a member,
It's the price you paid to be eligible."**



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