

NORAD's Santa tracker began with a typo

By NPR

This Christmas Eve people all over the world will log on to the official Santa Tracker to follow his progress through U.S. military radar. This all started in 1955, with a misprint in a Colorado Springs newspaper and a call to Col. Harry Shoup's secret hotline at the Continental Air Defense Command, now known as NORAD.

Shoup's children, Terri Van Keuren, 65, Rick Shoup, 59, and Pam Farrell, 70, recently visited StoryCorps to talk about how the tradition began.

Terri remembers her dad had two phones on his desk, including a red one. "Only a four-star general at the Pentagon and my dad had the number," she says.

The red phone rang one day in December 1955, and Shoup answered it, Pam says. "And then there was a small voice that just asked, 'Is this Santa Claus?'"

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