

Five reasons to dust off your Santa hat in Brockton.

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BROCKTON —

Hats on to start the season

1. The holiday season begins in earnest in Brockton on Sunday, Nov. 24, when the city sponsors its sixth-annual “Santa Hat Challenge,” where hundreds gather on Main Street, don a Santa hat, and show their holiday spirit. The record-setting event has grown yearly, to where more than 1,700 gathered near the Main Street plaque of James Edgar – who was the country’s first department store Santa. Signups for hat day begin at 11 a.m., and the official count will be taken at 2 p.m.

Reaching across an ocean

2. The Santa Hat challenge has become both a national and international affair. Last year, the town of Mullingar, Ireland, joined with Brockton in the event through a live video feed. This year, Brockton will do the same with Pittsburg, Pa., on the Internet, and might even hook up with Melbourne, Australia. “We’ve challenged other countries to join us, to get together and show their spirit,” said organizer John Merian.

Bigger than before

3. The Santa Hat committee has lined up more entertainment than in previous years. Performers, appearing on a special downtown stage, include: R&B artist Noel Gourdin, Spanish singer Henry Daniel, the SHC Holiday Dancers, R&B and motown group Reasons, the smooth sounds of Fidjos di Fazenda, the SHC Holiday Dancers, Scituate singer Caitlin Michele Ford and singer EhShawnee Taveras. “It’s an amazing lineup,” said Merian.

Gifts galore

4. This year’s event will feature more prizes and raffles, including a Kindle Fire, gift certificates to local restaurants, T-shirts and gift cards to many other local businesses and shops.

The only fee will be \$2 for those who are unable to provide their own Santa Hat.

Much more to come

5. The Santa Hat Challenge is just the first of several events in Brockton at which you can don your holiday hat.

It is followed by the Downtown Holiday Parade on Saturday, Nov. 30, at 1 p.m., and The Enterprise’s Helping Hands Jingle Bell Run on Dec. 7 at the Massasoit Conference Center.

The event also starts at 1 p.m., with a noontime registration. For more information on the Santa Hat challenge, or the downtown parade, please go to [1stdepartmentstoresanta.com](http://1stdepartmentstoresanta.com). For information on how to help in the Jingle Bell Run, please email: [IrishDaveG@aol.com](mailto:IrishDaveG@aol.com)