

## **Brockton: City joined by Mullingar, Ireland for annual Santa Hat Challenge**

**By Kevin Tocci – November 16, 2012**



Residents in Brockton will kick off the holiday season this weekend with the annual Santa Hat Day. The event began four years ago to celebrate Brockton's history as the city with the first-ever department store Santa Claus, played in 1890 by James Edgar. The first year, the city managed to get 507 people to don Santa hats. In 2009, Mullingar, Ireland topped the feat in 2009 with some 700 participants and sparked a friendly competition. Brockton was able to beat that number with 872 in 2010 and then 1,792 in 2011. Local businessman

John Merian says this year's event is changing after being introduced to Marty Mulligan, the organizer of Mullingar Santa hat challenge.

"Marty and I talked and said lets join forces, actually do a world record that brings two continents together, that simultaneously we're wearing Santa hats in honor of James Edgar, doing at the same time in both places and that's what we're doing this year," said Merian.

Merian says the city will feature other events leading up to the Santa hat challenge. The YMCA will hold the "Santa Hat Walk for Health," which will start at 12 p.m., plus there will be entertainment from various different dance groups. Anyone donning a Santa hat can participate in the event, which will be held this Sunday at 1 p.m. in front of the James Adams Garage on Main Street