

Turn Brockton into Christmas Town USA

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BROCKTON — Christmas Town.

It has a nice ring to it, don't you think, especially for Brockton? Why not? After all, the city was the home of the country's first department store Santa Claus.

That's right — that famous, longstanding tradition began right here in Brockton, which is quickly becoming known as Christmas Town, USA. We have James Edgar to thank, the philanthropic businessman who took the illustrations of Thomas Nast and brought Santa to life at his downtown store in 1890.

Edgar didn't don the red suit for commercial success, but rather for his genuine love for children and this city. When he wore it and invited children to share with him their secret holiday wishes, he became the very essence of Christmas.

He became Santa.

Now, it's time for all Brocktonians to do the same.

It's time for all of us to celebrate Christmas Town and all the events that — like Edgar's — help celebrate the spirit of the city.

So Brocktonians, for this moment, let's enjoy the celebration of our holiday parade, which was held two weeks ago. To all of you who came out and took part, congratulations. You helped thousands of kids and parents feel the warmth of the holiday season — right here in Brockton.

Congratulations to Mayor Harrington, the City Council, Brockton 21st Century Corp., Brockton Police Department, Metro South Chamber, My Very Special Parade Committee, Brockton Fire Department, Montello Business Association, Campello Business Association, Downtown Brockton Association, The Neighborhood Health Center, the Brockton Rox, HarborOne Credit Union, the Rotary, the Lions, Lynche's Towing, Everett's Auto Parts, the Brockton Public Schools, The Enterprise, BCCA, WXBR, our parade booklet sponsors and everyone who came, enjoyed, participated in and celebrated this year's holiday parade.

If you were chefs, I would say, "magnifique!" If you were artists, I would say you have painted a masterpiece. One thing is for certain — your hard work and dedication to make this event bigger and better than ever showed. By the looks of all the happy faces, floats, bands and families from all over, we stepped it up, and the people noticed. The article in The Enterprise talked about how Brockton is becoming known as Christmas Town, and how the people who live here are making it happen.

That's because you know the importance of building a thriving downtown. You know that if you build it, people will come, that people want to come and feel good and proud about their city.

The parade was a great start. Now, it's our job to deliver this energy and optimism throughout the year.

Enjoy all the people talking about how much fun they had and how they enjoy their city. Enjoy it because you were responsible for it. All of you.

It's the spirit of a community that makes it strong. Many years ago, in the Brockton Enterprise, it was written that as long as the business district endures and the community is alive, then the spirit of James Edgar will live on. From the looks of the faces at the holiday parade, that should never be in doubt.

Brockton, Mass.

Christmas Town.

Has a nice ring to it — don't you think, Mr. Edgar? Or should I say, Santa?