

NOVEMBER 2014

BURLINGTON LIFE

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The Burlington Santa 5K – Canada's largest all-Santa race

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COVERstory



The streets of Burlington will be a sea of red and white on Saturday, Dec. 13, when runners and walkers dressed as Santa Claus take part in the Santa 5K, Canada's largest all-Santa race.

submitted photos



Which Santa Race will you run?

The streets of Burlington will be a sea of red and white on Saturday, Dec. 13, when runners and walkers dressed as Santa Claus take part in the Santa 5K, Canada's largest all-Santa race.

The 8th annual Burlington Santa 5K, presented by VR Pro, is open to runners and walkers of all ages and abilities. What started with 1,500 Santas in its first year, has evolved and grown to having as many as 4,600 participants in recent years. This year's goal is to have 5,000 Santas participate in the race.

"The Santa 5K is a fun and festive way to get active while celebrating the holiday season," said Race Organizer Kelly Arnott of VR Pro.

"Whether you are a seasoned runner or someone just starting out, this race promises to put a smile on your face."

As part of the race entry fee, participants are provided with a Santa suit consisting of a beard, hat, jacket, pants and belt that is mandatory to wear and can keep. The result is a road race unlike any other.

"The atmosphere is just amazing," said Arnott. "Where else

do you see thousands of Santas running through the streets?"

The race, which begins at 9am at City Hall in Burlington, is a fundraiser to support St. John Ambulance Burlington and Community Living Burlington. In the past seven years, thousands of dollars have been raised during the Santa 5K race.

Arnott says everyone, even non-runners, can support a good cause. "Even if you aren't participating, you can cheer on our Santas," she says.

After the race, participants are welcome to enjoy free pizza provided by Panago Pizza.

Want to get into the holiday spirit a little earlier? The 3rd annual Hamilton Santa 5K race will be on Sunday, Nov. 30 at 10am, starting at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club and going through Bayfront Park along the Waterfront Trail to William Coffee Pub where participants will be served delicious breakfast sandwiches and fresh coffee courtesy of Williams.

"Proceeds from this race will benefit the Waterfront Trust," said Arnott. "The race is part of the Hamilton Academy of

Medicine's 'Hamilton's time to get fit' program."

Last year 700 participants put on the famous red suit, and this year the goal is to have 1,200 participants suit-up.

Interested racers can save \$10 by participating in both the Hamilton and Burlington Santa races.

"If you participate in both the Hamilton and Burlington races, you will receive a special gift that will be presented at the Burlington Santa race," said Arnott.

For our friends over the border, there is also a Santa Race in Burlington, Vermont. This year will be the third annual race. Last year's race was sold out and had 2,000 Santas participate from 14 different states.

For anyone looking to participate as a large group special rates are available. For more details about this, road closures and videos from past years visit santa5k.ca, or to register for the either or both Santa 5Ks, visit vrpro.ca.