

# The Columbus Dispatch

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## Scissor-bearing Santa doesn't make the cut Though carry-on restrictions have eased, Christmas Eve plan unwelcome at airport

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**Chris DeVille**  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

"Santa" was planning to be at Port Columbus on Christmas Eve to make sure folks heading home for the holidays had a way to cut all of that wrapping paper.

Peter Walsh, who owns a wholesale distribution company in Columbus, was so excited that airline passengers are again permitted to carry some scissors onto planes that he bought 2,000 pairs to give away at the airport on Saturday.

Walsh, 40, enlisted his brother to dress as Santa Claus and help him.

But, alas, the airport nixed the idea when he called ahead to ask permission.

"Society has gotten way too careful," Walsh said. "It's their airport. They don't have to provide a venue for it. I was just trying to be funny."

Walsh had bought in bulk about 2,000 scissors and 200 Swiss Army knives in hopes of giving them out to passengers who perhaps had scissors taken from them since most sharp objects were banned after the Sept. 11 terrorist attack.

According to the Transportation Security Administration, about 3 million pairs of scissors had been confiscated at airports nationwide since February 2002.

Yesterday, passengers for the first time since then boarded planes with some scissors, nail clippers and tools.

It made Jan D'Imperio happy, though she'll never see her favorite comb again.

D'Imperio, 60, of Delaware, loaded her laptop into a plastic tub to run through a security checkpoint yesterday. She was on her way to Oklahoma for Christmas.

She said she had a favorite metal comb — she'd had it since she was 12 years old — taken from her carry-on bag on another flight.

And though she's happy that more items will be allowed on planes, she's not so happy to hear that the TSA will increase pat-down searches and shoe inspections.

Twice chosen for random stops in the past, D'Imperio called the process embarrassing.

But Jean-Marc Duplessi, an 18-year-old student at Ohio Wesleyan, doesn't mind them.



PETE KIEHART | DISPATCH

**Peter Walsh, owner of a wholesale distribution company, has 2,000 pairs of scissors he hoped to give departing passengers at Port Columbus on Christmas Eve.**

As he stood in line at Port Columbus yesterday, heading home to Maine for the holidays, Duplessi said random stops are fine with him, but called the more lenient carry-on policy "kind of counterproductive."

"I can't imagine why you would need (scissors and tools) on any flight," Duplessi said.

Port Columbus didn't keep a tally of items confiscated yesterday, but the TSA estimated that it collected 30 percent to 40 percent fewer items than usual, local TSA director Tom Rice said.

Despite the extra inspections movement through the security checkpoints yesterday was smooth, Rice said, especially considering the heavy holiday traffic.

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