Wow, did the fat man with the red suit and white beard make this my best Christmas ever?

Saint Nick dropped off a dozen Air Jordan 11 Retro Concord sneakers and left them under our tree. You know, the $180-a-pair Nike Jordans that first came out when His Airness and the Chicago Bulls were at the top of the NBA world.

I understand they were hot items in stores around the country this month.

Police near Seattle used pepper spray to keep brawling customers in check. Doors were broken in Atlanta when shoppers bull-rushed a store there.

Rowdy shoppers caused mayhem in malls across the country. There were arrests. There was vandalism, utter disregard for others.

All of it caused by an uncontrollable desire to buy a pair of $180 sneakers that some factory worker in Asia made for less than a dollar.

Michael Jordan has been retired for years. This particular model debuted in 1996, yet today's urban youths stayed in line for hours in hopes of scoring a pair.

A man at a store was stabbed waiting in line at a Jersey City, N.J. mall. According to the AP, the 20-year-old was expected to recover from his injuries.

Some shoppers were trampled as they fell down with all the pushing and shoving fueled by the desire to gain entrance to the stores and get a hand on the Jordans.

Police at another mall broke into a car in the parking lot where a woman had left her two toddlers while she went to stand in line for the Air Jordans. Now, that's some solid parenting skills that won her a trip to jail.

This is not a new phenomenon. Years ago, teenagers were robbed solely for their new Air Jordans. I recall one incident where a teenager was shot and killed for his shoes. That's a high price to pay.

A few years back, word got around Memphis that a shipment of the new model Air Jordans was arriving by train. Sure enough, thieves located the boxcar full of the prized shoes and quickly emptied the contents.

That next night, Memphis police showed up at a rival high school basketball game. Lo and behold, players on both teams were wearing the stolen shoes. Many of the fans on both sides of the gym also had their newly acquired Air Jordans on.

Police made the players go to their locker rooms and take the shoes off and return them. Fans who were wearing them, quickly slipped out of the gym.

Some shoppers this year weren't there to buy shoes for their personal use. It was a business decision. They wanted to flip them to buyers who would pay $500 or more a pair. Not a bad profit margin.

Frankly, I never saw the attraction of the Air Jordans. I thought most of them were pretty ugly, as basketball shoes went. But the name Jordan was a magnet then and it holds true today. He has been retired for years, but his brand still sells.

The Air Jordan 11 Retro Concord featured a patent leather design on the bottom part of the high top shoe. And, of course the Air Jordan symbol, recognized around the basketball world.

I don't understand all the fuss. All I did was write Santa Claus a letter, asking him for the shoes. No pushing. No lines. No arrests.

It pays to believe in Santa Claus. Ho, ho, ho.

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