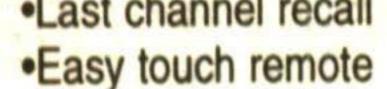
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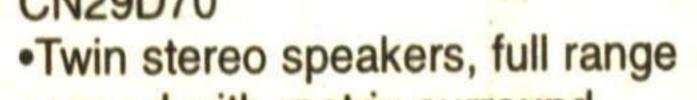
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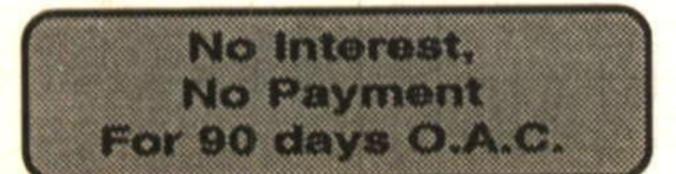
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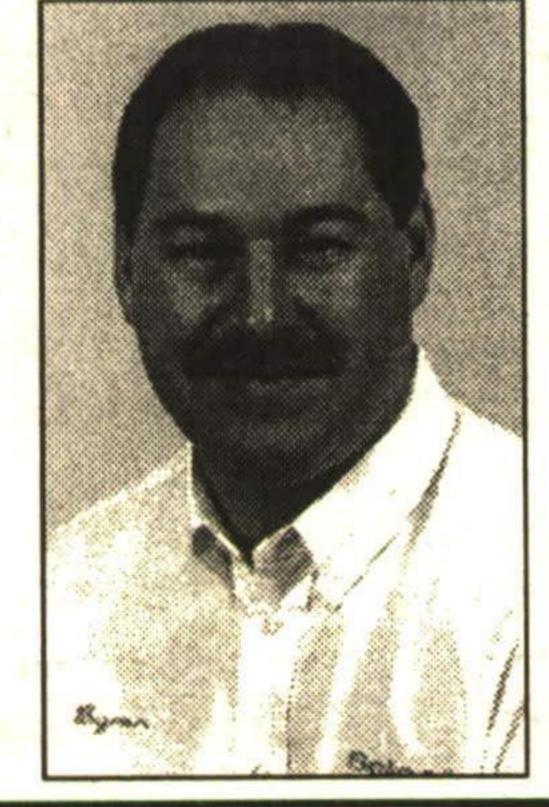
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# This Christmas tree is full of memories

Poss Barrier Carrier and Carrier and Control of the 1990

Then I see all the nicely decorated Christmas trees in the stores and the uniformly trimmed, color-coordinated trees in shopping centres, it is apparent to me that my family Christmas tree is quite different.

First of all, our tree does not have color coordinated decorations.

Secondly, all of the tree ornaments that we have are on the two lowest branches of the tree, right at the front. Daughters, Julia and Jennifer, 6 and 4 years respectively, prefer it that way. They put the ornaments on the low branches so they can reach them easily. Then they take them off the tree and put them back on again, and again. You see, this is their Christmas tree.

Our tree is not meant to be a tidily trimmed showpiece of this year's favorite ornamental trinkets. Our tree is more of an eclectic reminder of people, places and Christmases past.

Don't get me wrong, it is not unattractive. Jennifer says "it's the bestest tree in the world".

The yearly ritual of unwrapping the special tree ornaments is normally accompanied by squeals of delight from the girls.

My wife Rita, who carefully wraps each ornament individually after Christmas, supervises, as the girls race to see who can put the ornaments on the tree the quickest. We are all surprised by the memories that each unwrapping brings.

The six-member Santa Band, was purchased more than 10 years ago. The musically inclined Santas are still in good shape and look great. The unusual wooden seagulls, together with a number of other odd pieces, including Mr. and Mrs. Christmas Mouse, were the fruit of several trips to sunny Florida.

Don't ask me to explain why Rita would buy Christmas ornaments in Florida each year. She just did.

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK



Ken Nugent

The finely-detailed Creche from Europe was a gift to my son Myles from my, then, future mother-in-law many years ago. The oddlooking triangular reindeer head, made of popsicle sticks, was an old JK project for Julia.

Only two remain of the original four very delicate handmade Balsa wood ornaments from the Black Forest in Germany. They were sent to us by dear Edda.

The Woolly sheep has seen better days. When our cat was younger, he took a fancy to Woolly and he's never been the same since. Woolly that is. Come to think of it the cat hasn't been the same either. However, now the cat at least leaves the tree alone.

Some of the ornaments really are ornaments, while some of them are just used as ornaments. For instance the grey bunny in a pink jump suit, that we bought in Hillsburgh, probably wasn't supposed to be a Christmas tree ornament, but the tiny twin girls in traditional costume bought in Hungary by the girls' 'Oma' probably were. And the beautiful Christmas drum given to Julia by nanny Molly Jean, definitely was.

Our collection of Christmas tree things could be from Ashley's or simply the result of a school project. Each one holds a fond memory of a place, a person or an event and they remind us of these each year when we unwrap them and hang them on our tree.

I hope all of the Christmas tree ornaments are on the same tree branch at your house this holiday.

Merry Christmas.

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