

Make it fresh

Here's how to handle your Christmas tree

With Christmas tree lots beginning to spring up all over town The Liberal contacted Ed Max from Provincial Fire Prevention Company to get some tips on safe handling.

Start out by selecting a fresh tree and make an additional diagonal cut about one inch above the original to permit tree to absorb water, he suggested.

Of course, erect the tree away from the fireplace or heater, water daily and avoid smoking near the tree.

Be sure to check Christmas lights for worn or frayed cords which may overheat and avoid placing bulbs against needles.

Artificial metal trees should not be decorated with electric lights, said Mr. Max, as a short or bare wire will energize the whole tree and a child or anyone could be seriously injured.

"A metal tree can overheat and become like an element on the stove," he added.

Artificial trees made from a plastic material seem to be relatively safe, with a chemical added to retard fire or flame. Mr. Max does suggest people take the same precautions with these trees they would with a fresh tree.

Pressurized aerosol cans of flame retardant to be sprayed on trees have

not been approved, said Mr. Max, and his checking has turned up the fact that under testing the coating proved to be absolutely useless.

A simple spray which can be made up from chemicals easily and inexpensively purchased from a drug store could

be applied to paper decorations to make sure they are safe.

Mr. Max suggests that seven parts of borax mixed with three parts of boric acid in one hundred parts of water can be sprayed on decorations without fear of stain or damage and will retard

flame. Another hint is to pack used wrapping paper into boxes rather than burn it in fireplace or stove as the dyes added to the paper make it burn at temperatures in excess of 2,400 degrees Fahrenheit and can cause damage to chimney and overheat

stove pipes. Last but not least, double check smoke detectors and replace batteries if necessary to make sure they are working properly and it wouldn't hurt to make a note of the fire department telephone number — just in case.

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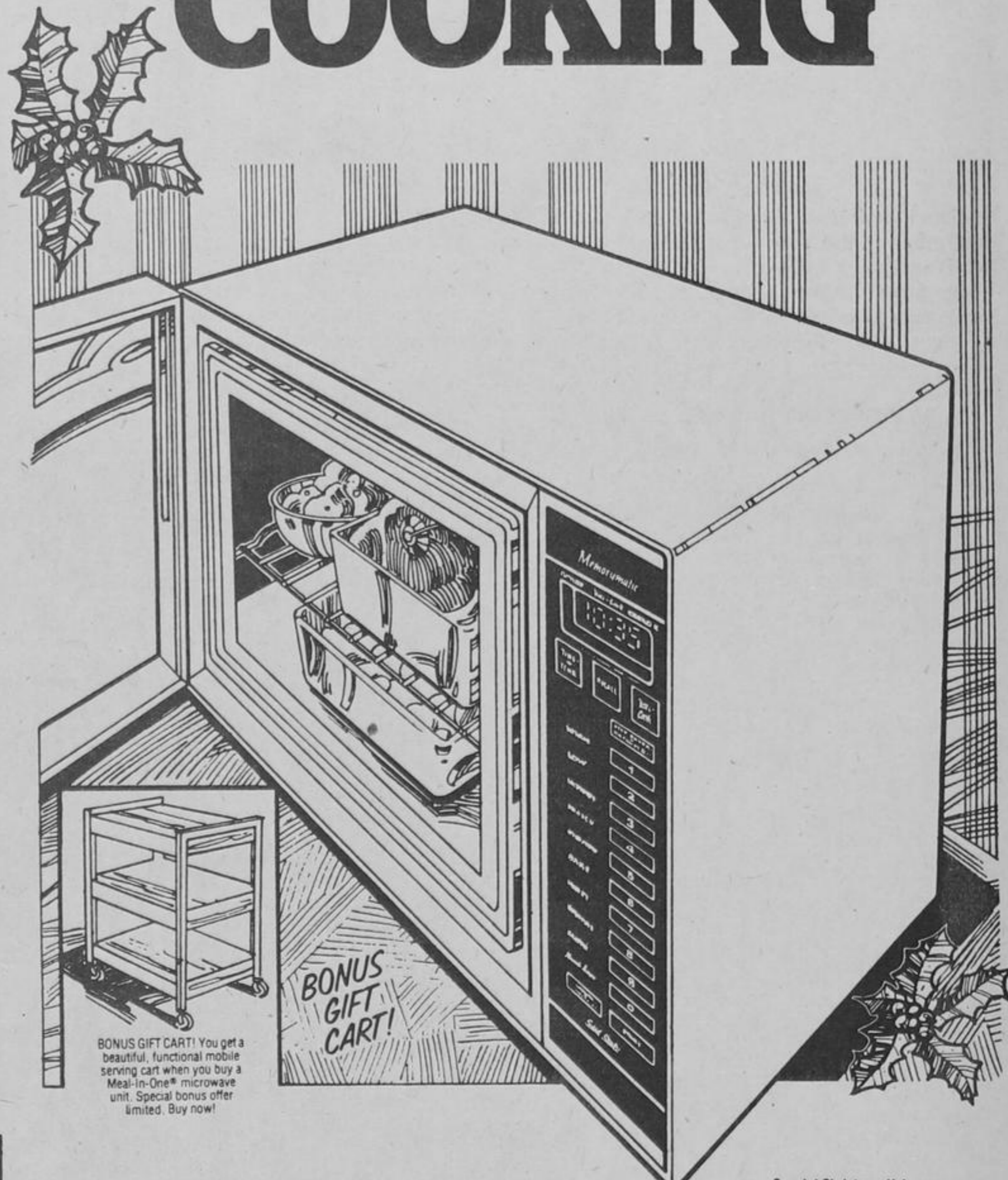
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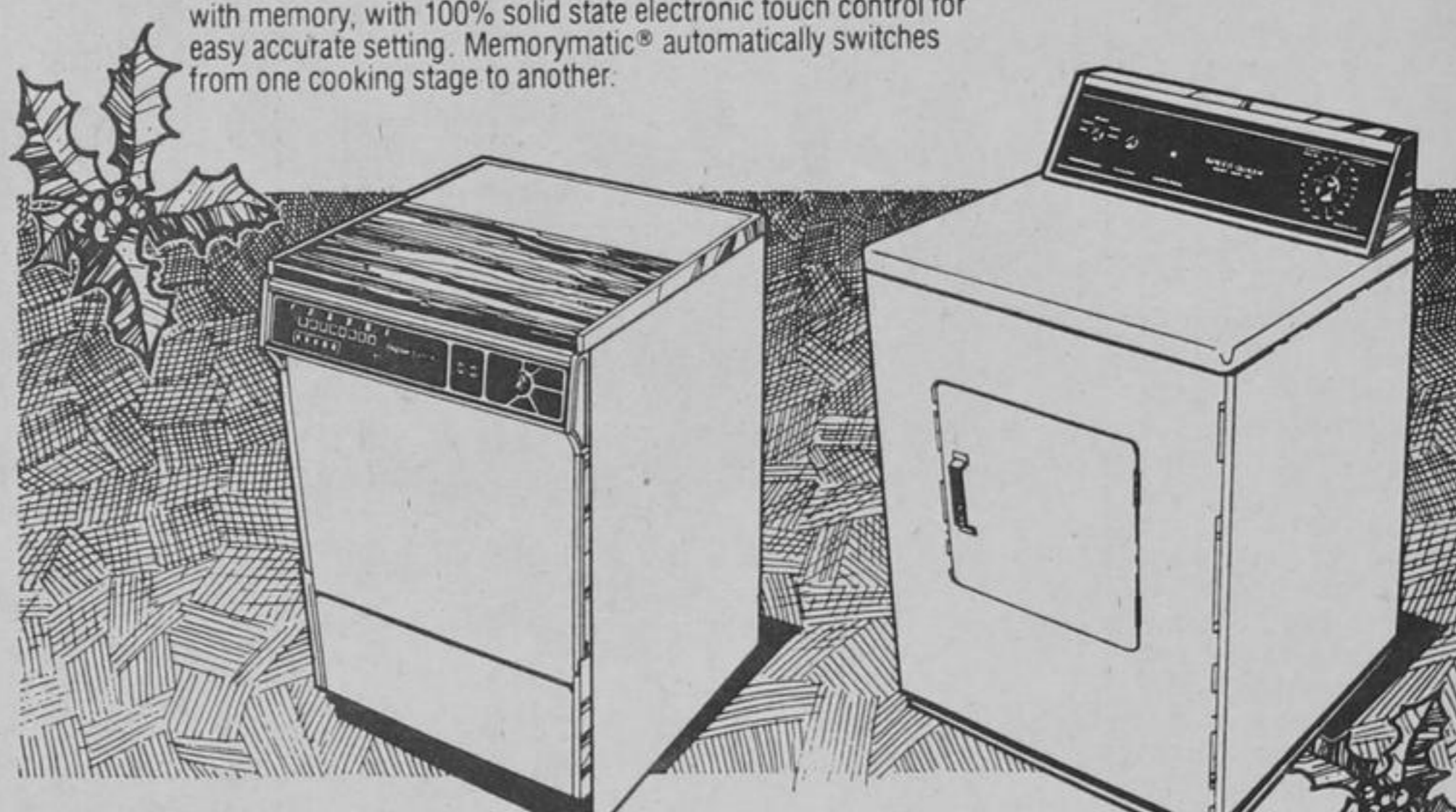


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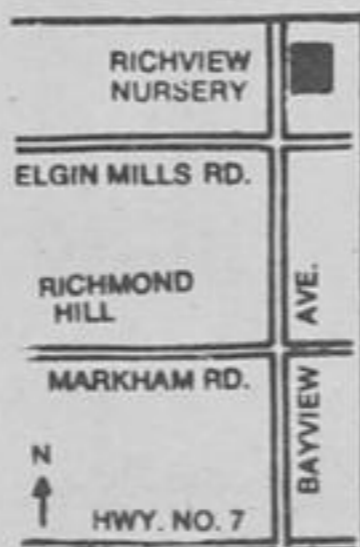
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