

Business

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A 'wheel' good toy

Oakville man invents new toy that proves trickier than a yo-yo

By Shelly Sanders Greer
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

A new toy has wheeled into Oakville, just in time for summer vacation. It's produced by an Oakville games inventor, and it challenges players to perform tricks using magnetized wheels on two rails.

Called Cyberail, this toy's tricks are limited only by imagination and skill.

"It has the 'Wow' factor," says Steve LePage, creator of Cyberail and owner of Kid Games Ltd. "Kids look at it and say, 'Wow, what is it?'"

Cyberail has only been available for a couple of weeks, but LePage says the reception has been fantastic.

"It was introduced at the World Yo-Yo Championships in July and everyone thought it was pretty cool," says LePage, who is hoping this will become the next craze.

LePage's dreams for Cyberail may come true. It was just selected as a winner in Dr. Toy's Best Children's Vacation Products Award Program. The inventor has also had interest from 13 other countries including Japan, the United Kingdom and Germany, not to mention the United States.

Geared towards kids aged seven and up, this reporter decided to try it out with her children. They were immediately drawn to the unique look of Cyberail and were intent on getting the wheels to do what they wanted.

"I like it because it's magnetized," said Amanda, 6. "You can take the wheels off and make the wheels move."

Bethany, who is 4, is a bit young for Cyberail, but she was able to bend her wrist properly and get the wheel to move along the rails, which kept her mesmerized. She is also left-handed, but because Cyberail is ergonomically designed for both left and right hands, she had no problem handling it.

It's not as easy as it looks, especially the tricks, which is one of the best things about the toy as far as LePage is concerned.

"If it's too easy, kids will get bored. Once kids

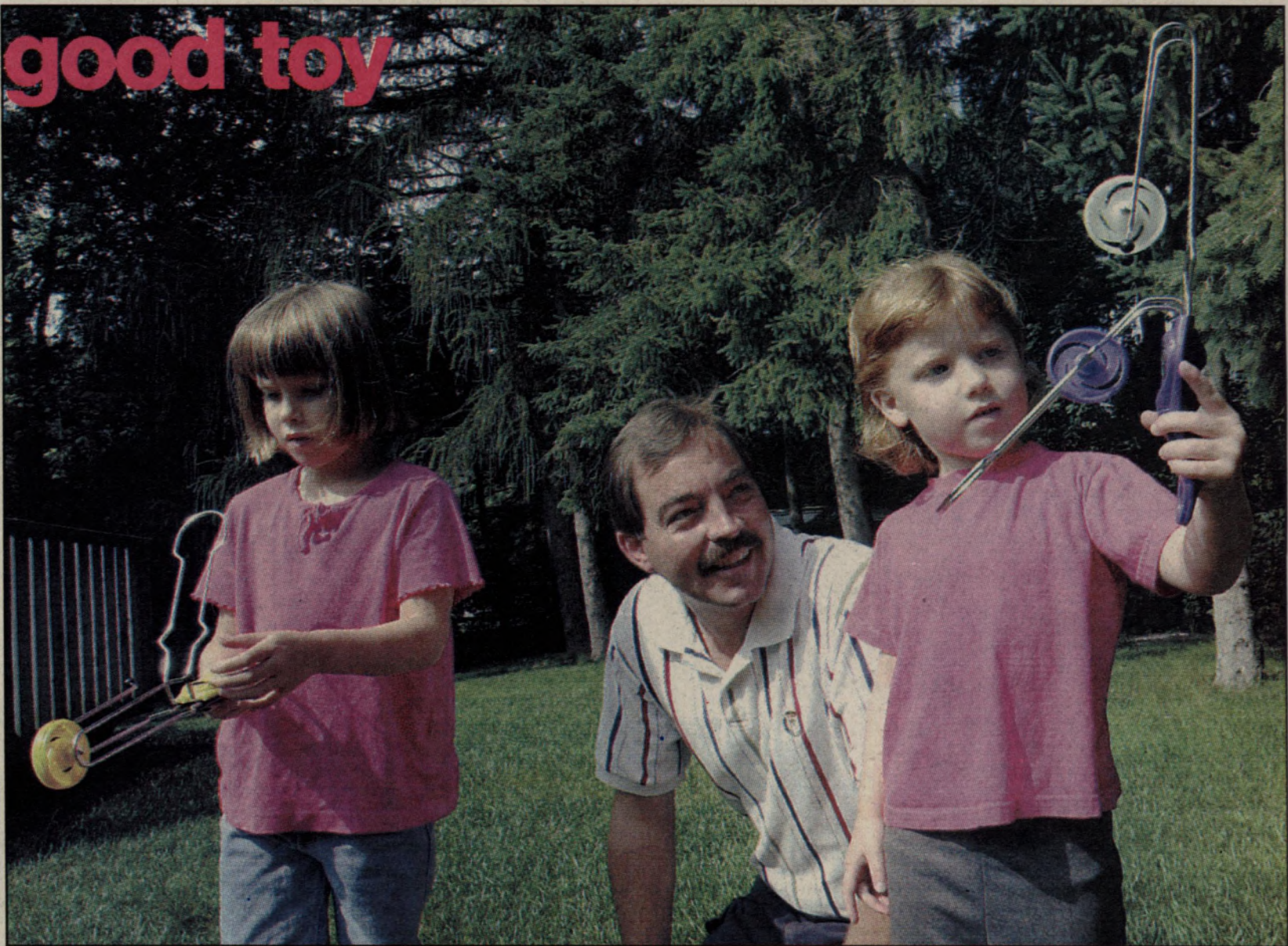


Photo by Peter C. McCusker

Oakville toy inventor and marketer Steve LePage is delighted that Amanda Greer, 6, and her sister Bethany, 4, are enjoying his new invention, Cyberail, a toy that was introduced at the World Yo-Yo Championships last month. It has also been selected as a winner in Dr. Toy's Best Children's Vacation Products Award Program.

master something, they can work on another trick that's harder," he explains. "It's great to watch their initial reaction. There is magnetism, gravity and centrifugal forces at work. Kids don't understand why it does what it does, but they think it's neat."

In a video LePage uses to promote this toy, teens demonstrate some pretty amazing tricks, like "throwing" the wheel from one Cyberail to another, spinning and launching the wheels.

LePage has set up a website where tricks can be seen, and products and accessories can be

ordered.

Cyberail can be purchased in Oakville at Mastermind, Toys R Us, and Toys, Games and Elephants. It will be available at more toy stores in the next few months – perfect timing for Christmas.

This is the fourth product LePage has produced in the four years he's been operating Kid Games. With all the attention Cyberail is getting, he plans to be busy promoting and distributing it, as well as working on other versions which may be launched soon.

His other games include MoneyCents, used in many classrooms with rave reviews, Proud to be Me, a board game which opens up the lines of communication between parent and child, and Mini Travel Cards, a great option for road trips this summer.

"I love Cyberail," says LePage. "It is a cool toy. I'm really pleased with the final product and the reactions from kids."

For more information about Cyberail, check out the website at www.cyberailtoys.com, or contact LePage at 1-888-KID-GAMES.

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LOST: Large male Siamese cat 'Ambush' Seal point, cross-eyed, 13 years, needs medical attention. Neutered, timid, microchipped. Britannia, 9th line August 7. Reward. 905 785-2932

LOST: man's beige Tilley hat with beaded band. Sentimental value. East Burlington 637-9024

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