

Be Inspired by New York's Independent Toy Stores

Owners share tips for displays



by Alyssa LaFaro

Dinosaur Hill during the holidays

Shopping in New York City's toy stores can change your life – just read Cathy Stone's story on page 10. Because you'll be in the neighborhood for Toy Fair anyway, here's a short list of some of our favorite stores, from the East Village to Long Island. As a bonus, we asked their owners for tips on creating inspirational, "buy-me" displays. While you're there, go see them for yourself.



Dinosaur Hill

Owner: Pamela Pier

Address: 306 E. 9th St. (East Village)

Years in Business: 30

Square footage: 450

Best-Selling Toy: Building Blocks/Basic Toys

Advice for eye-catching displays: Force customers to use their imagination. "We try to have displays that create a narrative," says Pam Pier. "Our goal is to have people stop and look at it, and think about the parts and how they relate to each other. For instance, in our current window we created a dock with a nutcracker on it. There is also a ship, a pirate dingy, a giant whale, a small fawn and an eagle with three little birds. The middle of the display reads, 'Give peace to all living creatures.' All of these things may or may not relate to each other. Regardless, they make people stop and wonder."