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based on "The Polar Express" Saturday at the Central New York Living History Museum in Cortlandville.

Transfixed by trains

C'ville museum hosts display of model locomotives

By ROBERT CREENAN
Staff Reporter

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CORTLANDVILLE
Doug Deer has been collect-
ing model trains for the past
50 years.

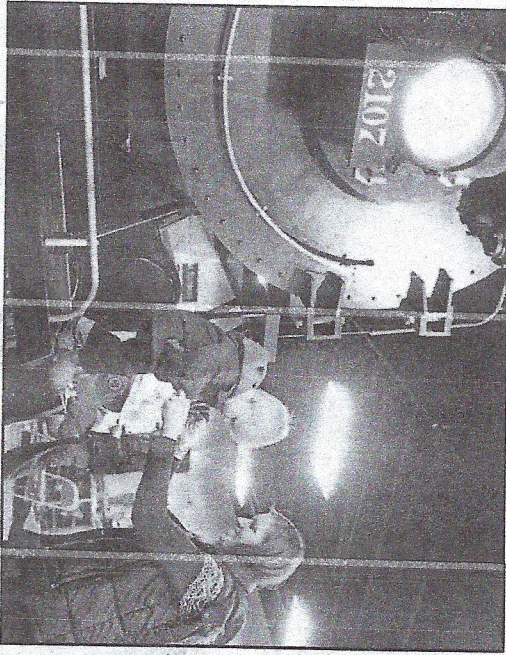
The 66-year-old Cortland
resident started getting train
sets as Christmas gifts from
his dad. They grew from a
Christmas-time display in
Deer's house to more than 100
sets on display year-round.

"When it got too big, I
made it permanent because I
couldn't take it down every
year," Deer said.

Deer got the chance Satur-
day to show off some of his
sets at the Central New York
Living History Center's
semiannual Train Day.

It took Deer a week to
build the eight sets on dis-
play, including a train that
went around a Christmas tree
with ornaments that had min-
iature train sets inside them.

The centerpiece of Deer's
displays was a large set that
contained model buildings,



Shavlya Peppel, of Cortland, helps her son Henry, 2, get
down from the cow catcher of a train Saturday at the
Central New York Living History Museum.

cars and people. Buttons let
kids start the train, light the
buildings and activate the
sawmill and other features.

Nine-year-old Mason Jen-
son of Cortland transfixed on
the large display in the mu-
seum while 9-year-old Ju-
lian Jenson liked the vintage
trains.
"Their uncle has some
Express."

Earl Randolph and his son,
Bill, had their own trainset on
display, with two sets of rails
and trains going in circles on
them. The setup re-creates
one at Earl Randolph's home.
"I've always enjoyed it,"
the 78-year-old Earl Ran-
dolph said. "Since I've re-
tired, I had more time to get
into it. And it's a fun pas-
time."

"It's just cool," Bill Ran-
dolph said.

This was the museum's
first train day with a Christ-
mas theme — previous
events were in October and
November. Kim Walsh, the
organizer and a member
of the Homeville Museum
board, said attendance rang-
es from 20 to 60 people.

Sarah Dimare of Moravia
brought her 2-year-old son,
Cyllis, who sat enraptured by
the sets with Christmas cars.
"I took him to a train mu-
seum in Medina and he loved
it," Dimare said. "It's good
we don't have to drive two
hours for a train display."

Study urges ban on window blind cords

CHICAGO (AP) — Children's in-

juries and deaths from window blinds
have not stalled despite decades of safe-
ty concerns, according to a new U.S.
study that recommends a complete ban
on blinds with cords.

Nearly 17,000 young children were

facturers adopted voluntary safety stan-
dards including warning labels. The
industry now has a plan in the works to
make cordless blinds the only option at
retail stores and online.

The study "should be a huge wake-up
call to the public, to the retailers, to the

Kaiser later formed the advocacy
group Parents for Window Blind Safety.

While the study's data analysis
doesn't show an up or down trend in
injuries and deaths, the fact that they're
still occurring shows that safety stan-
dards have been inadequate, said lead
author Dr. Garv Smith, who directs

New evacuations were ordered as one
fire sent up an enormous plume near
Montecito and Carpinteria, seaside
areas in Santa Barbara County.

"The winds are kind of squirrely
right now," said county fire spokes-
man Mike Eliason. "Some places the
smoke is going straight up in the air,
and others it's blowing sideways.
Depends on what canyon we're in."

Southern California's gusty Santa
Ana winds have long contributed to
some of the region's most disastrous
wildfires. They blow from the inland
toward the Pacific Ocean, speeding
up as they squeeze through mountain
passes and canyons.

Gusts of up to 40 mph are expected
through today, according to the Na-
tional Weather Service.

Containment increased Sunday on
other major blazes in Los Angeles,
Riverside and San Diego counties.
Resources from those fires were di-
verted to the Santa Barbara foothills
to combat the 270-square-mile fire
that started Dec. 4 in neighboring
Ventura County.

As of late Sunday, the Thomas Fire
had destroyed 790 structures and
damaged 191.

Fires are not typical in Southern
California this time of year but can
break out when dry vegetation and
too little rain combine with the Santa

See FIRES, page 2

