

The Star-Ledger

WX52

FINAL EDITION

TODAY'S FORECAST: Areas of morning fog, then mild and partly sunny.



at 7 A.M.
37°

at 2 P.M.
50°

at 7 P.M.
47°

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2006

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THE NEWSPAPER FOR NEW JERSEY

THE KATRINA REPORT:

"The failure of initiative



MICHAEL CHERTOFF:

"We now know our

Developer set to leave

The first: "Everyone knows how difficult it is to change. Especially when you've lived your life a certain way for more than four decades."

Compare it to this: "This, the 47th year of my life, is arguably too late to have this discussion. . . . At a point in every person's life, one has to look deeply into the mirror of one's soul and decide one's unique truth in the world, not as we may want to see it or hope to see it, but as it is."

The first speaker: The Mattel consultant talking about Ken.

The second speaker: Jim McGreevey.

Yep, there is only one conclusion we can draw: Ken has gone all "Brokeback" on us.

So far his returning wardrobe consists of board shorts and a white T-shirt, but we predict it is only a matter of time before we see a line of Ralph Lauren-inspired cowboy gear — everything from suede chaps to a little blue tin cof-

Electronic gizmos create a buzz at American International Toy Fair

BY PEGGY O'CROWLEY
STARLEDGER STAFF

NEW YORK — A 6-foot plush white and blue Smurf and a giant Pink Panther waved at visitors to the American International Toy Fair at the sprawling Jacob Javits Convention Center in Manhattan. Rows of booths displayed delicate Madame Alexander dolls, cute Gund stuffed animals, and colorful Alex art supplies.

But this year, there was something new: At the far end of the exhibit, which attracts 1,500 manufacturers looking to market the next big hit for the holiday season, was a special area called E@play, devoted to electronic toys, games and software for kids of all ages.

Among the offerings:

■ An alternative to traditional piano lessons, the Piano Wizard by Allegro Rainbows uses a color-coded keyboard and video screen. Notes in the shape of lady bugs float upward, and, like a basic video game, the player must strike the color coded key before it hits the top of the screen.

■ Or you can create your own mini-movies — inserting digital photos of your friends or family members in fun or embarrassing situations — with the new XipClips application by XOW!, aimed at the MySpace.com crowd.

■ There's no taking turns when you play Game Wave by Zapit Games, an interactive game console that allows up to six people at a time to play automated versions of word games, video games, and card games. Players immediately key in their responses.

This technology-driven entertainment for kids of all ages is increasingly becoming the norm in an industry in which children are abandoning traditional toys like dolls or race cars at ever younger ages in favor of electronics. Toy industry sales have been declining slightly for the past few years, and for the first time, icons like Barbie and Hot Wheels, both manufactured by Mattel Inc., suffered an 11 percent drop in sales last year.

"I wouldn't say it's spelling doom for toys, but

[See TOYS, Page 71]



RAY STUBBLEBINE/HASBRO

It won't shred the curtains or chew the plants. The new i-Cat.