

(Photo/Stephen Cantrell,

ioned rag dolls to space toys reflecting the

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The trendiest and hottest-selling single line of merchandise of the season will be the new generation of "Star Wars" characters and their space paraphernalia.

That's the prediction of Steve Beane, inventory control manager for the nine Toys-R-Us stores in Michigan. Five of those stores are in metropolitan Detroit.

Yoda, the ugly little man-creature star of 'The Empire Strikes Back," this year's "Star Wars" offering, is the hottest selling little item on the shelves, said Beane.

"Ever since the new movie, that merchandise is selling like crazy," he said.

NEWEST "Star Wars" items are the "Sno Speeder," "Attack Base" and "Tann Tann Beast." But if your children don't already have Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, Darth Vader and other character figures from the original movie, they're probably out of luck. Beane said they're no longer being manufactured.

Besides the "hot-trend merchandise" highly visible in TV commercials, shoppers will find a wide range of dolls, preschool toys, electronic games, trains and car sets,

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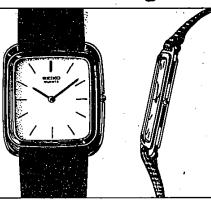
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