

McPHERSON, KANS.

SENTINEL

D. 5,215

NOV 14 1963

Burbules

Toys Predict Many Things Of Future

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For years, toys used to be miniatures of things used in the adult world. This Christmas, many are scaled - down versions of the world of tomorrow.

On a stroll through toyland for example, you'll see the "Wing Thing." This bat - like flying device has a 52 inch wingspread and is 36 inches long. Children can fly it like a kite, or under power from its small gasoline engine. It climbs to about 300 feet, and when the engine runs out of fuel, it continues to swoop and soar before returning gently to earth.

The "Wing Thing" is actually the smaller version of something called a flexwing, which will help return our astronauts from outer space in Project Gemini. Significantly, the toy version is available for children before the astronauts have the real thing.

If your imagination has been captured by predictions of automated highway systems, take a look at Autorama. Little cars travel on complex highway systems with turn-offs and cloverleaves —all by remote control.

And there's even a remote control car thrill show with the "Fly - Over Chicane." The little cars race up a ramp, hurtle off into space, change lanes in mid-air, land safely on the other side, and keep on going.

Even that old standby the Erector set has turned toward the future in 1963. Redesigned for the first time in 50 years, the perennial favorite now