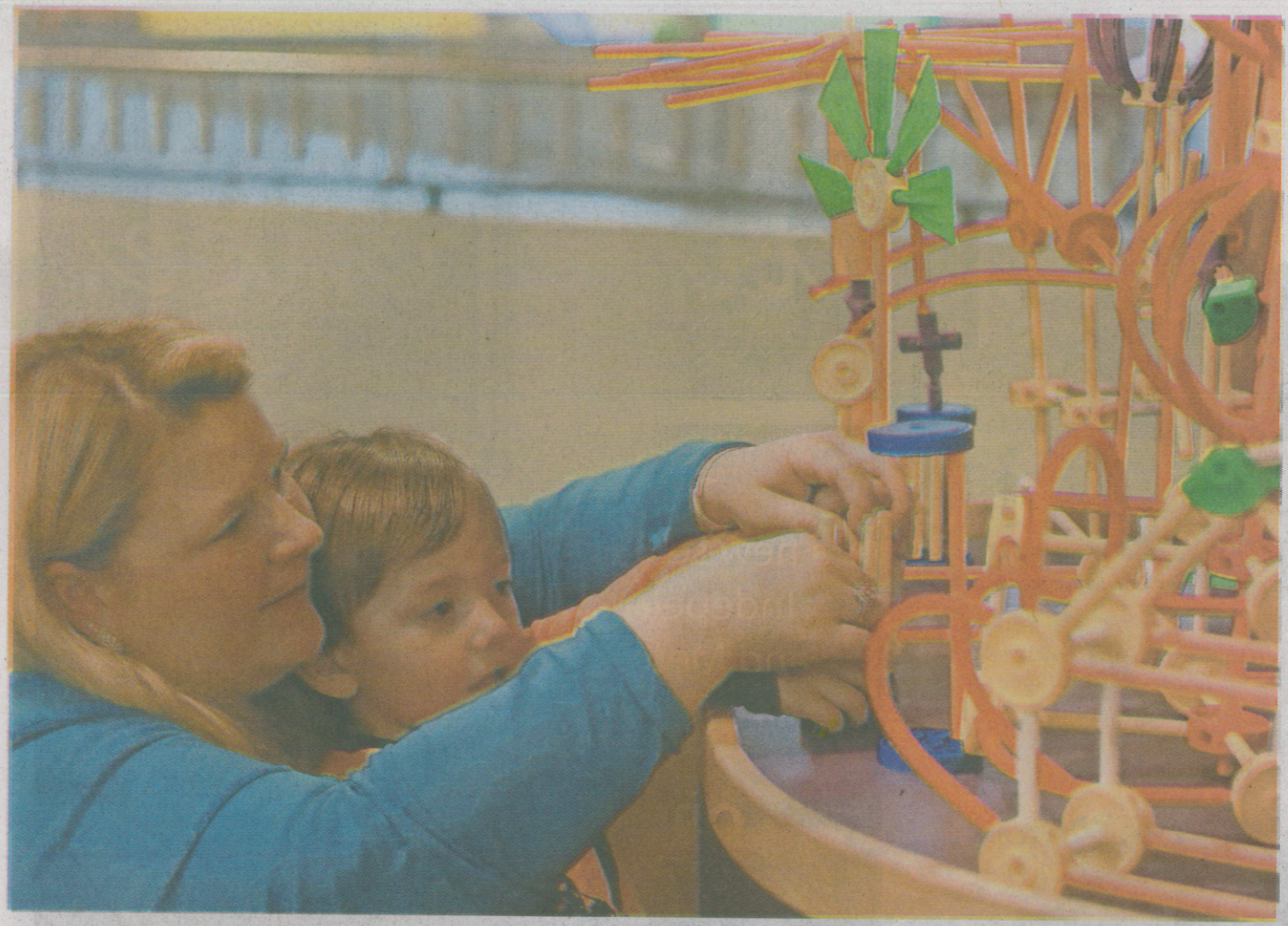


PAMELA DUNLAP/CONTRIBUTOR

Kathy Anne Sapp and her son, Noah, 3, build a tower in the new Tinker Toy exhibit at the Children's Museum of the Upstate. Spark!Lab will open to the public today at the museum.

Spark!Lab Smithsonian opens to public at TCMU

ANGIE CAMPBELL
UPSTATE PARENT

Spark!Lab Smithsonian will open to the public at 10 a.m. today at The Children's Museum of the Upstate.

The new permanent exhibit offers opportunities for children and families to explore their inventive creativity — to create, innovate, collaborate and problem-solve. Children will experience interactive, hands-on learning through games, experiments, activities and special programs.

The exhibit will be open at different times for different ages. The schedule:

» Tuesdays: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Tuesdays — ages 5 and younger only; 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. — all ages;

» Wednesdays through Saturdays: 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.;

» Sundays: noon – 4:30 p.m. all ages.

In partnership with the Smithsonian's Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, The Children's Museum, with the support of Fluor, is one of several museums around the globe to host the exhibit. The original Spark!Lab opened in 2008 at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

"Spark!Lab will give children and their parents new ways to explore and discover, ultimately opening their eyes to the possibilities of what they can create and achieve through the process of invention," said Nancy Halverson, president and CEO of The Children's Museum.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Smithsonian and the Lemelson Center for giving Upstate children the opportunity to explore the process of invention through an incredibly unique and special experience," she said.

Developed by the Lemelson Center and made possible through the support of Fluor, the Spark!Lab is on the third floor of the Greenville museum adjacent from the "Grandma Betty's Farm" exhibit.

The museum also recently opened the "Tinkertoy: Build Your Imagination" exhibit and introduced an interactive smart phone app for families to use while at the museum.

To learn more about Spark!Lab, visit www.tcmupstate.org.