



POST HOMES



PH1

NATIONAL POST, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2006

ANONYMOUS INNOCENT VIRGIN

That's what Italian designer Gio Ponti called his 1957 Superleggera chair. PH4



A peek into the living room of The Avenue's luxurious model suite gives a hint of the Art Deco-styling by Brian Gluckstein. The Avenue, a new condo at Avenue Road and St. Clair Ave. W., is selling fast. Page PH2.

Who goes there — friend or foe?

New gay-oriented condo a troubling sign for Toronto



KELVIN BROWNE
Right Angles

Last week's announcement that another condo is going up on King Street East was hardly news, even with Context Development and architect Peter Clewes involved. What was startling, however, is that The Bohemian, as this condo at 288 King E. is called, is conceived and built for gays, lesbians and their friends.

I'm not sure what I find more shocking, the fact that some gays and lesbians find it necessary to create their own ghetto (the high-rise homosexual equivalent of a gated community) or that I'm disturbed by the idea — and I'm gay.

See GAY on Page PH6

Energy Star homes follow a 'fairly simple formula'

Keeping outside out and inside in

With energy prices soaring and home prices rising, a few Toronto-area low-rise developers have started building increasingly energy-efficient houses — both to gain an edge over the competition and to lessen our impact on the environment. The second of a two-part series on energy efficiency.

BY LISA VAN DE VEN

For Sean Mason, curbing energy use and reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a matter of personal responsibility. "I believe that we have to do something better, that we have the opportunity as North Americans to actually curb our energy use," he says. "We have to do something."

For him, that "something" is building homes that waste less energy, and he's betting it's going to be just as important for his purchasers. In fact, last October, Mason Homes — which builds through Uxbridge, Lindsay and Barrie — introduced energy-efficiency as a standard feature in all its new detached housing. The houses use less energy and create fewer greenhouse gas emissions. "The car manufacturers are going on about their hybrids, but we can actually make more of a difference quicker in a house," Mr. Mason says.

And to prove to buyers that each

house meets this higher standard, Mr. Mason puts all his homes through an inspection process so they will be designated as Energy Star buildings.

Energy Star is designed for consumers who wish to buy more efficient goods; it used to be found only on dish-

'We have the opportunity to curb our energy use'

washers, fridges and DVD players, but now it's on houses as well. Originating in the United States, the program is managed here by Natural Resources Canada. It was introduced to the new-home-building market in 2005, giving builders such as Mr. Mason the opportunity to promote their homes as energy efficient with a respected name to back up their claims.

"There are two stats we like to put out," says Lenard Hart, director of business development for EnerQuality Corp., which runs the program for Natural Resources Canada. "It does depend on the house, because architecture does play a bit of a role in it ... but [an Energy Star home is] between 30% and 40% more energy efficient than code, and it emits two to three tonnes less greenhouse gases a year. On some big houses, we've seen up to four or five tonnes."

An Energy Star home looks just like the traditional house next door. The differences are mostly in parts of the house that buyers barely notice.

The first step in creating an Energy Star home, Mr. Hart says, is to improve the shell of the house, making sure energy stays in and drafts stay out. Better insulation is installed, more energy-efficient windows are used and ventilation is improved.

Next, he says, more efficient heating and cooling technology is brought in, including higher-efficiency furnaces and air-conditioning units. Energy Star appliances are often installed. "The formula's fairly simple — you make the envelope better, and then you make the things that heat and cool it more efficient," says Mr. Hart.

See ENERGY on Page PH4

GARDEN NOTE

CANADA BLOOMS

The 10th annual Toronto Flower and Garden Show runs March 8 to 12. For details, see canadablooms.com

MASTER PIECES

LAWRENCE PARK

The master suite of this home has oak floors, a walk-in closet with built-ins and ventilation; the ensuite has heated herringbone floors and a double whirlpool tub.

Page PH7

