

NEW IN HOMIES

Saturday, April 22, 2000 Section N

Inside



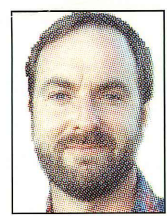
Bricks and Sticks

Say goodbye to chilly feet

Columnist Eric Wegler takes a stroll through a Willowdale EnviroHome, which was designed to be more comfortable, draft-free and quiet. He also finds out why its heating system will keep your tootsies toasty. **Page N10**

Workshop

How your kids can carve out a niche in life



Woodworking brings out the best in children, columnist Steven Maxwell believes, teaching them patience, planning and perseverance.

A contest open to youth only will give them confidence and focus their efforts, he says. **Page N2**

"Mortgage language borders on the incomprehensible, breaking almost every rule of English composition: ponderous words, run-on sentences, archaic clauses that follow no logical sequence. The need to demystify mortgages is long overdue."

— LAWYER ALAN SILVERSTEIN
Page N11



Innisfil

Sounds of silence greet buyers near Barrie

A subdivision of more than 300 homes near Barrie is a short drive from a busy shopping area, but a world apart from its hustle and bustle. The quiet site includes trails and wooded areas, as well as a community park and two swimming ponds. **Page N11**



PHOTOS BY KEITH BEATY/TORONTO STAR

AT THE CENTRE: Above, at builder Bob Mitchell's "Loft House," a hospital lamp lights hotel work table.

Open house



Condo conversion expert switches gears to build a loft-like home in Riverdale

"They paved paradise, put up a parking lot"
Big Yellow Taxi, Joni Mitchell

BY VALERIE HAUCH
TORONTO STAR

He's not a man who likes to do things the same old way. And if Bob Mitchell has to unpave a parking lot to put up a small urban paradise, so be it.

In fact, the local builder-developer, well-known around town for unique loft projects, has done just that with a custom-built house on Logan Ave. in Riverdale.

In so doing, Mitchell has managed a microcosmic reversal of destructive urban change once decried in the decades-old "Big Yellow Taxi" classic written by Canadian singer Joni Mitchell. That lyrical lament seems to have become part of the collective subconscious, expressing disenchantment with redevelopment that's ugly and unimaginative.

Those latter two adjectives could not be used to describe the outwardly plain, inwardly anything-but "Loft House," as Bob Mitchell calls it on his Web site (www.mitchell-lofts.com). It nestles next to his sold-out 12-unit Printers Row condominium project, now under construction on Logan Ave. inside a turn-of-the-century building, last used by a printing company.

Loft House — which was started in the summer of 1999 and mostly finished by the end of the year — is built on what was once a parking lot, 130 or so feet deep, that served the industrial building.

Visited recently on a gray, overcast day, the unprepossessing exterior didn't prepare the reporter for the bright interior illuminated largely by natural light.

A rectangular-shaped set of stairs rises from the centre of the first floor — which has ceilings 13 feet high — to a third floor with a skylight. A shaft of light



BOB MITCHELL

➔ Please see New, N12

BUILT TO ORDER: Janelle Hutchison and son Paul, 13, talk at the stainless steel kitchen island in their loft-like Riverdale home. Hutchison and her husband Kelly Robinson worked out the design with builder Bob Mitchell. The family dog is Mini.