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Eco-bunkie lets you climb into a greener existence

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Martin Liefhebber's partner wanted a bunkie.

"You know, just as an extra bed, maybe at the cottage or even in the backyard," said Liefhebber, remembering the brief conversation they had sometime in November.

She forgot about it; he didn't.

Yesterday at the Green Living Show, Liefhebber, an architect, unveiled the bunkie – a five-metre-high, curved structure that collects rainwater for the washroom, and has solar panels and a wood-stove. It's made of northeastern cedar found within 500 kilometres of the Greater Toronto Area, and uses no steel except some nuts and bolts.

It's as green as green gets.

Premier Dalton McGuinty and Mayor David Miller opened the third annual show yesterday. And while Liefhebber's aerialoft loomed over everything else at Exhibition Place with its towering height, there were hundreds of other environment-friendly options and innovations.

McGuinty talked about initiatives his government has taken toward making the province greener, including a \$550 million, two-year program through which some 1,000 Ontario schools will become more energy-efficient.

Liefhebber, an architect at Breathe Architects in Toronto, said young graduates from the Ontario College of Art and Design – where he teaches part-time – helped create the aerialoft.

They started working on the concept in January and, as it went through different designs and ideas, Liefhebber knew it would be something special.

Visitors gawked at the aerialoft and its washroom with the revolving door, and inundated Liefhebber with questions.

"It's one of those things where you are living green, next to nature and still have everything you need," he said. It has yet to be launched commercially and is estimated to cost around \$20,000 without the solar panels.

The green-ovations section of the show included displays of unique prototypes and newly marketed products. Carolyn Moss of Moss Sund Architects in Toronto brought a unique rainwater-

harvesting concept that is attractive, easy to use and green. She and two clients, Lee Fletcher and Terence Woodside, created the stainless steel tank covered with ivy.

The show is on until tomorrow.



LUCAS OLENIUK/TORONTO STAR

Architect Martin Liefhebber's "aerialoft," designed with help from OCAD graduates, is garnering a lot of attention at the Green Living Show.

