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At Home briefs

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A TV STAR?

HGTV's "Bang for Your Buck" show is looking for "fun and enthusiastic" Cape homeowners with a vacation rental that has undergone a major renovation in the past three years. Three rentals will be chosen, an HGTV design expert and real estate expert will evaluate each, then choose who got the most "bang for their buck." Homeowners will need to be available May 23-26. Deadline to apply is Thursday. Information: rcope@highnoonTV.com or 303-872-8586.

GEN Y: NEAT FREAKS?

If it's spring, Generation Y may be at home — cleaning. According to research from the American Cleaning Institute, 82 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds will spring-clean this year — about 15 percent more than the national average of two-thirds. Twenty-seven percent of Generation Y respondents use spring as a time to clean their homes from top to bottom. Ninety-six percent said having a clean home is important to them. Thirty percent of Gen-Y men agree that if not for spring cleaning, they probably would never clean. Men are more motivated when their home starts to smell, they are told to clean or someone comments about their home's lack of cleanliness, the survey said.

YES, AN APP FOR THAT

If you've got a smartphone, there are some garden-related apps available to help:

- Burpee Home Gardens introduces the Burpee Garden Coach, a free app for gardeners who like to grow what they eat. Through text messages and Web-based interaction via mobile phone, you learn how to choose, grow, maintain, harvest and eat backyard-grown veggies. To get started, simply text your ZIP code to 80998. Features include text messages throughout the gardening season on planting date tips and maintenance reminders and support; the ability to record, document and rate plants in a garden journal; access to local forecasts; and harvesting ideas. To get the app: burpeehomegardens.com.
- The Arbor Day Foundation makes it easy to identify trees, using your iPhone or iPod Touch, with "Arbor Day Tree Identification Guide: What Tree Is That?" based on its similar print tree ID guide. The \$4.95 app can be used regardless of cellphone coverage.
- Bonnie Plants has launched a mobile Web address, m.bonnieplants.com, which is like a plant tag with information on varieties, how to plant and harvest, tips and even recipes. Site content includes details about vegetable and herb varieties; planting and care; harvest and use; projects; container gardening basics and planting videos.

GARDENING WITH KIDS

A carton of eggs, a laundry detergent scoop and a sieve are all the youngest gardeners need to start seeds for spring. Spoon soil sifted through a sieve into blown-out eggs or egg carton space and then carefully place a seed or two in each spot. To watch roots develop, fill transparent laundry scoops with soil, and place seeds near the scoop side. The plants in eggs or cartons can be moved directly into outdoor pots or garden patch: The biodegradable containers will break apart from the pressure of roots.