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Friday, May 21, 2004

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Posted on Sat, May. 15, 2004

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Help! In the Home

DECORATING

Preparing home for buyer's market

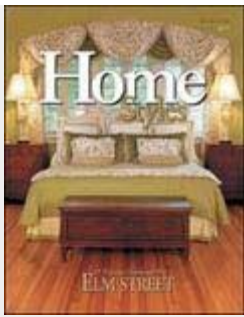
If you're trying to get your home market-ready or want to garner some decorating advice from the pros, check out these tips from three real estate experts courtesy of the Sheffield School of Interior Design:

When preparing a home for sale, the most important thing is keeping the place immaculately clean.

Minimizing clutter should be the first thing you do. Possible buyers are distracted by art collections or tabletops filled with family photos.

Organize closets, clear kitchen countertops and clear the refrigerator door of children's drawings and magnets.

Drowning in too much stuff?
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Coastal Carolina
HomeStyles

Enhance your home's curb appeal by upgrading exterior lighting, planting flowers near the door, adding fresh mulch to existing flower beds, trimming shrubs and removing dead plants or trees.

If considering new wall color, go with something neutral and light, which will enable the perspective buyer to better visualize how the space would look with their own furniture and accessories.

Spruce up the entryway with a pot of flowers on the front steps and replace the doorknob, wash down the door and have the windows professionally cleaned.

For more tips, visit www.sheffield.edu.

By Elaine Gaston, The Sun News

THE BOOK SHELF

Ideas galore fill new design book

The editors of Budget Living magazine believe style doesn't come from a store. It comes from within, and it doesn't have to carry a big price tag.

That's the attitude they've brought to their trendy publication, and it's one they've expanded on in their new book, "Home Cheap Home: A Room-By-Room Guide to Great Decorating" (Perigee Books, \$19.95).

The book is aimed at do-it-yourselfers who take pride in creating homes with a personal flair. It combines some of the best ideas from the magazine with fresh material to provide 192 pages of skinflint inspiration, such as turning wine crates into kitchen drawers, stenciling over carpet stains and using game boards as shelves.

*By Mary Beth Breckenridge,
Knight Ridder*

HOME SAFETY

New product gives control at fingertips

Fire 1st Defense Inc. has a nonrechargeable air-powered fire extinguisher that lets you point and spray instead of letting the blaze spread while you are attempting to read the directions.

It's not for big fires - the container holds just 16 ounces of water-based, pH-neutral fire suppressant

- but it could help keep a lid on a stove fire or other small conflagration till the firefighters arrive.

Since you use it once and then toss it, you don't have to concern yourself with making sure the extinguisher is properly charged. The can I have sitting on my desk has been there for a few months and won't expire until Nov. 25, 2005.

For information, call (610) 993-9960 or visit www.fire1stdefense.com.

*By Alan J. Heavens,
Knight Ridder*

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