

Generations

Inventions that amaze or make you wonder why

There's an article on the Web about new products that inventors promise will make our lives easier and happier. Here's a few with top honors:

British company Acti-check developed a wearable wristband named Assure, which continuously checks to see if the user is still alive and informs relatives if not. I thought this was a morbid idea, but it began to make sense for worried adults who needed to check on their elderly parents.

The watch-like tech monitors the wearer's temperature and movements, conducting checks every 15 minutes. The analysis and information is stored online and can be accessed by anyone with credentials.

Promising to be easy to set up, stylish, lightweight, water-resistant, detecting

anything unusual day or night, one can also raise a manual alert with a squeeze of the band. It then automatically contacts those you choose on your personal



**Peg
DeMarco**

responder list. It has a long battery life and costs around \$300.

Sounds good for Mom or Dad? Perhaps, but I have a strong suspicion that it may be difficult, if not impossible, to convince your parent to wear this gizmo when he/she would rather see you in person, talk on the phone or use the Web cam. It's still morbid to me.

There is ROBEAR, an experimental nursing-care robot capable of performing tasks such as shifting

a patient from a bed to a wheelchair and assistance in standing up.

It looks like a big, friendly, white bear, but I'm not sure I'd gamble a broken hip on ROBEAR's dexterity.

The most versatile was The Kitchen Safe, a plastic container that can be used to keep unhealthy snacks locked up.

This time-locked vault has no override switch, meaning once the contents are in, they cannot come out until the timer reaches zero. The timer can be set to lock for a one minute minimum or 10 days' maximum.

The website suggests using it not only for sweets, but cigarettes, remotes, videos, medicines, cell phones, credit cards and money. Useful? Maybe, but not if you have a heavy duty mallet within reach.

One invention I couldn't figure out why I'd want it is a cooking appliance that lets users get their faces drawn on slices of bread by way of using custom heating inserts, resulting in toast selfies. Not sure I'd want to butter anyone's face, let alone take a bite.

Pet owners can check out the Squeaker LED Poochlight, a collar and leash combination that glows in the dark, or RoboDynamics' Luna, the first human-size (almost 4.9 feet) personal robot designed for walking the dog. Not sure my dog would accept Luna since she is constantly trying to bite the Fed Ex man.

The Experience Helmet is designed to enable people to hear their own brainwaves. It makes use of an electroencephalography sensor that records any electrical activity tak-

ing place, which is then converted into sounds that reflect their states of mind. Not sure I'd want to know my states of mind every single minute of the day, especially during work hours.

If you are tired of your partner's snoring, you can invest in an anti-snore pillow that detects vibrations and gently nudges the sleeper to change positions without waking him or her. This revolutionary pillow is available online for \$139 and no doubt lessens reasons for divorce when nudging evolves into a heavy push out of bed.

For golfers, there's an alternative for throwing a valuable club when you don't make the shot. The InPutter, designed by Ingeniarius, is a golf club that monitors around 16 variables, including your swing, angle and power

generated in a shot. It also gives instant feedback by transmitting the data on your preferred device. You can silence it when you want, which probably defeats its purpose.

For those on the go, there's the Hand Drying Gloves, made up of high-tech microfibers that absorb water from your hair and air-dries your tresses. According to that company's material, not only do you save money on your electric bill, but it also protects your hair from the harmful heat of a dryer.

I'm not exactly sure how much I'd save on my \$200-plus monthly electric bill using gloves instead of a hair dryer, but those interested are urged to check out Amazon.com. They come in hot pink.