



# TOP FIVE INVENTIONS OF 2004 REVEALED

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Since I cover the interesting world in which inventors work, I see plenty of unique inventions every day. Many of America's biggest and best companies began with a single product – created by an inventive person who had a good idea and pursued it. Companies like Xerox, Coca-Cola, Nike, Goodyear, Kodak, IBM, etc., were each founded with one single product or invention.

Today I reveal the top five inventions that were created by individual inventors in 2004, meaning that you won't see the names of any big companies on these inventions. These inventions are totally different from anything that's been invented before, yet they are expected to have widespread appeal.

Inventors live in your town and in your neighborhood. The typical inventor can be your next-door neighbor, your co-worker, your sister-in-law or a former classmate. Here, then, are the top five inventions of 2004, the kind that make you say, "Wow! Why didn't I think of that?"

## THE PORTABLE WATER STERILIZER



is a pen-shaped device that zaps harmful bacteria and other microorganisms in drinking water. The lab-certified Water Sterilizer's inventor, Helmut Froeber, is a retired engineer from Irvine, California. He told me that the Water Sterilizer is ideal for campers, the military, travelers and anyone who doesn't have access to clean drinking water. The people who need it the most, though, are those who live in third-world countries. More than 1 billion people worldwide live without clean drinking water, according to Froeber.



Helmut Froeber



## THE KITCHEN MAGICIAN

is the latest brainchild of father of two, Ken Tarlow of San Francisco. Nicknamed the “Swiss Army Knife for kitchen utensils” by Tarlow, it uses hidden-compartment design to conceal its 20 individual utensils, including a knife, spatula, roasting fork, basting brush, etc.



It's ideal for apartment dwellers, the military, boy scouts and, of course, kids who are away at college. Of these five award-winning inventors, Ken probably has the coolest job of all. Ken also designs 400 products for clients such as Ron Popeil (Ronco) and The Sharper Image.

[www.smartinventions.com/magic.asp](http://www.smartinventions.com/magic.asp)



Ken Tarlow

## THE EMERGENCY LIGHT BLANKET

protects motorists when they have to change a flat tire or when they have engine trouble. The Blanket, with its flashing arrows built into it, attaches to the back of any car or truck and signals oncoming motorists to go around you. It is highly visible during the daytime, and its bright L.E.D. lights can be seen from miles away at night. People have been changing flat tires along the road since – well, since cars were first invented – but it's taken more than 100 years for someone to invent this product. Inventor Pepper Aasgaard of Omaha told me that his wife inspired him to invent it after he saw an accident on the way home from a University of Nebraska football game. The Emergency Light Blanket could have prevented that accident.

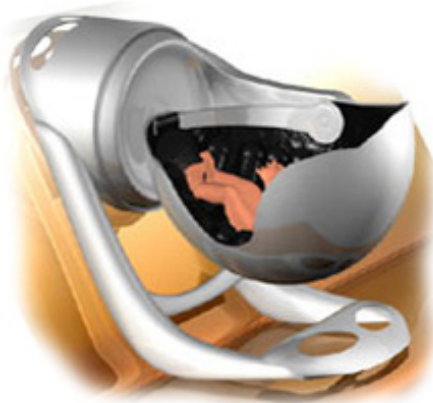


Pepper Aasgaard



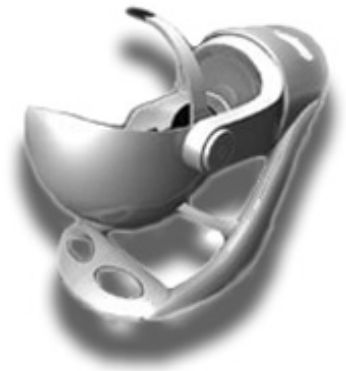
[www.asargroup.com/Index-ASAR-Electronics.html](http://www.asargroup.com/Index-ASAR-Electronics.html)

## THE SAFETY EGG



is a revolutionary child safety seat. This egg-shaped device rolls over on its axis like a Ferris Wheel to absorb the impact of a head-on collision, and it rolls over sideways on its axis during a side-angle collision. The Safety Egg's inventor is self-described "tinkerer" John Guenther of Chicago, who says, "Each year there are 200 deaths and 20,000 injuries because of the shortcoming in car seat design. Car seats were introduced to the market about 25 years ago, and they haven't changed much since then." Guenther's goal is to have a consortium of all the automakers use the Safety Egg in their new vehicles, as well as have it available as an aftermarket part.

[www.safetyegg.com](http://www.safetyegg.com)



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