



Smithsonian News Service Photo courtesy of The Discovery Channel

Fascinated with robots, Pittsburgh inventor K. G. Engelhardt is developing robotic kitchens and offices that will lighten work for elderly and disabled people.

the engines horizontally. A unique baffling system directs the thrust downward for takeoff and backward for flight. The flying car will fit in a garage, take off vertically and carry two passengers at 400 miles per hour. Moller believes so much in his invention that he makes his own test flights.

Moller admits that the idea of thousands of these cars flying into major cities like San Francisco is, at the very least, scary. But he says there's plenty of airspace, and a new U.S. Air Force Global Positioning System already in use is capable of keeping track of his flying cars. Four orbiting satellites will pinpoint each car's location, give or take 30 feet, and track its speed. On-board computers will keep the airborne automobiles safely separated on "electronic highways" in the sky, Moller says.

"Specialized users will be able to obtain a vehicle like this in the next two to three years," Moller says, and the price will come down very quickly as the numbers go up. In the mid-1990s, the price would be around \$100,000 a car, he estimates, and by the year 2000, comparatively priced to a quality automobile.

"I don't think that this technology has any choice but to become a part of everybody's life. How can we possibly build greater and greater freeways when they cost \$150 million a mile?" he asks. "It just can't happen."

Moller calls his creation a "flying computer," and he has infinite faith that flying cars will actually be on skyways above the nation within the next 10 years.

There is no 10-year wait, however, to witness test flights of another kind of craft: the homemade structure designed to cushion a fresh egg dropped 75 feet from a hot-air balloon. At the Aspen, Colo., International Design Conference, all kinds of would-be inventors recently tested their talents at the "egg-spurrence."

Contestants designed 6-inch packages to hold the eggs during free fall. Some invented intricate structures with pyramid-shaped supports designed to keep weight evenly distributed. Some of the participating children cushioned their eggs in contraptions less scientific but every bit as creative as those of adults. They opted to use socks, shaving cream, marshmallows and jello. One youngster

protected his egg inside a raw roasting chicken!

"The outcome of contests like this may not change the world, or even make it a safer place, but they can fire the imagination," Koch says. "They have a way of renewing hope in the human spirit."

Invention is about surprise, "a flash of lightning," says Roger Kennedy, director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. Kennedy, who will give on-camera tours of the museum's collections during the series, says, "We house many of the artifacts created by great inventors of the past, and we are eager to share our enthusiasm for creating and for learning about creating."

NOTE: "Invention" airs Tuesdays from 9:00-9:30 p.m. Eastern Time, and repeats Wednesdays from 11:30-midnight on The Discovery Channel.

TRIVIALITIES

Trivials for You

1. Mount Rushmore is the backdrop to the finale of what classic Hitchcock film?
2. What famous actor portrayed the life of Charles Lindbergh in "The Spirit of St. Louis"?
3. Who played Shirley Jones' little brother in "The Music Man"?
4. Who co-starred in "The Great Gatsby"?
5. Mrs. Blake Edwards is better known as whom?
6. James Snyder went on to broadcasting fame with what stage name?
7. What sports commentator also is known as "The Golden Bear"?

ANSWERS TO TRIVIALITIES

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1. "North by Northwest"; 2. Jiminy Glick; 3. Ron Howard; 4. Robert Redford and Mia Farrow; 5. Julie Andrews; 6. Jimmy "The Greek"; 7. Jack Nicklaus



'FRIDAY NIGHT VIDEOS' SALUTES THE PRINCE OF ROCK — NBC's "Friday Night Videos" will present a special salute to Prince on Fri., Nov. 2 (1:30-2:30 a.m.), hosted by singer Ti LaBelle and actor Kadeem Hardison (NBC's "A Different World"). Special appearances will be made by the stars of Prince's new movie, "Graffiti Bridge," scheduled for release on Nov. 10. Photo by [unreadable] for [unreadable].



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