

In The Driver's Seat

Automotive Technology Improving Our Lives

by Liz Allison

(NAPSA)—Cars today have advanced in some surprising ways. The automotive industry has developed equipment that not only keeps those in the car safe, but people and things around it as well. Consider these features:

- **Electronic Stability Control** constantly monitors the car's brake performance to determine if the driver is about to lose control. Individual adjustments to each wheel prevent a car from spinning out. According to the



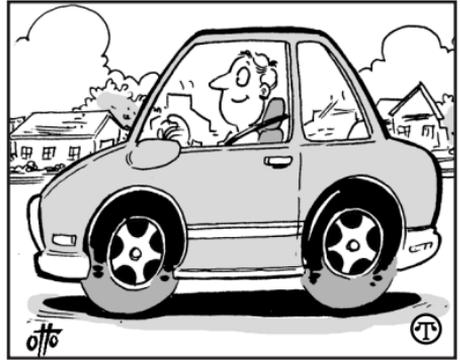
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Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, this could prevent nearly a third of all fatal crashes and reduce rollover risk by 80 percent.

- **Parking Assistance.** One company offers an Advanced Parking Guidance System that does the work for you. Many vehicles offer ultrasonic sensors in the bumpers that help judge the distance between you and other objects.

- **Active Safety.** Imagine driving on cruise control and your car automatically paces itself behind the car in front of you. Or your car automatically lowers its beams at night when an oncoming car approaches. What if your car had "night vision" and discreetly projected a holographic image on your windshield showing potential obstacles on the side of the road outside your headlights' reach? What if your car alerted you when you were leaving your lane? At its recent "Electronics University," one company rolled out a slew of technologies like these.

- **Eliminate Human Error.** The U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency attracts some of the brightest minds in



New auto technology keeps roads, drivers safer.

advanced car technology with a competition that requires vehicles to merge into moving traffic, navigate traffic circles, negotiate busy intersections and avoid obstacles by themselves.

- **Entertainment And Convenience.** Satellite radios let drivers listen to their favorite music or radio programming uninterrupted across the entire U.S. Some also directly connect an Mp3 player into the stereo system. Many cars feature DVD systems to keep passengers pacified. Portable GPS systems can be used in whatever car you're driving and cell phones can provide maps and driving directions.

These technologies make roads safer, but they'll never replace caution and judgment, so remember:

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Keep the car in good condition.
- Keep your focus on the road, not the gadgets.

Liz Allison, a spokesperson for AutoVantage, is a NASCAR TV personality, radio host and best-selling author. She has served as a racing analyst for TNT, CNN/SI, TNN, CNN, ESPN and ESPN2.

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